Watchtower

1914

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The WATCH TOWER and Herald of Christ's Presence

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

From every point of view the Year 1914 seems big with possibilities. The headlines of all the newspapers of the world tell that our Master's prediction of nearly nineteen centuries ago is being fulfilled—"Men's hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth" in the present social order of affairs. Evidences multiply on every hand that the teachings of the colleges for the past thirty years along the lines of human Evolution and destructive Higher Criticism of the Bible are bearing their fruitage. What only the educated and the wealthy a few years ago knew respecting these matters, people of all classes now know. Doubts about the inspiration of the Bible have led people to guess for themselves and to realize that all who reject the Bible are merely guessing at the future.

This matter affects the industrial classes as it does not affect the wealthy and the learned. The industrial classes, with little financial backing, do not feel satisfied with their own or other men's guesses respecting a future life. The next logical process of their minds is to inquire how we may know that there is a God, and in general to doubt everything. The next step in order is a determination to make the most of the present life, in view of their uncertainty about the future one. Under such conditions, can we wonder that Socialism in its various forms and phases is growing—that a general spirit of doubt and discontent is increasing?

So long as employment continues at profitable wages, the majority of these people are too cautious to desire a wreck of the social system, through whose operation they have a comfortable living and by whose destruction their comforts might be diminished. The world, therefore, must face the fact that, if dire necessity comes, as it has done in the past, the common people, the artisans of the world, will meet the situation differently from what their fathers did. Faith in God and in the Bible shaken—gone with most of them—we may be assured that a stoppage of the wheels of industry would speedily bring a terrible time of trouble to the civilized world. And these very conditions are threatened at the present time. It is on this account that many of the rich and influential are trembling as they face the near future.

The man or the woman possessed of a hope beyond the grave has in the storms of life an anchorage for the soul which others do not have. Should the time come, soon or later, when the social fabric will be stretched to the breaking point, when banks suspend payment of money to their depositors, when factories and mills are closed, when people are hungry, we may be sure that a roar and an explosion will not be long deferred. This awful condition is just what the Bible portrays. So far as our judgment goes, the Year 1914 is the last one of what the Bible terms "Gentile Times"—the period in which God has allowed the nations of the earth to do their best to rule the world. The end of their "times" marks the date for the beginning of Messiah's kingdom, which the Bible declares is to be ushered in with a great time of trouble, just such as we see impending.

As already pointed out, we are by no means confident that this year, 1914, will witness as radical and swift changes of dispensation as we have expected. It is beyond the power of our imagination to picture an accomplishment in one year of all that the Scriptures seem to imply should be expected before the reign of peace is ushered in.

Letters from all over the world assure us that the sentiment of THE WATCH TOWER readers is in full accord with that of the Editor in a resolution that, whatever may occur during these years, our faith in the great divine plan of the ages and in the harvest shall not be one bit shaken. We know in whom we have believed. We consecrated our lives to his service—even unto death, whether that death shall come within this year or at another time.

The signs of the times clearly indicate the near approach of the very trouble for which we have for forty years been looking. The signs of the Son of Man in the wonderful inventions and progress of the world are manifest to us. We believe that the Parousia of our Redeemer took place thirty-nine years ago and that he is the potent factor in all the affairs of his church and the supervisor now of the conditions which will shortly lead up to the establishment of his own kingdom and the binding of Satan, the prince of darkness.

We believe that the year 1914 gives evidence of greater possibilities of service for the truth than has any previous year of the harvest. Moreover, all those who have tasted of the good Word of God and who are rejoicing in the light of present truth seem to be actuated by zeal for God and for his cause and for his people, both in Babylon and out of Babylon, more than ever before. Besides, the number of these fully consecrated ones increases every day. Also the conditions are favorable to the opening of the eyes of understanding and the unstopping of the deaf ears of our dear brethren of various denominations.

Let us be more than ever on the alert, therefore, to be used and useful in the service of our king. Let us remember that the moments and the hours are important, that no matter how many cares of life we may have, we can always find some time for the service of the truth, not only in our own hearts and homes, but also in doing good to all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith.

While watching for the consummation, while realizing that it will bring the time of trouble, while seeking to be as fully prepared as possible for whatever share we may have in that trouble, let us not unduly emphasize this feature of the divine plan in presenting matters to our Christian friends of the world. Let us more and more cultivate a sobriety of mind, a loving tenderness of disposition, which will seek to tell only so much as may be necessary to be known. Let us emphasize the goodness of God and the great blessing that is in store for mankind and the nearness of this blessing and the grand results to be obtained. Let us tell that the fulfilment of our Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come," is close at hand!

"A LITTLE TALK WITH JESUS—"

[Reprint of March, 1880, which please see.]

"THE DAYS ARE AT HAND"

"For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come; it will not tarry."—Habakkuk 2:3.

God's plan of the ages is the vision seen by the Prophet Habakkuk, who was told to write it and to "make it plain upon tables, that every one may read it fluently" (Leeser's translation); that in the end the vision should "speak and not lie;" though it would seem to tarry, yet it would not tarry. It would seem to all that the great plan of God was long delayed. The groaning creation would think the heavenly Father was very slack. Many would be inclined to lose their faith in respect to the seed of Abraham, and to think that God had forgotten the promise which he had made to Abraham. We know that disappointments have come to God's people along this line. The Jews were disappointed in their expectations. Christians in this Laodicean period were disappointed at first, not clearly understanding what to expect.

During the early persecutions of the church, it was believed that those who suffered would soon enter into glory. They thought the kingdom was near. Some of the disappointed ones continued to wait and hope and pray. Others organized the great Papal system, and declared that the church should have her glory now, that the kingdom of Messiah was here, and that the representatives of Messiah should sit upon a throne and personate Messiah and bring the kingdoms of the world into subjection. They were evidently led to this by Messiah's not coming at the time expected, and they thought that they must bring about a fulfilment of the Scriptures which foretold his coming and reign.

TIME FEATURES UNPOPULAR

This has brought serious disaster in many respects; it has made all Christendom "drunk." (Rev. 17:2) Many, even today, are in bewilderment. Some, getting out of that darkness, have stumbled into other errors. The majority have lost all faith in prophecy. God foreknew all these things and foretold them, and they will not interfere with the divine program. Just as the wrong impression that our Lord was born in Nazareth was a reflection upon him, so that many would not accept him as the long promised Messiah, so these have said, Can any good thing come out of the prophecies, or anything relating to the second coming of Messiah? These people who proclaim his second advent are laboring under a hallucination! Are not the things written in the prophecies merely fanciful dreams of men—of the rebuilding of Zion and the restitution of Jerusalem?

Thus they scoff. They are inclined to feel an opposition to everything in the Scriptures regarding the return of our Lord to accomplish his foretold work. The Lord tells us that although the vision may seem to tarry, yet we are to exercise faith, because in the end it will speak; it will make itself heard, and will not lie. It will then be seen to be the truth. The divine plan of the ages is to be made plain upon tables. It will be made so very plain to us that he who runs may read. He who is asleep may not read; he who is drunken with the wine of false doctrine may not read; he who is standing in the way of sinners may not read. But he who runs may read, if his heart be teachable and pure.

"REST IN THE LORD"

This vision is to be made clear at the appointed time. We may not read the time features with the same absolute certainty as doctrinal features; for time is not so definitely stated in the Scriptures as are the basic doctrines. We are still walking by faith and not by sight. We are, however, not faithless and unbelieving, but faithful and waiting. If later it should be demonstrated that the church is not glorified by October, 1914, we shall try to feel content with whatever the Lord's will may be. We believe that very many who are running the race for the prize will be able to thank God for the chronology, even if it should prove not accurate to the year, or even out of the way several years. We believe that the chronology is a blessing. If it should wake us a few minutes earlier or a few hours earlier in the morning than we would otherwise have waked, well and good! It is those who are awake who get the blessing.

If 1915 should go by without the passage of the church, without the time of trouble, etc., it would seem to some to be a great calamity. It would not be so with ourself. We shall be as glad as any one if we shall all experience our change from earthly to spirit conditions before 1915, and this is our expectation; but if this should not be the Lord's will, then it would not be our will. If in the Lord's providence the time should come twenty-five years later, then that would be our will. This would not change the fact that the Son of God was sent by the Father, and that the Son is the Redeemer of our race; that he died for our sins; that he is selecting the church for his bride; and that the next thing now in order is the establishment of the glorious kingdom at the hands of this great Mediator, who during his Mediatorial reign will bless all the families of the earth. These facts remain the same. The difference would be merely that of a few years in the time of the establishment of the kingdom.

If October, 1915, should pass, and we should find ourselves still here and matters going on very much as they are at present, and the world apparently making progress in the way of settling disputes, and there were no time of trouble in sight, and the nominal church were not yet federated, etc., we would say that evidently we have been out somewhere in our reckoning. In that event we would look over the prophecies further, to see if we could find an error. And then we would think, Have we been expecting the wrong thing at the right time? The Lord's will might permit this. Our expectation as a church is that our change is near. Nothing of restitution blessings can come to the world until after the church has been glorified.

Another thing to be considered, should our hopes not be so soon realized as we expect, would be as to whether we were surely of the elect class. But we are not worrying ourself at all. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." There are no people in the world so blessed as those who have the truth and are serving the truth. There is plenty of work to do.

UNREST ON EVERY SIDE

The remainder of mankind are dissatisfied—not only the nominal church, the professedly godly, but all others also. They are disappointed in all they undertake to do. There is failure on every hand. Not long since we were speaking to a business man, and our conversation turned to religious matters. He is a very fine man; whether a Christian or not we do not know. We find that there are a great many pleasant and very honorable people who are not Christians at all. This man, speaking of the churches, said, "It is a sad thing—the condition of the churches. I am particularly interested in the Methodist denomination. Some time ago our church had a fortunate sale of their property, and they purchased a new site and built a fine church. And they think now that if there are sixty who attend service there it is a good congregation. And it is the same elsewhere. People are all going pleasure-mad. Every one wants to go on some pleasure excursion—to the beach, or what not. No one seems to care for religion now." This man voiced the general spirit of disappointment. But a better day is near.

In San Francisco, a year or more ago, at a Sunday School convention, one speaker gave quite a long address on getting the children into the church. He said that the whole church institution was likely to be foundered. He said that every member brought into any of the churches had cost six hundred and fifty dollars. Then he proceeded to tell how many workers were employed, and yet they were bringing only these comparatively few into the church.

And we know that the great majority of those who are brought in would not think of calling themselves saints, or of professing consecration at all. This gentleman seemed to think that there is not much in the Gospel for a mature mind. He said that the way to do was to train a child up for the church, and then he could not get away from it. Yet the statistics show that out of the thousands in Sunday Schools only a very small number ever go into the church.

SORROW AT MAGNITUDE OF OUR WORK

Some say they are sorry that our sermons are being printed in the newspapers all over this country, Great Britain, etc.; and that our seats are free, and that no collections are taken. One minister said, "By and by people will think it is a crime to take up a collection, and then where shall we be? Pastor Russell is bringing us all into disrepute." Another thing they say is, "When those doctrines are preached, they influence the best ones that we have."

So we have every reason to feel that it is wonderful, very wonderful, that when we are comparatively so few, and with so comparatively small an amount of money used, few have so great privileges and opportunities in the Lord's service. In EVERYBODY'S PAPER was given, more than two years ago, the report of the American Tract Society, and next to it was given the report of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. The former showed "excess of assets over liabilities, $851,092.53." The latter showed no assets in excess of liabilities. The reports show that the one without excess of assets is putting out vastly more literature than the other. We think this goes to show that we have miracles in our day.

A FAMINE—BUT NOT FOR BREAD

When we were in Boston some time ago, an Editor of a Boston religious journal said to us on the Monday following our discourse, "I was at your meeting yesterday; I saw that immense congregation. I looked it all over and said to myself, What is it that brings these people here? I remembered that there were seaside attractions, parks—everything to induce people to stay away. Yet on that warm summer afternoon there were four thousand present at the meeting, and two thousand turned away. We have many ministers in Boston, good choirs, and everything to attract; but these ministers at this time of the year have only forty or fifty at their services. How is it that so many came out to your meeting, and sat there for two hours?"

We replied that it seems to us that we are seeing the fulfilment of the prophecy: "There shall be a famine in the land, not a famine for bread nor a thirst for water, but for hearing the Word of the Lord." (Amos 8:11, 12.) We further remarked that the people have been feeding on very unsatisfactory nourishment, and that they are not satisfied with the chaff they have been receiving, and that they do not go to the churches for the reason that they do not believe in the eternal torment doctrine—the preachers do not believe it, and nobody believes it, except a comparatively small number, and that number is constantly diminishing.

We reminded him that these people, instead of hearing of eternal torment, now have offered them suggestions from the colleges to the effect that their forefathers were monkeys; that there are large interrogation points in the minds of the people; that they are hungry to know the truth. We told him that we believe this accounts for the large number present to hear us—that they were hearing something more rational, something more Biblical, than they had heard before. So we have everything for which to be thankful.

"OUR DELIVERANCE DRAWETH NIGH"

So far as we have been able to see up to the present time, the failure of a full development of matters in 1915, or before, would imply that all the chronological arrangements, as we have them, are wrong—our view of the harvest and all. And we have no reason to believe that these are wrong. We remember that we are not infallible, and that our judgment is not infallible; but the wonderful inventions of today, and the light that is dawning in every direction, as well as the universal unrest, seem in corroboration of the chronology—that we are in the dawning of the new age. But just how far along we are we do not positively know. We are waiting for the Sun of Righteousness to appear.

The fact that the vision is now speaking, and is made plain upon tables, is very convincing. We believe truly that "the days are at hand, and the effect [matter or thing (as spoken)] of every vision."—Ezek. 12:21-23.

THE GREAT PRIVILEGE OF TRUE SERVICE

"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."—Matthew 20:28.

The word minister has the same import as the word serve. The Master tells us that the purpose of his coming into the world was not a selfish one. He had been quite content with the glory and honor which he had with the Father before the world was. (John 17:5.) While it is true that the Savior is now exalted to a position very much higher than his previous one, yet he assures us that it was not with the spirit, the desire, for exaltation that he came into the world. On the contrary, he wished to serve. He said, "I delight to do thy will, O My God! Thy law is written in my heart."—Psalm 40:8.

In obedience to this divine will, our Lord left the glory which he had with the Father, came down to earth and gave himself up to death, even the death of the cross. On the night of his betrayal and arrest he said, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" He was obedient even unto the end.

Before coming into the world, our Lord had perceived that mankind was in need of a Savior, and no doubt this had to do with his gladly accepting the divine arrangement. He saw something of the Father's purpose in regard to fallen humanity. And when, during his earthly life, he saw these poor creatures in sin, degradation and weakness, he did not try to make them slaves. He did not try to use his power, his intelligence, selfishly for his own comfort; but he laid down his life unselfishly. He set himself to work out the plan which the Father had arranged.

Our Lord came not to be ministered unto. He did not come into the world to have servants and to get all that he could in return for the expenditure of a small amount of his own energy. He came not from any selfish motive whatever, but to serve others—to do good. As he himself testified, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This he did in harmony with the Father's plan.

We do not understand, however, that our Lord refused to have any one serve him. He accepted service from others. The thought of our text is that he came to render a service; not that he might be served; and in order that he might carry out his purpose it was necessary for him to become a servant. Had there been no need for that service, we cannot think that the Lord would have humbled himself and taken the bondman's form, or have undergone the severe trials of his earthly existence. But he came to render a service that was necessary to the well-being, happiness, yea, the very life of the entire human family.

Through Adam's disobedience sin had entered into the world. God's law pronounced the penalty of death for that sin. Thus the whole race of mankind was perishing; and if they were ever to be rescued, so that they would not perish like brute beasts, they must be redeemed. According to the divine law, there must be a ransom-price for the first perfect man, who had sinned. The Only Begotten was willing to meet this necessity. He rejoiced to do this work, to be the servant, the minister of God for this purpose, because of the need of the service, because it would bring blessing to others.

This is the spirit that should actuate every one of us. We should desire to incorporate into our character this principle of service. We should not serve merely because we like to work, like to be busy, but because we perceive there is a work necessary, and we are glad to lay down our lives in this blessed service.

THE ATTITUDE OF TRUE CONSECRATION

There are some who think it necessary to wash the feet of others. But since there is no real good to be accomplished by such a ceremony—nothing desirable—there is no reason why it should be performed. We cannot think that Jesus would have washed his disciples' feet unless they had needed washing. But if at any time we can thus render a real service, any of us should be glad of the opportunity to serve a fellow-member of the body of Christ—by washing his feet, or in any manner. The thought is to appreciate the privilege of real service, rather than the opportunity of doing something merely because it is menial. Jesus did what he did because it was helpful service, and was the Father's will. He wished also to teach his disciples that they should not be above doing the humblest service for each other as brethren. In addition, Jesus' words on this occasion seemed to emphasize the thought of the need of daily cleansing of the Lord's disciples from earth-defilement. See John 13:6-10.

The laying down of our Lord's life was accomplished moment by moment, day by day, in teaching, in healing the sick, the deaf, the blind, and in instructing his disciples. In nothing did he seek to serve himself. Therefore the record is, "He went about doing good." We should make application of this principle to ourselves; for "as he was, so are we, in this world." The attitude of true consecration is that we walk in Jesus' steps, and that we seek to know the Father's will in order to do it. This implies that we be Bible students, like the Bereans of old, who "searched the Scriptures daily."

If we have the Master's spirit, we shall be desirous of "doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Galatians 6:10) And this is the advice of St. Paul, who urged that we be followers of himself, even as he followed Christ. The lives of Jesus and the apostles stand out very distinctly on the pages of history as notable for their unselfish service of others.

Many have lorded it over God's heritage. The context shows that our Lord had this class in mind. He declares that the rulers of the Gentiles exercised authority over their people; and that this was at the expense of the ruled, and was very rarely accompanied by a desire to serve the people.

SELFISHNESS UNFITS FOR THE KINGDOM

We see how our Master came to use the words of our text. The disciples were afflicted with a common ailment—love of honor of men and also love of honor of the Lord. Two of them had made an earnest request to have a place of special honor in his kingdom. Their request aroused a spirit of indignation among the other ten, and a controversy resulted. They had the thought fixed in their minds that Jesus had promised them a

share in the kingdom. (Matthew 19:27-29) If it had been wrong for them to have this promise in mind, it would have been wrong for the Lord to give them the promise. But they failed to see that the Father would give that place to none who would not manifest fullest loyalty to him and to his Word.

The disciples had at that time a certain amount of false dignity, or pride, that would have made them unfit for a place in the throne. Hence the Lord reminded them that the conditions upon which a seat in the throne would be given to any one were that such a one should manifest so great loyalty to the principles of God's government, and so great humility of spirit, that he would be glad to render service to any one in need. And he set himself forth as an example.

We paraphrase our Lord's words: Do you think that I left heaven and came down to earth that people might serve me? No. The conditions to which I have come are very inferior to those which I left. But the Father gave me the privilege of service in this matter, and I am glad to have this service, because it is the divine will. I have come to minister, to serve, to give my life as a ransom-price for all.

This thought, then, he set before them—that they should rejoice in the privilege of service—rejoice in having the privilege of doing something really helpful to others, especially the brethren in the body of Christ. As we apply this principle broadly, we see how it is exemplified in the world, in the affairs of every day life. The whole human family are servants. One man serves as a jeweler; another as a manufacturer of woolen goods. He serves by buying wool, converting it into cloth and into garments. Another serves as a grocer and supplies food. Some are chiropodists; some, barbers; some, tailors; some, physicians; etc. In every case it is service to others.

Bringing the matter still lower, we see that the principle extends even to service of the dumb brutes. A horse cannot curry himself; and even a hog needs to be served—needs a trough, a bed, and food. We in turn are served by the brute creation. Whoever separates himself from this arrangement of service is getting away from his own good, and violating a law of the universe. Whoever gets to the place where he does no service, but has others to serve him, is to be pitied. He will be unhappy, be he ever so wealthy. Whoever would take this attitude would be arrogant and selfish, and his life would be devoid of beauty or of worth.

SERVICE A DELIGHT TO THE CHRISTIAN

The true Christian enters into the spirit of service, as did his Master, and delights to do a good turn to any one as he has opportunity. If there are those who are helpless, who are sick, these are calls upon his services as he has ability and is able to lend a helping hand. We are to serve all men "as we have opportunity, especially those who are of the household of faith."

Where shall we draw the line? The answer is that we must use moderation. We find ourselves every day passing by services that others have needed, but that we have not been able to perform. How then shall we regulate the matter, since we cannot do all that we would? Our own family should be our first charge, or responsibility. He who neglects his own is worse than an unbeliever. Charity begins at home. If we have responsibilities there, we could not give so much comfort, so much time, so much money, to others as we would to those of our own family.

LAZINESS NOT TO BE ENCOURAGED

Those who have money have a talent that they can use in doing good. They will not find very much opportunity so far as the world is concerned. Even if we had millions of dollars, the spirit of a sound mind should govern us in its expenditure. To give money to encourage anybody in wastefulness, slothfulness and idleness would be to misuse it, and not to do good. God himself declared, "In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread." The happiest people are those who are employed; the most unhappy are those who have nothing to do, those who have no ambition.

We cannot do even for our own families all that we would wish to do; for in the case of our own there is often a lack of appreciation. Some of our relatives would never have enough. We could never do sufficient for them. We should exercise the spirit of a sound mind, then, in deciding what to do. Let us ever remember that when we have entered the service of the Lord we are given a new commission, a special work to do in the world.

What kind of service are we then given? It is the service of ambassador of the Lord. We are to preach the truth wherever there is an ear to hear and an eye to discern. Those who have not the hearing ear and the seeing eye might rend us, as the Master foretold. (Matthew 7:6) We are therefore to use the spirit of a sound mind in discriminating between those who are good subjects for the truth, and those who are not.

We say to the Master, Lord, we will give all of our time to thee and to thy truth. Then he replies, But you are not to go ragged or naked, in order that you may preach the Gospel. It is proper that you provide the things needful. But do not think to get a certain amount of money laid up for yourself first, and then afterwards go and proclaim the kingdom.

We may ask, Does this excuse us, Lord, from doing anything for our fellowmen and for our own families? He answers that we should not neglect our own families, but should care for them according to their necessities. We are, however, to guide our affairs with economy. If our family fail to do their part, and will not put forth any effort when of sufficient age and able to earn a livelihood for themselves, then we are to do nothing for them; for having their own strength, they do not need our assistance. We are to do for them only the things that are needful. We believe this is the mind of the Lord.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS STEWARDS

While we are to do good to all men, yet our special service is to be rendered in the Lord's work, the work of the Father—in dispensing the truth. But while we are so doing, we may be able to speak a kind word to those with whom we come in contact. If we have money we may help in that way. But we should remember that we do not own even a penny of what we possess, or a moment of our time. All belongs to the Lord and should be spent along the lines of spiritual things, except where there is real necessity along earthly lines. To be sure, the world will not esteem us so much as if we would do more along earthly lines; but we have not received our commission from the world.

We perceive that the spirit of the Lord Jesus has had great influence in the world. It has made a deep impression upon noble souls, and has led them to the establishment of orphans' homes, hospitals for the blind, homes for the incurable, etc.; and these institutions are provided for by the public. It is recognized today to be proper to provide for those unable to provide for themselves. Since the world has settled this matter from a business point of view, the Lord's people are excused from personal responsibility which they have as God's ambassadors. It is the proper thing to care for the sick and the maimed; but because the city and state have provided, individual responsibility is largely lifted.

There are wealthy people who say, I prefer to look after my sick friends myself, and send them to a high-priced institution. If any do so, this is their own business. They may also say, I prefer to live in a million dollar house. This, too, is their own business. They have a right to do so; and they may also have their automobiles and private yachts for pleasure, etc. But with the Christian it is different. All he possesses belongs to the Lord. He therefore is in a different position from any others. He is not to be like the world. All that he does is for God—because of his relationship to him as a son. "Now are we the sons of God."

THE HUMBLE TO BE EXALTED

In the words of our text, the Master was instructing his disciples that they should not desire to rule—that he desired as his followers those who had most of his spirit of humility and service. If any man were to exalt himself, they were to have correspondingly a lower esteem for him; for "he that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The Lord will send the experiences which will exalt or abase, and it is for us to show our appreciation where we see the right principles in operation. Whoever manifests most of the spirit of Christ is to be highest in our esteem. Whoever has less of the spirit of Christ is to be lower in our esteem. These characteristics are to be quietly observed by us.

The basis upon which the world operates is selfishness. This is the secret of war, rebellion, revolution, etc.—one party and another seeking selfishly to control riches, honor, power or authority. We are delighted, as Christians, to note the difference in the spirit which we are of. We are to remember that we are by nature "children of wrath even as others." We are not to suppose that we shall be changed instantly; but the mind will be changed, we shall grow more Christlike. And as new creatures in Christ we are to keep a diligent watch lest the service we are so desirous of rendering to the Lord become vitiated more or less, after the fashion of the spirit of the world.

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN A SERVICE

Our Lord, when he takes his great power to reign, will not have the same motive as have the rulers of the present time—merely to assume power for his own glory and for vaunting himself. He will, indeed, have great power and authority, but it will be in harmony with what the heavenly

Father has arranged. It will be a manifestation of glory and power, not to crush the world, but to bless and uplift it. This work will be accomplished from the standpoint of service, with a view to helping mankind to be the real rulers of the world; for the Messianic kingdom will cease when the world shall be able to take care of itself.

We perceive that this is the way it was purposed from the first. The heavenly Father made man the king of earth. God crowned man with glory and honor, and set him over the works of his hands. (Psalm 8:5, 6; Hebrews 2:7) It is not his purpose to keep mankind under the iron rod forever. The rod will be merely for temporary service, for man's true development, that the race may be brought back to the full blessing of their original privilege as kings of earth.

The Lord's kingdom, we see, will be very different from any other ever instituted. Our service, as members of Christ's body, will be the same as his. We shall share with him in the uplifting of humanity. "God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."—Ephesians 2:6, 7.

NAMES WRITTEN IN THE LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."—Rev. 3:5.

The invitation of this Gospel age is to a special class, a class which professes to be out of harmony with present conditions—out of harmony with sin.

Those who may become of this class are such as have been granted a knowledge of God's arrangement through Christ, and these may avail themselves of this privilege without delay, if they choose, by making a consecration to the Lord.

As Jesus laid down his earthly life in the service of the Father and of the truth, and was misunderstood by those about him, so those who follow in Jesus' footsteps must in like manner suffer disappointments in earthly matters, if they would be sharers in his glory and immortality. As Jesus overcame and sat down with the Father in his throne, so those who overcome will sit down with Jesus in his throne.

We must distinguish between the overcoming of Jesus and that of his followers. His was a perfect overcoming. While he had the instruction of the Father and the help of the angels, he had no one as a sin-bearer, no one to impute any righteousness to him. His overcoming was full and complete. His followers, being imperfect in the flesh, cannot do perfectly; and therefore by the grace of God it has been so arranged that these may be acceptable through Jesus, if they have the spirit to overcome, the desire to overcome—if they manifest righteousness of heart. But they must show this overcoming spirit, else they can never be associated with our Lord in his kingdom. They must be copies of their Master in spirit, even though imperfect in the flesh.

Thus the very moment that we take the step of consecration and are accepted, all our blemishes and imperfections are covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness. But it is not only while we have blemishes that we need to be covered; even all those represented in the symbolic pictures of the Scriptures are there shown as clothed. The pictures given of the heavenly Father represent him as clothed, and the pictures of our Lord represent him as clothed. The Revelation pictures represent our Lord and the saints as clothed in white garments. The angels who appeared at the time of our Lord's resurrection are represented as clothed in white. Our Lord said: "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

The glorified church is represented, not as taking off the robe of righteousness, but continuing to walk in white raiment. It will no longer be an imputed robe of righteousness, however; our righteousness will be our own. To be clothed in white garments then will be to be recognized as one of the pure ones—not as now, in a robe of reckoned righteousness, but in a robe of actual righteousness. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power."

TWO BOOKS OF LIFE

The Bible mentions two books of life—one appertaining to the present time, and the other to the Millennial age. As we read: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." Again, "And the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life." (Rev. 3:5; 20:12) The special book of life that is open at this present time is the one in which the names of all the overcomers of this Gospel age are written. When we take the step of consecration and are begotten of the holy Spirit, it is appropriate that we should be reckoned as belonging to the family of God. Just as a family will keep a record of its members—Joseph, Mary, Martha, etc.—so with those who become members of the family of God, through Christ; their names will be recorded.

This recording has been going on throughout this present age. This means that those whose names are therein written are not only members of the family of God, but also members of the bride class. In order to maintain this position, they must be overcomers. In some Scriptures it seems that the great company class are included; in other passages it is not so. Those who will constitute the little flock, or those who will be of the great company, or those who will attain perfection as earthly beings by and by, must all be overcomers. The bride class is referred to as "more than conquerors." They will gain the abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom.—2 Peter 1:10, 11.

In our text we may not be sure whether or not the great company is included. From one standpoint it looks as though they were; from another, as though they may not be. We do well not to settle it too definitely in our minds, but wait to see what the Lord's intention is. We know that there will be some names blotted out. All those who go into the second death will be blotted out of the special record, and their names have no place in the book of life. Perhaps the great company class will also be blotted out of the special record. But we are not anxious to put that construction upon it. They are our brethren, they also are brethren of the Lord, and we would like to think of them as favorably as possible.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FATHER

"I will confess his name." This gives us, first of all, the thought that, although we have been begotten of God, we have never been introduced to him—in his actual presence. Our Lord is not only represented as our Bridegroom, but also as our Elder Brother, and is pictured as waiting on the other side until we, his brethren, shall pass over. And as we shall pass over, our Lord being the One to whom the Father delegated the work of instructing us in the school of Christ, it will be appropriate that he should introduce us to the Father.

In another place, our Lord says that if we are ashamed of him, he will be ashamed of us. This expression would rather imply that the great company class would not be included here. But we are sure respecting the little flock class, that they will be introduced to the Father and to the holy angels as the bride of Christ. This is pictured in the 45th Psalm: "She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework; the virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto thee." Those especially confessed, introduced, are the bride class only. And we are to hope and strive that we may have a place amongst these. The place that the Father would prefer us to have is the place we would prefer to have.

PRINCE OF DARKNESS VS. PRINCE OF LIGHT

FEBRUARY 8.—Luke 11:14-26, 33-36.

"Look therefore whether the light that is in thee be not darkness."—Luke 11:35.

However much the worldly-wise may scoff at the Bible teaching that there is a personal devil, and that he is a prince over a demon host of spirit beings—rebels against God's government—let us always remember that this is the teaching of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. The difficulty with the worldly-wise is that their good reasoning faculties are not guided by the Word of God. They say it is difficult enough to believe in a God and an angelic host, his servants, spirit beings and invisible to men. Much more difficult is it—yea, to them unreasonable—to believe in another spirit ruler and another spirit host, the adversaries of God. They reason that it would not be thinkable that God would create beings opposed to himself; or that if, created holy, they became the adversaries of righteousness, an all-powerful Creator would not destroy them, but permit them to continue their evil opposition.

The Bible explains that Satan was the first transgressor,

in that previously he was a cherub, an angel of superior rank and nature, who lost his loyalty to God through pride and ambition; and that he seduced into disobedience those whom the Bible now designates a demon host. Everywhere the Scriptures set forth that this host of spirit beings are associated with our earth, and not in some far-off fiery furnace torturing the human dead.

The Bible indicates that God does not lack the power to deal with these rebels, but that he is permitting them for a time, allowing them to manifest the fruitage of sin, anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife—as a lesson for angels and men. They are under certain limitations which the Apostle styles "chains of darkness." They have not been permitted to materialize as men since the Deluge. But they have sought intercourse with humanity; and in proportion to their success their victims are said to be obsessed by evil spirits. When the victory is complete, the victim is said to be possessed of a demon and insane.

It is estimated that fully one-half of those in insane asylums are demon-possessed—the demons belonging to the very class so frequently mentioned in connection with our Lord's ministry. As in the past, intercourse was sought through witches, wizards, necromancers, etc., so today, intercourse with humanity is sought through ouija boards, planchettes, and spirit mediums. Humanity, deceived by the doctrines of these demons inculcated in the dark ages (1 Timothy 4:1), has neglected God's testimony in the Bible to the effect that the dead are asleep, and "know not anything." (Ecclesiastes 9:5) "Their thoughts perish," until their awakening in the morning of the new dispensation, otherwise styled "the day of Christ"—"the times of restitution"—the Millennial day. (Philippians 1:10; Acts 3:21) Today's study introduces the Master delivering a man from demon possession. The people rightly understood what was the difficulty; but, being opposed to the Master, some of them evilly declared that the demons obeyed Jesus because he himself was Satan, Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Others said: Your miracles are all earthly; show us some sign from heaven.

Jesus answered the accusation that he was the prince of demons rather than the Prince of Light by showing that for Satan to cast out his own hosts would signify a warfare in the camp of the evil ones, which would imply that Satan's house was divided and that it would soon fall. It would be foolish, therefore, for Satan to cast out Satan; consequently such an argument should have no weight. But, said Jesus, other Jews have exercised this same power of casting out devils, and you never charged these with being the prince of demons. And how could there be several princes of demons? Judge according to this whether your argument against me is good. But, on the contrary, to those of you who realize the truth that I am casting out demons by the "finger" of God, the power of God, there will be no doubt that this power, which I possess more than others, and which I have exercised through my apostles also, is an evidence of special favor from God and a corroboration of my testimony that God's kingdom is near you—that the power of that kingdom is being exercised in your midst.

But, as a matter of fact, when that nation rejected Christ, the kingdom which God offered them was taken away from them. The offer was discontinued. They were turned aside for a time from God's favor, while the message of grace and truth has since been gathering another Israel—drawing first of all from the Jews such as were Israelites indeed; and later, going hither and thither, it has gathered for this same class saintly ones out of every nation.

The power of Jesus in casting out demons showed that he was thoroughly competent to deal with the prince of this world, the prince of darkness, Satan; and that, had the kingdom been set up at that time, Satan and his angels would have been bound or restrained then. However, in view of the foreknown and foretold rejection of Jesus and the kingdom, the work of binding Satan did not progress, but delayed until the second coming of Jesus. Then, his bride class having meantime been selected to be his joint-heirs in the kingdom, he will take his great power and reign. At that time he will deal with Satan and his subordinate demons; yea, with all that have cultivated sin and the spirit of Satan, which has so seriously gotten hold of humanity under the conditions of the fall.

THE BINDING OF SATAN

Our Lord tells that in the end of this Gospel age Satan shall be bound for a thousand years (the thousand years of Messiah's glorious reign), that he may deceive mankind no longer, as he has been deceiving and deluding them for six thousand years, putting darkness for light and misrepresenting the heavenly Father as the worst being imaginable, plotting and predestinating thousands of millions to be born and to go to eternal torture.

Jesus pictures Satan's control of the world at the present time, likening him to a strong man armed and guarding his palace. He can maintain his control until a stronger comes, overcomes him and takes possession of his wrongly-acquired valuables. Thus Jesus foretold that his own Messianic kingdom will be stronger than that of Satan, and will control it and bind him. The result will be the deliverance of mankind from the curse of sin and death which has rested upon the race for now six great days of a thousand years each. Messiah's kingdom will be in the great seventh day, or Sabbath, in which all who will accept the Savior may enter into rest.

Meantime Jesus, according to the Father's plan, during this Gospel age, through his own message and the message of the apostles, has been gathering out of the world a bride class, to be his joint-heirs in the kingdom. Satan is allowed considerable liberty in the testing of the loyalty of all these. There can be only the two masters. Knowingly or ignorantly, people are serving either the One or the other. As Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me."

THE WHOLE WORLD OBSESSED

St. Paul declares that the prince of this world (Satan) "now works in the hearts of the children of disobedience." Jesus took up this same thought, and likened the world to the poor demoniac whom he had released from Satan's grasp. Similarly, all who accept Christ are delivered from the power of Satan. Let not sin, therefore, have dominion in your mortal bodies.—Romans 6:12.

Jesus represents such hearts as swept and garnished—sins forgiven and grace of God received. But he declares that Satan will seek to regain control of such through the spirit of the world—pride, anger, malice, hatred, strife, works of the flesh and of the devil. (Matthew 12:43-45) "Whom resist, steadfast in the faith," writes the Apostle. (1 Peter 5:9) If Satan be not resisted, the danger is that the light and the blessing received through the knowledge of God will become a curse and an injury; and that the result with such a person will be worse than before he came into relationship with Christ.

Jesus emphasized this, declaring that as a candle should not be put under a bushel and hidden, but should be exposed so as to do good, so also the light of the truth, the grace of God received, must not be hidden, but must be let shine to the glory of God. Otherwise, the light would become extinguished and the darkness would prevail. The eye represents intelligence; and as long as we have the true enlightenment, or intelligence, the whole body is blessed thereby; but if the intelligence be destroyed, if the eye be blinded, the whole body will suffer and be in darkness.

Every one, therefore, receiving the light should take heed to it as a precious thing lest he lose it, and have darkness instead. The eye, the light, here represents the enlightenment of the holy Spirit, which has the greatest power to bless us; and this, if lost, would mean to us even a greater darkness than that we experienced before coming to a knowledge of the Lord.

WHO MAY PRAY AND FOR WHAT?

FEBRUARY 1.—Luke 11:1-13.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."—Luke 11:9.

Apparently Jesus usually prayed alone. We read that on some occasions he spent the entire night in prayer to God. How inconsistent that would have been if he himself were the Father, who for a time was with men and outwardly appeared as the "man Christ Jesus"! But how consistent is the thought of Jesus' prayer to the Father when taken in connection with his own declaration: "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28); "I came not to do mine own will; but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38); "Of mine own self I can do nothing; as I hear [of my Father], I judge."—John 5:30.

Instead of being the Father masquerading as a man, Jesus was the Logos, the Word, or Message of God, whom the Father had sanctified and sent into the world to be the world's Redeemer, and who by and by is to be its King, to deliver it from the power of Satan and sin, and to restore the willing and obedient to the divine likeness, the Father's favor and everlasting life.—Isaiah 25:6-8; Romans 8:21.

Realizing the importance of his mission, Jesus kept properly in touch with the great Author of the plan of salvation, his heavenly Father. His prayers were not mockeries; they were

sincere. He worshiped the Father in spirit and in truth, as he declared all must do who would be acceptable to the Father.

No doubt the disciples noted the Master's frequency in prayer, and the blessing which he seemed to receive therefrom. Instead of urging them to pray, Jesus by his example taught them to desire the privilege and blessing of prayer. In due time they requested instruction, saying, "Lord, teach us to pray!" It is well that we inquire who may pray, and for what things we may petition the great Creator, else we might be praying without authority, or praying amiss, as St. James declares some do.

There is a difference between worship—adoration, homage—and prayer. Any one may offer homage to the Lord, bow the knee or express thanks and appreciation. But as for making requests of God, prayers, this privilege is distinctly limited. The Jews were privileged to offer prayer, because they as a nation were in typical relationship with God under the Law Covenant, as a "house of servants." But the Gentiles had no privilege of approaching God in prayer until after the Jewish favor had ended—three and a half years after the crucifixion of Jesus.

The first Gentile whose prayers were received, according to the Bible, was Cornelius. And even his prayers were not acceptable until he had been instructed respecting Christ and his redemption work and had become a follower of Jesus. Then his prayers and his consecration were acceptable to the Father, and he was received into the family of God as a son. Then as a son he had the right or privilege of prayer.—Acts 10:25-48.

So today while any one may offer worship and reverence to God, none is privileged to pray unless he has become a consecrated disciple of Jesus, except it be the immature children of such consecrated persons. All over the world today's lesson will be misinterpreted. Jesus' words, "Our Father," will be misinterpreted to signify the "Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." The context will be ignored. The fact that these were consecrated disciples, and not mankind in general, who were instructed to pray "our Father," will be ignored.

There is a general tendency to ignore personal faith in the redeeming blood—to ignore the fact that no man cometh unto the Father but by the Son. (John 14:6) Adam indeed was created a son of God; but his disobedience and death sentence cancelled the relationship, which cannot be restored except in God's appointed way—through Christ. Prayer is a wonderful privilege. It is not for sinners, but for those who have been justified by the great Advocate whom the Father has appointed—Jesus.

The model prayer which Jesus gave his followers is grandly simple. It is devoid of selfishness. Instead of "I" and "me," the prayer is comprehensive of all who are truly the Lord's people, in any class—we, us, our. It is unselfish, too, in that it is not a prayer for earthly blessings. Only one petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," can be construed to apply to even the simplest of earthly blessings. And this may also be understood to signify more particularly spiritual nourishment.

The prayer opens with a reverent acknowledgment of the greatness and sacredness of the heavenly Father's name, or character. Next comes an acknowledgment of the present condition of sin in the world and an acknowledgment of faith in the promise that God has given, that eventually his kingdom shall be established in the earth, and shall overthrow the reign of Sin and Death which has prevailed for six thousand years, and will bind Satan, "the prince of this world." (Rev. 20:1-3) The petition, "Thy kingdom come," not only manifests faith in God and in his promise to abolish sin and establish righteousness in the earth, but it means more; namely, that the suppliant is in his heart in sympathy with God and his righteousness and out of sympathy with the reign of Sin and Death.

The next petition is, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." This signifies full confidence in the promise of God that his kingdom when it shall be established will not be a failure—that Satan will be bound; that the reign of Sin and Death will end; that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth and triumph, destroying all wilful opposers, until finally every knee shall be bowing and every tongue confessing, to the glory of God.

It is an expression of confidence that the kingdom will effect the full restoration of the earth to its Edenic condition and of man to his primeval perfection in the image of his Creator; for not until such conditions prevail will it be possible for God's will to be as perfectly done on earth as it is now done in heaven. An included thought is that when sin and death shall thus have been effaced, the world of mankind will be as happy in God's favor as are the angels now. This Jesus clearly expressed later, assuring us that eventually there will be no more sighing, crying or dying, because all the former things of sin and death will have passed away.—Rev. 21:5.

The request for daily bread implies our realization that our sustenance, both temporal and spiritual, must come from God. And the failure to specify any particular kind of food implies not only a hunger and desire on our part, but a full resignation to the provision of divine Wisdom.

When the justified pray, "Forgive us our trespasses," they do not refer to original sin; for they were freed from that condemnation in their justification. By trespasses are signified those unintentional imperfections which appertain to all, and which all the followers of Jesus are striving to overcome. The request that we shall have forgiveness of our blemishes as we are generous and forgiving toward those who trespass against us is a reminder of the general terms of our relationship to God. We cannot grow in grace and abide in the sunshine of God's favor except as we cultivate the spirit of love, which is the spirit of God—a forgiving spirit, a generous spirit, in our dealings with others. God thus purposes to favor more especially those who particularly strive to exemplify his gracious mercy.

"Abandon us not in temptation" indicates that we are aware that we are surrounded by the powers of evil, and that as new creatures we would be unable to withstand these successfully except as we should have divine aid. "Deliver us from the evil one" is a recognition that Satan is our great adversary; and that we are on the alert to resist him, and yet realize our own insufficiency, our need of divine aid. "We are not ignorant of his [Satan's] devices." (2 Corinthians 2:11) "We wrestle not against flesh and blood [merely], but against wicked spirits in high positions."—Ephesians 6:12.

"SEEK, KNOCK, ASK—AND RECEIVE"

In the concluding verses of the study, Jesus admonished that the prayer should be with fervency or earnestness, and not merely lifeless, formal words. He gave the illustration of the man who at first refused to be disturbed, even by his friend, but was finally moved by the earnestness of his friend's petition. So when we pray for God's kingdom to come and his will to be done, as it delays long, we are not to think that our prayers are unheeded. We are praying in harmony with the divine promise, and although we are not hastening the kingdom by our prayers we are entering into a blessing of rest through faith, by continually bringing before our minds these promises of God, and thus waiting upon the Lord for the fulfilment of his promise.

What God really wishes to give to his people is his holy Spirit. Because of the imperfections of the flesh none of us can be filled with the Spirit at first, as was our perfect Master. But as we come to God desiring to be filled with his spirit, desiring to be in harmony with him, desiring to be in his character-likeness, by the seeking we find, and to our knocking the door is opened.

Nor should we be afraid that our heavenly Father would give any bad answer to our requests. Would an earthly parent give to a hungry child a stone when it asked for bread; a serpent when it asked for fish; a scorpion when it asked for an egg? Surely not! We are to know that our heavenly Father is much better than we, much kinder, much more just and loving, and that he delights to give his good gifts, his holy Spirit, to those consecrated disciples of Jesus who earnestly seek it.

THANKSGIVING WITH PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION

The following Scriptures have been compiled by Brother Daniel Toole:

TAKE TIME TO PRAY

For my love they are my adversaries; but I give myself unto prayer.—Psalm 109:4.

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.—Acts 6:4.

He went out into a mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God.—Luke 6:12.

Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God; for God is in heaven and thou upon earth.—Eccl. 5:2.

PRAY IN SECRET

Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. —Matt. 6:6.

And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the even was come he was there alone.—Matt. 14:23.

PRAY IN GOD'S PRESENCE

Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.—James 4:8.

Have faith in God. What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them.—Mark 11:22, 24.

O, Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might so that none is able to withstand thee?—2 Chron. 20:6.

AS A CHILD OF A FATHER

If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?—Luke 11:11-13.

ANSWER CERTAIN

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.—Matt. 7:7, 8.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.—James 1:5.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.—John 14:13.

PRAY HAVING FAITH IN GOD

And Jesus answering saith unto them, "Have faith in God."—Mark 11:22.

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.—1 John 5:14, 15.

And they were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them; for they cried to God in the battle and he was entreated of them because they put their trust in him.—1 Chron. 5:20.

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.—1 John 3:21, 22.

Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.—Heb. 10:19, 20.

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.—James 1:6, 7.

Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them.—Mark 11:24.

PRAY BEING FREE FROM CONDEMNATION

Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord. Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud that our prayer should not pass through.—Lam. 3:40, 44.

Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. I cried unto him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue. If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me.—Psalm 66:16-18.

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.—1 Peter 3:7.

For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God, and whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.—1 John 3:20-22.

WITH THE WHOLE HEART

I cried with my whole heart, hear me, O Lord; I will keep thy statutes.—Psalm 119:145.

Thou hast given him his heart's desire and hast not withholden the request of his lips.—Psalm 21:2.

TRUSTING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised.—Heb. 10:23.

Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.—Deut. 7:9.

For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him. . . . God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?—Num. 23:9, 19.

Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.—Heb. 11:11.

Their children also multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven, and broughtest them into the land, concerning which thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess it.—Neh. 9:23.

PRAY TRUSTING GOD'S POWER

Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.—Gen. 18:14.

Ah, Lord God, behold thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee.—Jer. 32:17.

For with God nothing shall be impossible.—Luke 1:37.

And Asa cried unto the Lord his God and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help whether with many or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.—2 Chron. 14:11.

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.—Eph. 3:20.

TRUSTING IN GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.—Psalm 51:1.

O my God, incline thine ear and hear; open thine eyes and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies.—Dan. 9:18.

Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way. . . . Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving-kindnesses, for they have been ever of old.—Psalm 25:8, 6.

Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; save me for thy mercies' sake.—Psalm 31:16.

Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.—Psalm 119:76.

And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.—Romans 4:19-21.

PRAY PLEADING OUR NEED

Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help.—Psalm 22:11.

Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low; deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.—Psalm 142:6.

For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor, also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their souls from deceit and violence; and precious shall their blood be in his sight.—Psalm 72:12-14.

Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from him cometh my salvation. . . . He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved. . . . My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him.—Psalm 62:1, 2, 5.

PRAY PLEADING GOD'S GLORY

And Moses said unto the Lord, "Then the Egyptians shall hear it (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them); and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land; for they have heard that thou, Lord, art among this people, that thou, Lord, art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night. Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying, Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness."—Num. 14:13-16.

O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies! For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth; and what wilt thou do unto thy great name?—Joshua 7:8, 9.

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice that Elijah the Prophet came near and said: Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, let it be

known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant and that I have done all these things at thy word. . . . Hear me, O Lord, hear me; that these people may know that thou art the Lord God and that thou hast turned their heart back again.—I Kings 18:36, 37.

For thou art my rock and my fortress! Therefore for thy name's sake lead me and guide me.—Psalm 31:3.

Now, therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline thine ear and hear; open thine eyes and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God; for thy people and thy city are called by thy name.—Dan. 9:17-19.

PRAY PLEADING GOD'S JUSTICE.

That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee; shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?—Gen. 18:25.

In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed; deliver me in thy righteousness.—Psalm 31:1.

PRAY PLEADING OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.—2 Kings 20:3.

Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.—Neh. 5:19.

And before this, Eliashib the priest, having the oversight of the chamber of the house of our God, was allied unto Tobiah. —Neh. 13:4.

PRAY PERSEVERINGLY

And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?—Luke 11:5-13.

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man; and there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not, for awhile; but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?—Luke 18:1-8.

I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God; many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.—Psalm 40:1-3.

And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee; I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shown unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.—Gen. 32:9-12.

And it came to pass when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and behold, he stood by the camels at the well.—Gen. 24:30.

He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God; yea he had power over the angel and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us; even the Lord God of hosts: the Lord is his memorial, therefore turn thou to thy God; keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.—Hosea 12:3-6.

PRAY WITH PURE MOTIVES

Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.—James 4:3.

PRAY WITH THANKSGIVING

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.—Col. 4:2.

Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.—Phil. 4:6.

By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.—Heb. 13:15.

I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.—Psalm 116:17.

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs.—Psalm 69:30, 31.

STIR YOURSELF TO IT

And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stir reth up himself to take hold of thee; for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.—Isa. 64:7.

Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me.—Isa. 27:5.

Wherefore, I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands.—2 Tim. 1:6.

LET YOUR FAITH GROW STRONG BY MEDITATION UPON THE PROMISES

The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains. He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation, chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning work to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved. Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown; yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth; and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble. To whom, then, would ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number; he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.—Isa. 40:19-31.

And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.—Psalm 50:15.

The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.—Psalm 34:15-17.

For Thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.—Psalm 86:5.

The Lord is righteous in all his ways and holy in all his works.—Psalm 145:17.

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. —Romans 10:12.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.—James 1:5.

Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.—Heb. 4:16.

And I say unto you, Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.—Luke 11:9, 10.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.—John 14:13.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.—John 16:24.

ENCOURAGED AND INSTRUCTED BY PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS

Moses for help to judge Israel.—Num. 11:11-15.
Moses for Israel's forgiveness.—Exod. 32:11-13.
Moses for Miriam.—Num. 12:13.
Moses for murmurers.—Num. 14:13-19.
Moses for Pharaoh.—Exod. 8:12, 13, 30, 31; 9:33.
Moses in the case of fiery serpents.—Num. 21:7, 8.
Moses for Aaron.—Deut. 9:20.
Samuel for Israel.—1 Sam. 7:5-10.
Elijah for the widow's son.—1 Kings 17:20-23.
Hezekiah against the king of Assyria.—2 Kings 19:15-20, 32-37.
Hannah for a son.—1 Sam. 1:9-11, 27.
Abraham's prayer.—Gen. 18:23-33; 20:17.
Lot's prayer.—Gen. 19:17-22, 29.
Isaac's prayer.—Gen. 25:21.
Jehoahaz for Israel.—2 Kings 13:4, 5.
Asa's prayer.—2 Chron. 14:11, 12.
Jehoshaphat's prayer.—2 Chron. 20:1-24, 26.
Manasseh's prayer.—2 Chron. 33:10-13.
Job for his friends.—Job 42:7-10.
Ezra's prayer.—Ezra 8:21-23, 31. Chaps. 9; 10:1-19.
Nehemiah's prayer.—Neh. Chaps. 1; 2:1-8.
David's.—Psalm 18:6; 28:6, 7; 31:22; 34:1-10; 118:5; 116:1, 2; 138:3.
Paul and Silas.—Acts 16:25, 26.
Manoah's prayer.—Judges 13:8, 9.
See Psalms 62:1-5; 145:15; James 1:17.
Prayer a necessity.—Luke 21:36; 1 Peter 4:7; Eph. 6:18.
"Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding."—2 Tim. 2:7.

"When prayer delights thee least,
Then learn to say,
Now is the greatest need
That I should pray."

—See Romans 10:12.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

WATCHING LEST HE SHOULD SEEM TO COME SHORT

Dear Brother Russell:—

Greetings in the name of our precious Redeemer! During the weeks that have intervened since leaving Bethel en route for the South, it has been on my mind to write you; and I have refrained from so doing merely because I know that your time is so thoroughly occupied in the Master's service. However, I want to say that the truth is becoming more precious; and that my appreciation of spiritual things is daily increasing and I am rejoicing in the many, many evidences of the Lord's love and care.

The last few TOWERS have been so grand and truly a spiritual feast; especially those articles re the time features of the divine plan. While I have full confidence in the chronological features of the plan, yet nevertheless my consecration is unto death and forever; and I am trying to live each day as if it were my last, and then there is just one day between me and the kingdom.

My heart has been grieved, as I have come in contact with the dear brethren in different parts of the country, to note in many the tendency to complain and to find fault on the slightest pretext. I feel we are drawing very near a time of testing for the church. Surely if we have a deep heart appreciation of the truth, we would not be so prone to find fault and to criticize. Personally, the truth is so precious and so all-absorbing that I feel less inclined to murmur, and more and more inclined to be thankful for every experience in life, be it pleasant or unpleasant. The resolution not to murmur or complain has been so helpful, for which I thank the Lord.

Every day sees fresh cause for thankfulness for "The Vow." As I see the wave of immorality and debauchery which is sweeping the country, and the generally prevailing tendency to lower the standards of morals and propriety, I am sure the Lord has given us the Vow for our protection. Some of the dear friends seem to think they are strong enough without the Vow, and perhaps they are; but for my part I am glad for any protection and help which will enable me to stand more firmly.

Another thing that comes under my observation is this: Some of the friends seem inclined to be rather lax or careless in their deportment, with the excuse that their motives are pure and that they mean no harm; and it seems to anger them if their actions are called in question. Sometimes I wonder how many of those who profess to be in present truth will be "overcomers." The standard is so high and we have so much to fight against! Many seem to be lacking in a deep spiritual appreciation of the truth. I cannot judge the motives of the dear friends; and therefore I am trying by the Lord's grace to walk more circumspectly and watch myself closely lest I would even "seem to come short."

Oh, that prize is so wonderful, so glorious, and the kingdom so near, "what manner of people ought we to be in all holy conduct"! Praise the Lord, we are almost home! The lights of the Eternal City are almost discernible, and soon we shall be at home and at rest!

In conclusion, dear Brother, let me assure you of my hearty co-operation in the promulgation of the harvest message, with which I am in perfect harmony. I hope, if it should be the Lord's will, to see you some time this winter. In the meantime, I hope and pray the Father's smile of approval will continue to be your daily portion. Pray for me, as I do for you and all the family.

The classes throughout the South send their love and greetings. With much Christian love, I am

Your brother, by his Grace, J. P. MACPHERSON.

"CAST NOT AWAY YOUR CONFIDENCE"

Dear Brethren:—

Although our heavenly Father sees fit to try the faith of his people along various lines, yet it seems that during the coming year we may meet a more severe testing of our confidence in God and his Word.

I am aware, however, that the faith of the dear brethren and sisters is very strong, and believe they will continue to fight the good fight of faith successfully to the end.

Pastor Russell, as I have always understood him, never claimed his interpretation of the time prophecies to be infallible. His writings have always impressed me that way.

Should the year 1915 come and not witness all that many of the brethren expect, it will matter but little to me. We know still that "Thy Word is truth," and that not one jot or tittle will pass till all be fulfilled. We know further that, according to the signs of the times, the Day is not far distant.

When fiery trials assail us, let us remember the words of inspiration, "Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

Yours in faith and hope, N. E. BUTLER, N. S.

WITHOUT HIS CONSENT

Dear Brother Russell:—

A copy of 1913 "Convention Report" has just come to my attention. It contains what purports to be a report of a discourse delivered by me at the Springfield Convention.

I have not the disposition nor the power to control the actions of others in the publication of what I say at Conventions; but I would like to have the friends know that such publication is without my consent. A stenographic report of the above mentioned discourse was handed me at Springfield, but I declined to read it, not wishing to have anything to do with its publication.

Yours in His service, J. F. RUTHERFORD.

"WONDERFUL COTTON SEED" FREE

Last year we offered our readers a few grains each from a wonderful stalk of cotton seven feet high, bearing hundreds of bolls. The only conditions were that they should send us one-half the seed of their crop, keeping the remainder for their own use. As a result we have received some sixty or seventy pounds of cotton seed. We will be pleased to send this to cotton-growers, giving a preference to those whose names are found on THE WATCH TOWER lists—on the same terms as that sent out last year. However, because of the better supply, we can increase the quantity sent to you.

Write soon, and then wait. We will allow reasonable time to elapse before sending any, so as to determine what quantity may go to each.

A PROPHECY NEARING FULFILMENT

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."—Hab. 3:17, 18.

Habakkuk's entire prayer, recorded in this chapter of his prophecy, is so symbolical that it would be scarcely in keeping with it for us to give the words of our text the plain, simple interpretation that we would be otherwise inclined to give. This simple interpretation would be that although the conditions were such that famine stalked everywhere, and there was nothing of earthly hope, nevertheless God's people at any time and in any place would rejoice in God and give him the glory.

It would seem very strange, however, if the Prophet should wind up the whole chapter, so highly symbolical, with anything so plain and literal as we have suggested. With so much imagery in his mind, it would seem but reasonable that the words should be interpreted in keeping with their context, and that we should regard it as the Prophet's expression of some deep truths. Much of the language of the Bible is figurative; and in our common conversation we also use many figures. For instance, in the Scriptures a vine is a figure used for the church: As our Lord said, "I am the vine; ye are the branches."—John 15:5.

The flock of God—the sheep—are common figurative expressions for the same class. Our Lord speaks of the little flock. We are his sheep. The Jews were also referred to as God's sheep, by the Psalmist David, in Psalm 74:1; 79:13, etc.

So with the word olive. The olive tree is mentioned by St. Paul in referring to the special people of God, his peculiar people—those in relationship with him. He speaks of the natural olive tree—shows that the promise applied originally to the Jewish nation: "In thee [Abraham] and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." He says that because of unbelief the natural branches were broken off. Thus we locate the vine and the olive both as representing the church of Christ, from different points of view.

When the little flock shall have passed beyond the vail, there will still be the great company of the Lord's people left here. Many of these will apparently continue in Babylon until the time of trouble shall cause Babylon to fall. And by the fall of Babylon these will be set free. Before all this is made plain to them, they may use the language of our text, and later come to see clearly. In the 19th of Revelation this company are spoken of as rejoicing in the fall of Babylon and saying, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." (Vs. 7.) All things had seemed to them to be failures; and now they see that God's plan has not failed, but has been fulfilled.

EARTHLY GOVERNMENTS A FAILURE

The church has not yet blessed the world. The fruit of the vine will feed the world in the coming age. Neither the olive nor the vine will give life to the world at the present time. This will come in the new dispensation, during the Messianic reign.

The Lord has used the word field to represent the world: "The field is the world." The world have been hoping to better their affairs. They have been hoping to manage matters successfully. And so the various universal empires have sprung up. First the Babylonians tried to give the world a better government, but their efforts were of no avail. Then the Medes and Persians tried, and also failed. Next the Greeks and later the Romans took the reins of universal government, and likewise failed. Finally Papacy came forward, claiming to be the kingdom of Christ that would rule the world. She failed. Of late years Socialism has come to the front, saying that it can better the world, but the prospects for social improvement are no better.

"NO HERD IN THE STALLS"

The expression, "herd in the stalls," seems a little obscure. The Scriptures liken our Lord Jesus to a bullock—and in the coming age mankind, on reaching perfection, will be symbolically represented by a bullock. The suggestion of the Prophet David is that mankind then shall offer bullocks on God's altar. (Psa. 51:19.) This cannot refer to the church in the present time; for in the Atonement Day type the church is represented by a goat, and our Lord—a perfect man when his sacrifice was made—is represented by a bullock. But in the end of the next age, when the world shall be perfected, they shall offer bullocks on the altar. This represents how mankind will make a full consecration of themselves, their perfect powers.

We know nothing better in the application of the bullock than that suggested by the Psalmist. At the close of this Gospel age, when all the church shall have passed beyond the vail, there will be no perfect men. In other words, there will be a point of time when the church will be glorified and when the ancient worthies will not yet have appeared. The people will stand amazed, not seeing any way out of their troubles. Only those who have the light of the Lord's Word will be able to appreciate the condition at all.

Those who will then understand—the great company—will rejoice in the Lord. They will be able to trust in God, even though conditions in the world are distressing, and the ancient worthies not yet here to take hold of matters. They will see that the conditions are really leading up to the great blessing—that the great time of trouble is the necessary preparation for blessing. And they will say, Let us rejoice and give glory to the Lord, for the bride hath made herself ready! We see in this glorification of the church the beginning of the great blessing. Soon we may expect to see the ancient worthies here. Then will come the fulfilment of all God's gracious promises. So we will not lose heart, but will trust in the Lord.

Our Lord Jesus spoke of the great company—the foolish virgin class—in his sermon on the mount. (Matt. 7:21-23) After the last member of the little flock has gone beyond the vail, the great company will be thoroughly awakened and will say, "Lord, Lord, may we not come in? We are ready now, dear Lord; we see where we have made our mistake. We see matters differently; we realize what privileges and opportunities for sacrifice we once enjoyed, but missed. May we not enter even now?" But the Lord will answer, "Depart from me. I do not recognize you." This word depart does not mean that they will depart into eternal torment, as we once thought. The Lord does not say, "Depart, ye cursed," for cursed means to be set apart for punishment. He merely says, "Depart from me."

The kingdom of heaven is elsewhere (Matt. 25:1-12) likened unto ten virgins who took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. Five of them were wise and took oil in their vessels with their lamps; but five were foolish virgins and took no oil with them. When the Bridegroom came, the foolish virgins said to the wise ones, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." But they could not do so, they had enough only for their own lamps. After the wise virgins had entered with the bridegroom, the door was shut. Then came the other virgins saying, "Lord, Lord, open unto us!" But he answered, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

These words of our Lord, "I know you not," do not mean that these were not virgins. What do they mean? He means that, having recognized his bride, He does not know any other woman. These were desiring to be recognized as a part of the bride. And the Lord says, I do not recognize you. My bride is complete. So the foolish virgin class are rejected from a place in the bride class, but they are received as associates and assistants. Their rejection will give them cause for grief. Realizing that the door of opportunity is closed to them, they will cry, Oh, we have lost the great prize! They may become despondent. We do not know.

SORROW TURNED INTO JOY

But this great company are afterward pictured as saying, Let us be glad! Let us rejoice! Let us glorify God, because the bride has been taken! Should any one say to them, But you are not of the bride class, their reply might be: Nevertheless, the blessings are coming to all—even to us! The bride class are the first-fruits of God's people. It is our own fault that we failed to get into the bride class. If we had seen a while ago as we now see, we would have striven harder and we should not have failed. We would not have listened to what Babylon had to say, We would have "run with patience the race set before us." We were stupefied by the "doctrines of demons." (1 Timothy 4:1) We are glad that we are now awakened. We rejoice that God's plan is being so gloriously outworked. Our lamps are burning now. We are blessed as never before. Let us be glad and rejoice in that the bride is glorified.

"CUT OFF FROM THE FOLD"

"The flock shall be cut off from the fold." As applied to the elect church, this is viewed from the earthly standpoint. There is an earthly fold and a heavenly fold. We are now in the fold on earth. We must die in order to enter into the glory that is promised us—to enter into the heavenly fold.

Our Lord Jesus was cut off from the earthly fold when he died. And as with our Lord, so with us. We must be cut off from the fold here before we can enter into the fold above. It may appear to the great company for a time as though all things are failing, and not coming to pass; but from God's standpoint the fig tree will be budding and the olive will be bringing forth her fruit. There will be no miscarriage of God's purposes. The church will reach her full glorification, and then the vine will bear glorious, ripe fruitage for all mankind.

PASTORAL ADVICE ON PRAYER AND TESTIMONY

The new creation needs a special meeting of a devotional kind once a week for prayer and testimony. We believe that the friends would find it very profitable to set aside at least one night in the quarter as a prayer meeting in a very general sense. Our suggestion has been that the middle Wednesday evening of the quarter be the one selected for this purpose. This meeting should be devoted to prayer rather than to testimony. It may be opened with a prayer by the leader, who could then call for two or three prayers. Afterward he might read the text for the week, and comment upon it for about three minutes; or if the class were very small, comment about five minutes; if very large in numbers, about two minutes. The length of the comment would be according to the size of the class.

Then the leader might say, This is the evening we have arranged to be especially for a prayer service. We have all found, no doubt, that it is a special privilege for the Christian to worship the Lord, to offer prayer, praise. With the heart, we believe; with the mouth, we confess. During this service we prefer not to call by name, but desire that all present participate. If you have only a few words, no matter. Indeed, we would rather encourage the thought that the prayer should not be too long. Now we will give opportunity for three to rise—two brothers and one sister; after that we will have a hymn; following the hymn we will have another opportunity for prayer—one brother and one sister (according to the general make-up of the class), and thus give an opportunity all around.

We find that a great blessing comes to the Lord's people from the exercise of the privilege of prayer. They need to be encouraged, for many of them have not had such encouragement in their earlier life experiences.

We think that once a quarter for the special prayer service would serve the purpose better than once a month. More than once a quarter might prove tedious; and if such order has been followed in any class, we recommend that it be changed.

A MODEL TESTIMONY MEETING

As a rule the mid-week meeting should be set aside for praise and testimony. As before stated, the Christian needs a special devotional meeting, with opportunities for relating his experiences. Up-to-date testimonies are very helpful. All the Lord's people have trials and difficulties, and by hearing of one another's experiences, we learn to sympathize with each other.

Such meetings should begin with a hymn or two, followed by one or more short prayers. The brother who is to open the meeting with prayer, should be instructed before the meeting what to do and what not to do. And the opening prayer should be merely a request for divine blessing upon the hearts and the minds of those assembled, that they might be in the right condition to receive the Lord's blessing.

Suppose that the text for the evening read, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time." The leader would say something like this: Our text for the week reads thus (here read the text). . . . Apparently, in God's sight the quality of humility is one of the most important qualities for any one of his people to possess. The entire Scriptures seem to indicate that when we have humility we are pleasing in God's sight; and that unless we have this quality we could never be fit for the kingdom. We can see the wisdom of this requirement, too; for if God should exalt to a high position those who are not humble, it might lead to further difficulty in heaven.

We can see that Satan was not properly submissive to God. After he had gotten into this proud condition he probably thought that he could do better than God; and in his endeavor to show what he could do, he brought his own downfall and brought the human family into sin and death. No wonder, then, that God required Jesus to show that he had submitted himself to the Father's will. We see the course of Jesus in this matter, and how the Father afterwards exalted him. It is for us to submit ourselves to everything which God's providence brings to us. "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

Now, dear friends, perhaps you may have something to tell us of your experiences this week, along the line of humility, or its opposite—pride. This is not to be a dissertation on Scripture. We already know what the text means. We want you to tell us of your own personal experiences. What experiences have you had that have tended to impress this Scripture on your mind? Let us have some little page from your personal experience. We will begin with Brother A, and then have Sister B, and then will alternate between the two sides of the room, and thus progress. Will you give us your testimony, Brother?

HOW TO GET DOUBLE EFFECT

By following the method of calling upon one here, and one there, we get double effect. If the testimony begins at one end, some who are far away might think: Oh, it will not come my turn for a long time! But if the method is adopted of calling one here, and then one there, and there and here, it makes all more alert, and will keep them awake to the whole subject.

In leading a testimony meeting ourself, we keep the thought in mind that we want a good testimony to begin with and a good testimony to close with. So we start with some one who will give a good, wide-awake testimony, and thus give a good impetus at the beginning. When we are singing the opening hymn, we have in mind Brother So-and-so, or Sister So-and-so, to begin with or to end with. And thus we are sure of having a good beginning and a good ending.

If in the middle of the service there are some who seem to stumble a little, and do not seem to know how to proceed, we say, We understand, then, brother (or sister) that your experience has been thus and so. We would take what we surmise to be his real thought, and state it for him, if we think he is unable to complete it. We should be able to do this. Any leader ought to be able to do so, and thus kindly to encourage him.

We would be careful not to make it so rankly different from the thought that the brother or sister will feel like saying, Oh, that is not it at all! But we try to give his thought so that he could say, Brother Russell understands my thought! But if we should look sour and say nothing, the brother (or the sister more especially) might feel too much discouraged to try at all the next time, thinking that she might better keep quiet.

In a testimony meeting, where there are sixty to one hundred present in the class, there is not the best opportunity for the most helpful meeting. The most profitable number would seem to be twelve to fifteen. Then there is sufficient variety, and none too much time to spare, yet enough time for all to testify.

If the first who testifies has a wrong thought or course of action, he may say: This week I had a conversation with a preacher who thinks that he knows a great deal about Scripture—I asked him several questions, which he could not answer; and all the people could see that he could not answer at all!

The leader might say to him, Brother, I have no doubt that you meant that well, but I am not so sure that you did it wisely. It might have been better if you had done it gently. We are not to be rude, but gentle, in meekness instructing those who oppose. You must remember that it would be a very difficult matter for a man of years, of standing, of education and reputation to see these things. You should, therefore, be doubly on guard not to arouse antagonism. So I would advise that in a case like that, we would simply drop a little word, and this word would be more in harmony with the suggestions of gentleness, meekness. In speaking as you did, that minister might have thought that you were not humble enough.

There might be another one who would have the thought all twisted in another way. The art of testifying well is one that the leaders of testimony meetings should cultivate in the class. They should have right ideas about these matters, so that the class would get proper thoughts as to how to deal with what comes up. In this way they have something fixed in their minds.

TESTIMONY MEETING NOT FOR A DISCOURSE

If one attempts to give a sermon, the leader might say, Excuse me, Brother, but this is not a meeting for a discourse. This is a testimony meeting. Perhaps at some other time you can speak more at length.

It might be well for the leader to give in advance a definition of what a testimony is, something as follows: Presumably we all know what a testimony is. It is not a discourse or a dissertation on Scripture. This is a meeting especially for testimonies. I will give a dissertation myself on the text for the evening, now, at the beginning; but later we will wish to have the personal experiences of the friends.

We take it for granted that all the friends mean well; anything that is not just in order is not seen by them to be out of order. But by the leader's remarking that he would read the text and give a few words regarding its signification, and would then hear testimonies, they will see what is expected. By the leader's giving his own personal testimony at the close of the meeting, they will also get the proper thought.

Our thought is that it would not be best for the friends to depart for their homes with any unseemly haste, but to tarry for a word of greeting. That is our custom. We do not know any Scripture bearing directly upon this subject, and we would have no right to lay down a rule or law; we merely give the suggestion that nothing would be gained by entering into too much conversation at the close of the service. There is a danger of the after-meeting crowding out the benefits and blessings of the service. Of course, if they leave promptly the friends have not so much opportunity for fellowship, unless they come a little earlier—a little ahead of time—to the place of meeting. If some can do this it would not be amiss for them to have a little friendly interchange before the coming of the leader, and before the hour for meeting. This would seem to be a very profitable opportunity.

PROPER ATTITUDE IN PRAYER

Nothing in the Scriptures limits the Christian as to the attitude of his body when he goes to the Lord in prayer. Standing and kneeling are both mentioned. One would have to be guided by the spirit of a sound mind. If he were out on the street, it would surely be undesirable to kneel. If he were on a stone floor, it might also be undesirable to kneel. If he were in private, it would seem best to kneel in prayer. Some have told us, however, that when they get upon their knees they are likely to get very sleepy. We would wish to be in that attitude which would enable us best to think of what we are doing. If we found that on our knees we were apt to grow sleepy, we would assume some other attitude which would keep us awake and attentive to prayer.

As for congregational prayer, it is our thought that it can generally be best observed sitting, with the head bowed. Of course, the preference of attitude is largely a matter of education, of habit. It has been our thought to say to the friends everywhere, that in public service this attitude would best be observed during prayer. Where the gathering is small and there is a carpet on the floor, it might be as well to kneel.

As for testimony meetings, it is our opinion that unless the class be a large one, it is better that they sit when testifying; for by remaining seated the giving of a testimony is easier. A difficulty with some in giving a testimony is that they rise and, becoming embarrassed, forget what they are going to say. So it reduces the nervous excitement of some to remain sitting. In a large meeting, it would be better for the person to stand, so that the voice can reach all.

STANDING DURING CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

In the matter of singing, we believe that the custom of standing, which prevails in Great Britain, is a very good one. It would seem to be too much to stand during a praise service, where a number of songs follow each other. But standing in singing has its advantages generally. A person in standing is putting himself in a distinctive attitude; and he can sing better because of thus putting his vocal cords in better position. It is desirable, therefore, when a hymn is announced, that the friends stand.

The invitation to rise should always be given in an appropriate way and not in a peremptory manner. The leader should not say, The congregation will rise, but, Let us rise and sing. There might be some who are in such physical condition that they would better remain sitting; hence the invitation, Let us rise and sing, is particularly intended for those who wish to rise. We think it would be a great mistake to say, Let us rise and sing, and then add—as some do—Let us remain standing while Brother A offers prayer. This might in many cases be imposing a real hardship.

TOO MUCH SELF-CONCEIT

But in the closing hymn, if the audience rise, then instead of having them sit down for the closing prayer, it would be well to remain standing, and the prayer should be merely in the form of a benediction, which should not be distressing in length to anybody. If there had been one prayer before, there would not be further necessity for more than could be offered in a few words. Most prayers are too long.

One who is leading in prayer should not interfere with the liberties and rights of the entire congregation by the length of his petitions. We do not read that our Lord made very long prayers. It is true that he sometimes continued all night in prayer, alone; but he offered no lengthy prayers in public. The "Lord's Prayer" is quite brief and to the point. Those people who think they should tell the Lord all about how he should run the universe, have too much self-concern, too much self-conceit. When we learn how poorly we are able to run ourselves, it should make us very slow to advise the Almighty as to how to manage his affairs.

FORMAL PRAYER OFTEN MOCKERY

A Boston newspaper, in referring to a prayer offered by a prominent minister, stated the next day that Rev. ——— delivered the most eloquent prayer ever offered to a Boston audience! The Editor evidently knew that the prayer was not addressed to the Lord! We need to have much of the spirit of a sound mind. We presume the Lord sees that all our intentions are good. But he has not told us that we are to pray to be heard of men. We are to pray to the Lord.

In private prayer we are told to "enter into thy closet," and we suppose that no one should pray in a tone that could be heard outside the door. Prayer, either in private or in public, is to be addressed to the Almighty, in reverent terms, and should express the desire of the heart appropriate to the occasion. We should know for what we are going to the Lord. It would be better that we should not go to the throne of grace unless we have something that we wish to say.

At the close of any meeting we think it would be very unwise for the speaker to pray for ten or fifteen minutes, or even five minutes. Two or three minutes would be an abundance, we think. The Lord knows about all our needs, and we should have consideration for the congregation.

It is something of a matter to sit for an hour, and then to prolong the service by a lengthy prayer is unwise. Lengthy prayers should be offered in private. Some Christians, however, need to be encouraged along the line of prayer—some are not disposed to pray as much as they should. Prayer is a most wonderful privilege, but one that should not be abused by endless repetition of the same thoughts.

"We will watch while we pray,
With our lamps trimmed and burning;
We will work while we wait,
Till the Master's returning;
We will sing and rejoice,
While each omen discerning."

FAITHFULNESS IN OUR STEWARDSHIP

"It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful."—1 Cor. 4:2.

Every great business enterprise employs various classes of workers. This does not imply that the firm approves of all the moral qualities of their employees. They may employ some laboring men who are of good moral character and some who are of poor character; for they do not hold the working men responsible in that sense. But the most responsible positions are given to those of recognized good character.

So God makes use of different agencies to do his service. These are sometimes animate, sometimes inanimate. (Isaiah 45:1-4; Jer. 10:13) But those whom he recognizes as specially his servants are the church of this Gospel age—a special class of servants on special terms and agreements. These special servants are also called sons; that is to say, they are adopted, and promised that they will be fully inducted into the divine family if they are faithful in God's service in the present time.

These servants represent a stewardship—a term common in olden time. The servant did with his master's goods as though they were his own. At the same time, while given this privilege, he was required to give an account to his employer. The master did not give him these goods and say, Use them as you like, and I will call for them when I want them. On the contrary, his stewardship was to be a faithful one, and would be examined later with this end in view—to see if he had been faithful. A faithful steward would be on the lookout for everything that represented the master's interests—would be as careful of these as he would be of his own. He would use his

every power for increasing the talent—represented by the money in his care.

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

In the parable of the talents the Lord represented a man as going into a far country and leaving the talents in the care of his stewards. They were entrusted with these goods in a very special way. Thus it is with us. Each of us is entrusted with certain talents. At the time of consecration we gave our all to God. Having given all that we have and are to the Lord, he accepts our offering and appoints us his stewards over these goods—these things that we had. This would include our all—time, influence, various talents—for business, music, or what not. All these are the Master's after we have made consecration. We belong to Christ. He is the head, he is Lord. But he commits to us as his faithful servants all these talents, to use for him. And he says, "Occupy till I come."

This parable applies to all the church all the way down this age. Each servant is to be diligent in occupying the position of steward until he is released from it. The steward who would use his position merely to glorify himself would not be a faithful steward. The faithful steward would be the one who would desire to so use the talents as to increase the Master's wealth, the Master's glory.

The Lord gave an illustration of the faithful and unfaithful stewards at his second coming—before he will deal at all with the subjects of the kingdom—mankind in general. He showed how he will call these servants to whom he has given the talents; for he has promised them that he will make them rulers with him in his kingdom, if they are faithful in the use of their talents. In the parable, the one who received five talents doubled them, and made them ten. The one who had received two talents made them four. But the one who had received one talent gave the excuse that he had buried it in the earth, because afraid. And he was declared to be an unfaithful servant.

This servant was not sent to eternal torment, but the talent was taken from him. It was of his own volition that he became a steward. Seeing that he had become a steward, he deserved to be punished because he did not use that which his lord had entrusted to him. That talent belonged to his lord.

An unfaithful steward will be punished for his unfaithfulness. Better that we should not enter into the Lord's service at all than that we should enter and then hold back, neglect our opportunities. If the one who had the five talents had held back, his simply doing nothing would have made him responsible. In showing how he dealt with the one who had the one talent, the Lord is emphasizing the matter the more. These talents represent our opportunities for service according to our several abilities. The one who had less ability was given less opportunity than the one who had more ability.

So with us. Some may have handicaps of various kinds. Some have more talents, or abilities; some have less. We cannot use talents we do not possess. It is required of a man that he be found faithful with what he has. This matter of using all the talents calls up the thought of full, complete loyalty of heart devotion. We should not say, I am doing better than somebody else, as the man with five talents might have thought had he used but three or four of them. But the one who is using his talents to the full capacity is specially pleasing to the Lord. Those who have two talents and use them faithfully receive the same commendation as the one who has five talents and uses the five.

THE PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD

The parable of the unjust steward (Luke 16:1-9), which impresses this same lesson, was primarily addressed to Jesus' disciples, in the presence of the Pharisees and those who sat in Moses' seat, who were the representatives of the divine order of things in the Jewish age. In this parable the Lord emphasizes the fact that a wise steward would be alert to his own future welfare. If a debtor could not pay one hundred per cent., but could pay fifty, it would be wise for the steward, in consideration of his own interests, to keep the future good will of the man, and let him pay half. This steward was commended by his lord for his shrewdness in taking this course, even though he had previously been unfaithful to him.

The Scribes and Pharisees are scored in the parable. Our Lord's words intimated, You know that you are not yourselves able to pay the divine requirements of the Law—you are not able to pay fifty cents on the dollar, and you ought to feel sympathetic with some of these poor Jews who cannot keep the law. You should say to them, Cut it down somewhat—keep half the law, if you cannot keep it all. Can you keep half? Yes? Well, go ahead and keep half.

But, said the Lord, you despise all these—you do not want to "brush garments" with them as you pass them in the streets. You know that you cannot keep the law yourselves. You are in the position of the steward of my parable. You should take the same course as that steward took with his master's debtors. He was about to be dispossessed. So you are near the end of your term. When you get out of office the people will not think much of you. You would better help your case out. You sit in Moses' seat. You should tell your brethren that while they are not keeping the law in full, they are pretty nice people; and you should encourage them to do the best they can. You should help them along.

After giving this parable respecting the Pharisees, Jesus turned to his disciples, saying, "I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness." That is to say, Applying this to yourselves now, consider that your earthly possessions are an earthly stewardship. Live in harmony with the people as far as justice will permit. Do not in any way exact the last thing possible from them. Be generous in all your affairs—not only in financial matters. Instead of condemning everybody and threatening them with eternal torment, tell them that God is very merciful. Tell them that God has provided a Redeemer for all mankind. Tell them to be of good courage and to do the best they can—that they may be sure that God through Christ will be very merciful, and that they will have better dealings at his hands when the time of their testing shall come.

By teaching the people thus, we may get the ill-will of the scribe and Pharisee class; but we are getting the good will of the people and of those who are in harmony with God and righteousness. And although we may be excluded from the high functions of the nominal systems, many of the common people are hearing gladly and sympathetically, and are wishing to share their homes with us. And so we have homes all over the world, wherever God's people are; for they have the ear and eye to appreciate the Lord's arrangement. Furthermore the Lord himself will ultimately receive us into everlasting habitations. We are wise stewards in this respect. We are living so as to use our time and strength to the best of our ability to do good and to instruct others to do good.

TWO PARABLES COMPARED

The parables of the talents and of the pounds are much alike, both representing a great householder, or lord, dealing with his servants. In the parable of the pounds, a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. This parable is based upon the fact that when an under-king, like King Herod, would hear that a new Emperor had come to the throne of Rome, he would be anxious for a re-appointment to his own kingdom. Knowing that the Emperor had power to reinstate him, he would be desirous to know whether he would receive his kingdom again, or whether someone else would receive the place. So when such under-king went to Rome, it was with the view of returning with his kingdom, or a commission from the new Emperor.

Our Lord in this picture represents himself as a Nobleman who had been called to a throne, and who was going to a far country, to heaven itself, to receive the investiture of his kingdom. In due time he was to be the great Messiah; and he must first be invested with the authority, and then return and establish his kingdom.

In the parable of the talents, the lord, before leaving, called in his servants and committed unto them his goods, his property. He said, I will make these servants stewards. He gave one talent to one, two talents to another, and five to still another, according to their several ability. They were all remembered. When he returned he called his servants and reckoned with them. The one with two talents came and said, Lord, thou gavest me two talents. Here I make my report. I have gained two other talents. The one with the five talents said, Lord, thou gavest me five talents; lo, I have gained other five! I have doubled the amount and gotten ten! The lord said to each, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant! Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

Then came the servant with only one talent. Although he returned it, he had failed to use it. He said, I have not lost a penny; here is thine own. His Lord said unto him, Thou art a slothful and wicked servant! The servant was punished because he was unfaithful.

OPPORTUNITY MEASURES RESPONSIBILITY

The Lord gave this parable as an illustration of our experiences now. These talents consist of opportunities. To illustrate: We recently had the talent, or opportunity, of speaking the truth to 5,000 people. Therefore we had a re-

sponsibility. But if we do not have such an opportunity, we do not have the responsibility of it. This is what the Lord meant, we understand. One may have more opportunities granted him than another. One person might be a good writer; another a good speaker; another a good exhorter; and another may be good at all three of these things. The one good at all three would have thereby three times as much responsibility as the one with only the one ability.

The talent in Bible times represented a certain amount of money. According to the most recent figures available (Am. Bib. Soc'y, 1895), the talent mentioned in the Scriptures was either gold or silver. The value in U. S. money of the gold talent is $32,689, while the silver talent was but $1,563.37. Our Lord, however, used the talent, not to represent gold or silver, but as well representing the opportunities his people have to do God's will and to serve the brethren; for he says that whoever does good to one of the least of his will receive a blessing.

The lesson taught in the parable of the pounds seems somewhat different. In this the lord gave each of his servants one pound, to do what he could with what was given him. One gained five pounds, and one gained ten. The third gained nothing. The pound (mina, or maneh), is equivalent, if gold, to $6,637.80; if silver, $312.67½.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ONE POUND TO EACH

In this application of the parable, to our understanding, the pound represents the blessing of justification given to each of God's children. When did he give us the pound? When he accepted us as his servants. When did he accept us as servants? We were not servants when we first turned from sin. To turn from sin is not to become a servant. The first step toward God is to turn away from sin toward righteousness, and to attempt to draw nigh unto God; for God says, "Draw night unto me and I will draw nigh unto you."

This one is walking in the way to justification, but has not gotten it. He is getting nearer and nearer to the right place in his ideas, etc. Finally he comes to the place where he says, Lord, if thou wilt accept me, I will give thee all I have. He offers himself to be God's servant.

One is not yet a servant of the Lord when he turns from sin. We never had a right to do wrong; and in getting away from sin and wrong, we were not serving God. God has no servants in this age except those begotten of the holy Spirit. Others may in some sense be used as servants; for God can use even the wrath of man to serve him. In a certain sense the devil may be his servant; for sometimes he does what the Lord wishes to be done. We think the devil was serving God when he got the Jews stirred up to crucify Jesus. Demons often serve the Lord in bringing tribulation upon his people, for these tribulations are like the turning of the grindstone, that polishes the jewel. God wishes to use some means at the present time to polish his jewel class.

But the servants referred to in the parables are the Lord's consecrated people; for it is only those who have reached the point of full consecration to God that he calls his servants. Those who gave up the service of sin and unrighteousness, became their own servants, the servants of self, until they gave up their lives to the Lord. They then said, I have no will but thine. I will serve thee faithfully, even unto death. As the Lord accepts these as his servants, he gives each one a pound.

What is this pound? It is justification to life—a valuable thing. Now, being justified by faith, and being thus accepted as a servant of God, and begotten of the holy Spirit, each one has the opportunity to do what he is able as a servant of the Lord. He uses whatever talents the Lord gives him. He must do his best with all that is entrusted to his care, as a faithful steward of the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."—Exod. 33:14.

We are not to think of our heavenly Father as literally walking through the wilderness with the children of Israel, as leaving the affairs of the universe and going with them in their journey. Nor are we to get the thought that God is everywhere at the same time. This unscriptural thought has been the foundation for much error. Christian Scientists say that God is everywhere—in every piece of wood, of china—in everything. When we ask what they mean, they say that since the word God simply stands for good, and since there is good in everything, therefore God must be in everything; for God means good and must be everywhere, even in every atom of matter. So on this erroneous doctrine of God's omnipresence they build their theory. But theirs is not the Scriptural thought.

The Scriptural thought is that God specially manifests his power and love to his people. God is in heaven; the earth is his footstool. But by his various powers and agents, and by his intelligence and knowledge, he can be as if present everywhere—through his angels, his messengers. Just as we by the telegraph and the telephone can have communication with the uttermost parts of the earth, so God can exercise his power in every part of the universe.

The words of our text, we remember, were the Lord's answer to Moses when that great statesman was in perplexity. He had been commanded to go forward as the leader of Israel, and through divine favor to bring them into the land of Canaan, there to give them rest.

From the beginning of the wilderness journey, there was more or less of disinclination or fear on the part of the people. They realized that they were breaking up their homes and going forth into a strange land. Even though they had been oppressed by the Egyptians, they reasoned that if they went out into the wilderness with no Egyptian taskmasters, this would mean that they would have no food. Thus they were stiff-necked—like an ox—difficult to turn about.

The Lord's promise to Moses was, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." And he promised to be with the Israelites. He gave them assurance that they might recognize his power in their midst; for God's energy in all the affairs of earth, as of the universe, is not merely a power to know the things that are happening, but to control all events that they may outwork his designs. He guides and assists the efforts of his people. Additionally, the angels of the Lord quite probably were employed in this special work of superintending the affairs of the Israelites.

This thought is in harmony with the Scripture which intimates that there is a guardian angel for each one of the Lord's saints, who has supervision over him. We read, "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 18:10) They have immediate communication with the Father; and thus he has direct oversight of all who belong to him.

The divine power was manifested directly with the Israelites in the Shekinah glory over the mercy seat in the most holy, which indicated the Lord's presence with them. And when they were to journey onward, the pillar of cloud went before them by day, and the pillar of fire by night. When they were to stop, this cloud would stand still. While they were encamped, the cloud would rest over the tabernacle, and the shekinah glory rested between the cherubim on the mercy-seat in the tabernacle. Thus the presence of God went with them to the land of Canaan, and gave them all things which he had promised.—Joshua 23:14.

MOSES' NEED OF ENCOURAGEMENT

From our context we perceive that Moses' meekness was again manifesting itself. He had previously asked for some one to be mouthpiece for him, and the Lord had said that Aaron might be his mouthpiece. Rash people often get into trouble, because there is a lack of meekness, modesty. But it was not so with Moses—"the meekest man in all the earth." Humility is a most important element of character. The meek man will find it easier to be gentle and patient than will the man who lacks meekness. And so in enumerating the fruits of the holy Spirit St. Paul mentions meekness.—Gal. 5:23.

When the Lord promised that his presence should go with Moses, he was speaking to him as the mediator. Therefore he said, "My presence shall go with thee." As soon as Moses had inaugurated the Law Covenant at Sinai, Israel was in covenant relationship with God, and the Lord with Israel.

ISRAEL'S FAILURE TO ENTER REST

One might get the thought that God's promise to give rest would signify that Moses should have a rest of mind, and that all who would come into line with Moses and with God's promises would also have a rest of mind. But this mental rest is not what is here meant. The Israelites were going from the land of Egypt into the land of Promise, which was to be an everlasting inheritance to them, if they would keep their Covenant. But of all the adults who came out of Egypt, only Caleb and Joshua entered into Canaan. (Num. 32:11, 12) The majority failed to enter in because of their lack of faith. The forty years' wandering in the desert was because of their fearfulness and consequent rebellion.

When on the wilderness journey Israel came finally to the place where they could see the land of Canaan, spies were sent to make investigation and to report as to which would be the best way to enter the promised land. All of the spies save Caleb and Joshua, gave an unfavorable report. Then through timidity the people said, "We cannot go up and take that land. Those people are giants, and we look like grasshoppers beside them." So in their lack of faith they murmured against going up. Therefore God sware in his wrath, "This people shall not enter into my rest."—Hebrews 3:11.

TYPICAL AND ANTITYPICAL REST

The Apostle Paul shows that the rest in Canaan was a type of the rest of the people of God, in this Gospel age. (Heb. 4:3, 9) By faith we rest in God—We rest in his promises. We are not moved away by any of the adverse conditions of the present time. Our rest is the reality; the rest of Israel was the type.

The antitypical rest, into which the Lord's people enter, has two phases. We who believe enter into rest now. We have the peace of God ruling in our hearts and guiding our lives. We have the peace of faith, the rest of faith, the confidence that God will direct our course. Therefore we are contented, even though not yet satisfied. We shall not be satisfied until we enter into our complete rest. Our true rest will be that glorious, perfect condition beyond the veil, which we shall attain through the first resurrection.

St. Paul, in discussing this question in the 3d and 4th chapters of Hebrews, declares that the people of Israel failed to enter into rest, not because God did not perform his part, but because they failed to exercise the proper faith in the Lord; they had "an evil heart of unbelief." And he proceeds to say, "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1) There are requirements; there are conditions. The Apostle means that whoever would be of this overcoming class must take heed, or he will fail to enter into the eternal rest of God. There will be such a class of overcomers; and God has predestined and foreordained that they shall enter into this glorious and perfect rest. If we are faithful unto death, we shall attain this glorious rest by the resurrection "change."

JOSHUA A TYPE OF CHRIST

The world is not now able to enter into rest. They are like the raging sea. They have not come into relationship with God. As the Scriptures tell us, mankind is a poor, groaning creation, travailing together in pain. They do not see the rest which God has provided. We see, however, that when the antitypical Moses, the great Mediator, shall have been completed, he will lead the people into rest.—Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22.

Moses did not lead the people into the land of Promise; it was Joshua—their new leader—who led them over Jordan. Thus the type shows that mankind will enter into the promised land, not by the law, but by a Savior. The name Joshua means savior—Greek *Jesous*. (Heb. 4:8, margin) So Jesus will lead all of mankind who will, into the true land of Promise—into love and loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness. It will take the entire thousand years of the Messianic kingdom to bring the world into condition for all the blessings which God has in store for them.

Our Lord Jesus entered into rest by trusting the heavenly Father to fulfil all his gracious promises. Jesus, the Head of the antitypical Moses, thus enjoyed perfect rest of heart, and realized the heavenly Father's continual presence with him. This continued for three and a half years; and then he entered into the rest complete, by the first resurrection.

The same is true of all the members of the body of the antitypical Moses—the Christ. God's presence goes with them. The world at present is not in a condition to enter into the Father's rest. Only the members of the body of Christ have entered into this rest of faith, trusting in the Lord. And none except those who continue faithful will be recognized as members of the great antitypical Mediator. All who lack faith lack proof that they are in the body of Christ. If, then, our hearts are disturbed and we cannot enter into this rest of faith, the proper course is to seek the throne of grace, that we may overcome the difficulty.

THE REST PROVIDED FOR MANKIND

As for those Israelites who the Lord said should not enter into his rest, we understand him to mean, not that no Jew will enter into the true rest of God, but rather, that this was a prophecy of the end of the Jewish age—that they as a nation would not be ready to enter into this rest of faith which was then offered them—that as a nation they would fail. They did fail; for "they knew not the day of their visitation."

As soon as the great Messiah shall establish the New Covenant, both Jews and Gentiles will enter into peace and prosperity, as rapidly as they enter into that New Covenant. But the disobedient, after a full, fair trial, will go into the second death. Throughout the Millennial age mankind will be entering into the actual rest, which will mean deliverance from the bondage of sin and death. Before Messiah's reign shall have ended, they will have fully entered into that rest and into perfection of life, and will be counted in as a part of the seed of Abraham, according to the promise, "I have constituted thee a father of many nations." (Gen. 17:5; Rom. 4:17) The blessing of the Lord will be upon them all. Any refusing to enter into the rest of God will be cut off—the wilful sinner shall die at one hundred years of age.—Isa. 65:20.

ST. PAUL'S EXHORTATION TO ELDERS

"Take heed to yourselves, . . . for grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."—Acts 20:29, 30.

These words were addressed to the elders of the church at Ephesus. St. Paul, going toward Jerusalem, had found himself not far from Ephesus, and had sent word to the elders that he would remain there a little while, and would be glad to meet them once more. They came and held a lengthy conference with him. This text is part of his message to them. He told them that he would not see them again, and exhorted them to take heed to themselves. It behooves every one to take heed to himself more than to others. And unless a man learns to rule his own spirit, he could not be in a proper condition to rule others.

This is particularly true of all elders. They should watch themselves. Because of the honor which the church gives them, they are in danger of being carried away by a feeling of self-importance—self-conceit. They are in danger of becoming arrogant. But the message is to take heed to themselves, and to the flock of God, over whom they are made overseers. They are to recognize their position as representatives, not only of the congregation, but also of the Lord. This position being given them in the appointed way—an election by the stretching forth of the hand—they are not only to take this as the word of the church, but also to realize that they are chosen of the holy Spirit. They are to recognize this care of the church as their great mission, an important service to be rendered in the name of the Lord.

WOLVES AND APOSTATE SHEEP

There are two particular reasons why elders need to be on guard. The first reason, as given by the Apostle, was that grievous wolves would enter in among them, who would not spare the flock. The intimation seems to be that the wolves are not part of the flock at any time. They would not represent themselves as wolves, however. The Apostle's warning would seem to imply that a certain class of people of a wolfish nature would seek to associate themselves with the church. Our Lord warned, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." (Matt. 7:15) This seems to imply the thought of deception—walking like sheep, going about amongst the sheep and representing themselves to be sheep, wearing sheep's clothing, but never being real sheep. Their object in coming into the flock is selfish, their influence is that of a wolf amongst sheep. A wolf worries the sheep—his intention is to kill them, to suck their blood.

So there seems to be a class who, for no reason that we can imagine, pervert the truth, injuring the flock, stirring up arguments that confuse the flock, destroying them as new creatures, and dragging them down to death. Presumably there has been such a class all the way down through the age. While our text does not imply that sheep could ever become wolves, perhaps some of us have known persons who at one time were sheep, but who after a while manifested a wolfish disposition, and took pleasure in doing all that they could to injure the flock. The Lord and the Apostle warn us that we should beware of those who come in amongst the sheep, palming themselves off as sheep.

In addition to this danger from wolves, there will be dangers among themselves. The Apostle points this out as a very subtle danger. In addition to those of the wolfish nature, some in a class will engage in service as teachers, and by speaking perverse things will seek to draw away disciples unto themselves.

They seek to draw them away as their own. Their sentiment seems to be, This is my class, my flock—not recognizing that the church is the Lord's flock, that they are the Lord's sheep. In this there is a selfish attitude quite contrary to the spirit of the Lord and to the Scriptures. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" is a principle of the divine government. If any one would be a true elder, a real servant of the Lord, he is to remember these things, and to avoid everything that would be of a self-seeking spirit. Otherwise, he may be sure that he will do injury, not only to himself, but to others also, by such a course.

RESPONSIBILITY PROPORTIONATE TO ABILITY

Sheep are very timid animals and need some kind of leading. In the absence of a shepherd, they need some one of their own number to be, as it were, leader for them. In flocks of sheep there are wise sheep—rams of the flock, leaders—that the sheep learn to follow, in the absence of the shepherd. These old rams of the flock would represent elders in the church of Christ. The ram's horns constitute a means of defense, with which he could drive off adversaries in a time of attack, and the sheep would be able to get behind him.

But the Scriptures speak of danger as respects some of the rams of the flock—certain leaders of the Lord's people. (Ezek. 34:17-23) These rams got into the stream and made it muddy, defiling the water. He-goats are also mentioned; this is an illustration of the disposition of some elders of the church of Christ, and should not be lost upon us. We are told that owners of sheep sometimes use a goat as a leader of the flock, because a goat is more combative than a sheep, and thus supply the sheep courage, etc. We do not know how many of the Lord's flock are being led by a goat. But whenever any one manifests the goat disposition, the Ecclesia should strictly avoid making him a leader.

The proper leaders are those who show the proper disposition. The church is very much at the mercy of the leaders; hence the latter have the greater responsibility. So the Apostle says, Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that a man who is a teacher has the severer trial, the severer test. (Paraphrase of James 3:1, R. V.) He has the greater responsibility in proportion to his ability. It would seem, then, that all who accept the position of elders are, to some extent, representing the Lord, who is the great Shepherd of the flock.

"WOE UNTO YOU, PHARISEES!"

FEBRUARY 15.—Luke 11:37-54.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked."—Galatians 6:7.

Amongst the various sects of the Jews of our Lord's day we have every reason to believe that the Pharisees constituted the best—the one most loyal to God and his law. The Sadducees professed no faith in a future life. They were infidels and politicians. The Essenes were a small sect not mentioned in the Bible, a kind of higher critics, of little faith and confused by mixing paganism with Judaism. The Pharisees were what might be termed the orthodox body of Jews. Their name signifies "holy people." In today's study, Jesus, not deigning to mention the other sects, which had entirely departed from God, addresses himself especially to the Pharisees, pointing out wherein, with all their boasted holiness, they came far short of what would be acceptable to God.

A Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him at his house. The invitation was promptly accepted, and Jesus passed in and sat down at the table with the others, without going through the formalism of washings, customary to the Pharisees. We are not from this to suppose that Jesus was careless. Rather, we are to recognize that the washing of hands by the Pharisees was a ceremony which Jesus especially wished to ignore, in order that he might have the opportunity of criticising that spirit which the ceremony well illustrated.

The host thought of Jesus as a holy man, not a publican or a sinner, and remarked that it was strange that he had not performed the usual ceremony of washing. This remark gave opportunity for a discourse on the subject. Jesus pointed out that a great deal of the religion which even the holiest of the Jews practised was merely ceremony, formalism, and not true religion. Outwardly they were clean, but inwardly their hearts were unclean—given to extortion—spiritual wickedness. The Lord sought to show that in God's sight the heart is the important matter and that the outward cleansing is quite secondary. The inside of the cup should first be attended to, and afterward the outside.

As a matter of fact, those who do come into heart harmony with the Lord, and who are cleansed by obedience to his message and its spirit, are thereby made clean every whit—outwardly, as well as inwardly. It is safe to say that every one who is pure in heart will, according to his circumstances and opportunities, seek to be clean in person, in speech, in every way. The principle working in his heart will exercise an influence upon all his words and thoughts and doings—all his days and all his hours.

From the expressions of our Lord here and elsewhere it would appear that one of the great failings of the Pharisees was covetousness. According to the Greek, Jesus called them "money-lovers." On one occasion he told them that this covetousness, greed, love of money, led them to disregard dishonestly the rights of others. He said: Ye devour widows' houses, meaning that they would take advantage of widows to accumulate property for themselves. As a matter of fact, it would appear that many of the Pharisees were quite rich.

Jesus pointed out that with such wrong conditions of heart God could not be well pleased with them, even though they ever so carefully observed the outward regulations of the Jewish law. He called attention to the fact that in their outward observance of the tithing (giving one-tenth of their income every year) they were particular even to those small seeds of which they grew but a trifling quantity. In everything they were careful to give one-tenth, but they neglected the weightier matters of the law—to do justice in their dealings and to have mercy toward others. The Master did not object to their giving one-tenth of everything, but declared that these things they should do and not to leave the more important things undone.

Another time he reproved them, saying, Ye strain a gnat and swallow a camel—a strong hyperbole, a figure of speech, showing how inconsistent were their reasonings and doings. The straining out of a gnat represented their carefulness to avoid things strangled. The swallowing of a camel meant that, on the contrary, while careful about the little things, they would be thoroughly disregardful of God's law on the weightier matters. Jesus declared that they should be benevolent rather than covetous and self-seeking, and that if this were their disposition of heart the outward cleanliness would be less important.

He declared that they chose the chief seats in the synagogue and salutations in the market-places. Their covetousness took the form of pride, as well as dishonesty. They wanted to be very prominent in things religious, to be very popular and to be hailed as "Rabbi"—master, learned one. Jesus declared that they were like sepulchres, outwardly clean and whitewashed, but inwardly full of death, corruption, uncleanness, unholiness. They were holiness people merely in the outward form or ceremonial.

It is not for us to judge all or any of the sects of Christendom and to apply the Master's words to them. Unlike Jesus, we have not the power to read men's hearts, nor the authority to pronounce them hypocrites. The Lord's message to us is, "Judge [condemn] nothing before the time." At his second coming, he declares, everything will be revealed. The true status of each will be shown. He declares that at that time many will be saying, Lord, have we not done many mighty works in thy name? but that he will, nevertheless, declare to them: I do not recognize you. Ye have been workers of iniquity—workers of unrighteousness—in my name.

Without judging personally, we may all fear that much of the Christianity of our time is well described by the Apostle Paul. Speaking of our day he says, "Having a form of godliness, but denying its power"—outwardly Christians, but inwardly skeptics—covetous, extortionate, unjust. Men are not able to judge rightly of such matters today. Some who are loyal and zealous for the Lord are branded as hypocrites and deceivers; while others, disloyal, merely whited sepulchres, may be lauded to the skies as denominational idols or generous benefactors of earthly systems.

Some of the Pharisees, especially educated, talented and well-versed in the teachings of the law and the prophets, were styled lawyers—Doctors of the Law, the equivalent of what today are termed Doctors of Divinity. Turning to these, Jesus upbraided them, saying that they placed upon the common people grievous burdens which they themselves would not bear. He meant that they gave such hard interpretations of God's law as were discouraging to the common people—setting before the publicans and sinners standards of excellence and perfection which they themselves would not think of even trying to live up

to. Apparently the thought was thereby to impress the common people with the sanctity of the clergy, that they might be the more reverential toward them. They builded sepulchres for the prophets of old, forgetful that their fathers, whose same spirit they had, were the very ones who had killed those prophets—had persecuted them to death.

WOE! WOE! WOE! WOE! WOE!

While Jesus prophesied woes against the Pharisees, we are not to think of him as condemning them to eternal torment, nor as intimating that this would be the nature of the woe that would come upon them. The woe to the Pharisees was that they were about to miss the great blessing which God had promised to the Jewish nation; namely, that of chief association in Messiah's kingdom. (Genesis 12:3) The promise belonged to Israel primarily. Because of their unpreparedness for it, this was taken from them to be given to another Israel. Had enough of them been "Israelites indeed" to complete God's foreordained elect, the bride of Christ, the kingdom offer would not have gone to the Gentiles.

The Pharisees, of all the Jews, were in the most favored place for attaining to joint-heirship with Messiah; but they recognized not what they were losing, as Jesus recognized it His expression, "Woe unto you," is therefore to be regarded sympathetically, pityingly. This thought is borne out in the context, which proceeds to declare the great time of trouble which came upon their nation at the time of Jesus' crucifixion, and reached its completion in A. D. 70 in the total destruction of their city and polity.

As the Lord here declares, that awful trouble was a settlement of Jehovah's account with the Jewish nation for all the righteous blood which had been shed and for which no expiation had been made. Little did those Pharisees know that their hypocrisy was not only hindering themselves from preparation to be joint-heirs with Messiah in his kingdom, but was also hindering the masses of the people, who relied upon them for information. Jesus refers to this in the succeeding verse (52), saying, Ye have taken away the key of knowledge. Ye neither enter into the kingdom yourselves, nor do you permit others to enter who would be glad to do so, but who are misled by relying upon your judgment.

Bible students very generally believe that the great time of trouble which closed the Jewish age was an advanced picture, or prophecy, of the still wider spread of the time of trouble which will close this Gospel age and bring woe to many of the Pharisees of our day, as well as tribulation upon all evildoers in connection with the overthrow of present institutions, as a prelude to the establishment of justice—the Messianic reign of glory.

GOOD CONFESSION VERSUS BAD CONFESSION

FEBRUARY 22.—Luke 12:1-12.

"Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God."—V. 8.

A large crowd surrounded the Savior, anxious to hear him who "spake as never man spake." Ignoring the multitude, Jesus addressed his disciples, saying: "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Here, as elsewhere in his teachings, Jesus uses leaven as a symbol, or figure, of an evil influence. We know not of one instance in which leaven is used to represent anything good or pure. During the Passover season Jews were prohibited from using it, thus symbolizing the putting away of sin.

Jesus declared that the hypocrisies practised by the Pharisees—the learned people of that time—were leaven, impurity, sin, contaminating in their influence. His disciples should be honest, sincere, pure, free from cant and deception. Their words and works should be such as would not need to be covered. Jesus declared that ultimately all hypocrisies and sins will be uncovered, revealed. Undoubtedly he meant that during his kingdom, when the power of the resurrection will be exercised, all the hidden things of darkness will be abolished, the secrets of mankind will be exposed. No doubt this will constitute the basis of the shame and contempt which will be the punishment of many, as foretold.

Thus we read that in the resurrection some will come forth to shine as the stars of heaven, and others to shame and everlasting contempt. (Daniel 12:2) However, it is comforting to know that the Hebrew text signifies lasting and not everlasting. The shame and contempt will last as long as the shameful and contemptible conditions last—until the reformation of the individual or, that failing, until his destruction in the second death.

FEAR NOT PERSECUTIONS

Jesus intimated that honesty of life would bring his followers persecution from the hypocrites; but that they should not fear, even though the persecution resulted in their death. The present life is but ephemeral, at best. The life that is worth considering is the everlasting one which God has provided for all the willing and obedient, and which may eventually be attained through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice. Those who thus believe should have no fear of what man can do to them, but rather should be fearful of anything that would separate them from God and his gracious provisions of a future life.

"Fear him who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell." The word hell here is Gehenna in the Greek. Primarily, this is the name of the valley outside of Jerusalem, into which the offal of the city was cast for utter destruction, and into which the vilest criminals were cast after execution—not to torment them, but to imply symbolically that there was no future for the wicked. Jesus used Gehenna as a type of the second death, which will be the portion of all who wilfully, intelligently, deliberately, sin against light and knowledge.

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and a reverential fear is always proper. But as God's people become intimately acquainted with him, learning of his justice, wisdom, love and power, and realize that he is the friend of all who love righteousness, they come to love God; and, as the Apostle declares, "Perfect love casteth out fear [dread to offend]," which signifies rest. The Lord's disciples were to realize their heavenly Father's care for them and his wisdom—that as he forgets not the sparrows, so he will not forget them; and that not even a hair of their heads could be injured without his knowledge and permission; that everything that he permits to come to his people, to his children, he assures them, will work out for them some blessing.

CONFESS ME BEFORE MEN

Whoever would be in accord with God must confess him and must confess Jesus, his representative, whom he sent into the world. Whoever confesses Jesus, confesses the Father who sent him. And all such will be in the Lord's favor, and ultimately be acknowledged in the resurrection by the Father and the holy angels, as members of the bride of Christ. But those who, after becoming disciples of Christ, deny him, he will not acknowledge as disciples in glory.

Jesus' words were addressed to the disciples, not to the masses. Whoever would confess Christ would become his disciple. None could deny him who had never acknowledged him. He is to be confessed, not merely by baptism, nor by any outward form. He is to be confessed in the life, in the conduct, in the words, of his followers. They are to have his spirit and to "show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light." Whoever makes a profession of being a disciple, and then ignores the Master's teachings, misrepresents him, slanders him, denies him, and will not share in the glorious presentation of the bride, in the end of this age.

The masses, of course, were in doubt, and did not become disciples at all. Some even derided Jesus, saying that he had a devil and was mad. The Master declared that such misunderstanding of him and such slanders were quite forgivable, if done ignorantly. But when some went beyond this, and declared that his good works of the holy Spirit were accomplished through the power of Satan, Beelzebub, they were committing inexcusable sins which would not be passed over.

Such sin must be wilful; for their accusations had no basis whatever. The Master's teachings were purity itself. His conduct, his sayings and his miracles were all good works. Only a wilful perversity could attribute these to Satan. The fact that they would never be forgiven does not signify, however, that the vilifiers were hopelessly lost. They would suffer punishment proportionate to the degree of their wilfulness. If the punishment would bring reformation, well and good; but if not, it would eventuate in utter destruction—the second death.

Few subjects are less understood than this one—the sin against the holy Spirit. The word spirit in such a case as this stands for power, or influence. For instance, the spirit of Satan would be the power, or influence, adverse to God and to righteousness. The spirit of error would be the power, or influence, of falsehood. Contrariwise, the spirit of truth, the spirit of God, the holy Spirit, represents divine influence and power, wherever recognized. The responsibility of each individual is proportionate to his enlightenment. The mentally and morally blind have comparatively little responsibility, because they do not appreciate clearly the distinction between the spirit

of truth and the spirit of error, the spirit of God and the spirit of Satan.

Man was not created in this condition of inability to discern right and wrong, good and evil. He was created perfect, in the image and likeness of God. Sin has wrought death, not merely to man's body, but also to his mind, his conscience. The ability to discern between right and wrong varies, therefore. Additionally, some have opportunities for instruction more than others, and thus their responsibility is increased. The world in general knows not God, and hence could not sin against the holy Spirit in that full sense or degree which would be punished with the second death. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."—2 Corinthians 4:4.

Some knowledge is necessary to bring us to an appreciation of Christ as the Sent of God. Then if we accept him and become his consecrated disciples, or followers, we receive the begetting of the holy Spirit. This brings us to a vantage point where our eyes of understanding open more and more widely, in proportion as we are filled with the holy Spirit. Our responsibility increases with our joy in the Lord and our preparation for the heavenly glories to which we have been called. It is these advanced disciples of Jesus that are in danger of grieving the holy Spirit whereby they were sealed—of quenching the spirit of holiness in their hearts. (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19) While the quenching and the grieving are not instantaneous works, they are the paths which lead to the second death. Every Christian, therefore, should press on toward perfection of holiness—the filling with the spirit.

The Apostle presents this thought in Hebrews 6:4-6, declaring that those who have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, and who have been made partakers of the holy Spirit, cannot be renewed unto repentance, if they with full wilfulness and deliberation reject Christ and righteousness, and turn to sin. Again, later on, he says (Hebrews 10:26, 27), "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received a knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for our sins, but a certain fearful looking for a decision and a fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries"—of God. The Apostle mentions especially the rejection of the atoning work of Christ, saying that such count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified a common thing, and do despite to the spirit of favor which has brought them thus far.

Those who quench the spirit of holiness, or "grieve the spirit," are described by St. James (5:14) as spiritually sick. Cut off from fellowship with God, they have one last resort; viz., to request the assistance of sanctified elders of the church to pray for them and to anoint them with oil, symbolic of the holy Spirit. The prayer of faith shall save these spiritually sick; and the Lord will raise them up; and though they have committed sins, these shall be forgiven them.

"THE HOLY SPIRIT SHALL TEACH"

The Lord's faithful followers were to expect that amongst their tribulations would be false accusations which would bring them before magistrates. For the most part the disciples were unlearned, and would feel great trepidation in the presence of educated officials. They were to know, however, that the Lord's blessing would be upon them; and that they would have wisdom superior to that which was naturally theirs. They need not anxiously premeditate what their answers would be, but commit all to the Lord, expecting divine assistance.

Nothing in this implies that the ministers of Christ either in the pulpit or in the class meeting should attempt to represent the Lord without studying their subject. On the contrary, each should accept to himself St. Paul's words to Timothy: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15) There is a difference between standing before a congregation of God's people as a mouthpiece of his Word and being called before magistrates.

LEVITICUS NINE AND SIXTEEN

Apparently we have failed to make clear our thought respecting the teachings of these two chapters. Our statement in TABERNACLE SHADOWS that they both picture the Day of Atonement sacrifices has been misunderstood. We do not mean to say that the two ceremonies took place on the same particular Day of Atonement. Our thought is that the antitype of the two took place at the same time in the antitypical atonement day—the Gospel age.

The record of the Ninth Chapter relates to the consecration of the priests. The service there pictured represents the consecration of Aaron, and was to be repeated in the case of every priest who attained the office of high priest. That is to say, this service was to be repeated only when a high priest should die and his successor in the office should be inaugurated. Thus the ceremony might be performed several times in one year, if several high priests, one after another, died in one year and successors took their places. Or this ceremony of Leviticus 9 might not be repeated for many years; as, for example, Aaron lived nearly forty years after his appointment to the office, and hence not until his son Eleazar became high priest would this consecration service be repeated. On the contrary, the Day of Atonement described in the 16th chapter recurred every year.

The lines of harmony between the two ceremonies are indicated by the sacrifices, which in both cases were a bullock and a goat. These represented the same sacrifices in antitype—the bullock representing the high priest and the goat representing the under priests; for Jesus died only once—not twice. Therefore the death of the bullock in both instances represented the one sacrifice of Jesus. And because the church dies only once, therefore the sacrifice of the goat in both instances represents the death of the church as members of the antitypical priesthood under the headship of their great High Priest.

Why, then, the two pictures? may be asked. We reply, Because the death of Jesus had two distinct aspects, and similarly the death of the church has two aspects. Only by dying to the earthly nature was it possible for Jesus and the church to attain the heavenly nature and the office of the royal priesthood—to qualify for the work of Messiah. Even, therefore, if the world had not needed to be redeemed from sin, the Priest must have given the same sacrifice exactly, in order to attain his high position. And so would the under-priests. On the other hand, as mankind are sinners, needing to be redeemed, atonement for sin would have been necessary before the work of restitution could go on, entirely regardless of the exaltation of Christ and the church to the heavenly plane.

Thus the "better sacrifices" of Messiah cover two distinctly separate, yet both important, works. It was necessary that Jesus and his followers should suffer and enter into their glory. And this is emphasized by Leviticus 9. It was also necessary that a sacrifice for sins should be offered on behalf of mankind, in order to permit them to come to restitution blessing; and this is typified in Leviticus 16. So we repeat that the sacrifices of Leviticus 9 and those of the 16th chapter are identical sacrifices, accomplished in this same antitypical atonement day—the Gospel age.

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THE ANOINTED—THE MESSIAH—THE CHRIST

The teaching of the Law, in type and testimony, is to the effect that God purposed to raise up a great Priest, who would also be a King; and that this priestly King and kingly Priest should cancel the sins of the people, and be invested with power to rule, and with authority as a Mediator to help them back to God. To the surprise of the typical people, Israel, instead of assuming the office of Priest and King in conjunction, he merely died!—Luke 24:20, 21.

Then came the time for the holy Spirit to reveal to the church what had previously been a mystery; for when God had through the prophets spoken of Messiah as a King upon his throne, he had declared that which would be mysterious to the people—would not be easily understood. God had purposely kept his plan a secret until the due time for revealing it should come. The secret was—"Christ in you, the hope of glory."—Colossians 1:26, 27.

In other words, our Lord Jesus is, primarily, the Anointed One and, according to the Scripture testimony, is very highly exalted. But he was not the completion of the divine arrangement regarding the anointed. The heavenly Father purposed not to have Jesus alone, but that he should be the Head of the anointed, and the church the body. (Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:29-32; Col. 1:24) This was the mystery. The great Messiah was to bless the world as the antitypical Prophet, Priest, and King. God appointed Jesus as the Head, and elected certain saintly ones to be the members of his body. Until this body of Christ was complete, the blessing promised to Abraham could not come upon the world.—Gal. 3:16, 29.

The terms upon which any may come into membership in Christ's body—may be members of the anointed Priest and King—are that they walk in his steps. If we desire this privilege, we must present our bodies living sacrifices, as he presented his. Additionally, we must have him as our advocate, that we may be enabled to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ. So, the Apostle says, we were called to suffer with Christ, that we might reign with him.—Col. 1:24; 2 Tim. 2:12.

Not until this work is completed can there be restitution to the world. The blessing of the world cannot begin until this great Priest-King is complete and inducted into office. Then as the Mediator of the New Covenant, He will bring the promised blessings to mankind in general. The entire Scriptures seem to give this thought, and this alone. In no other way can we explain why, after God's promise to send a Redeemer, and after that Redeemer had come, and had died, "the Just for the unjust," the work of restitution (Acts 3:19-21) should not have immediately proceeded. Throughout this age there has been the work of selecting the church. In the immediate future are the times of restitution, when the Lord, at his second coming, shall have received his members to himself on the plane of glory.

The Scriptures declare that our Lord Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. Hence he would need no sin-offering on his own behalf. Yet the Scriptures say that he needed first to offer for himself, and then for the people. (Heb. 7:26, 27) Here we see clearly shown the church as a part of himself—different from the world in general.

The entire work of the church at the present time is the sacrifice of the human life. As Jesus will be the King of Glory, so we shall be the under-kings; as he will be the great Priest, so we shall be the under-priests. The parallel is found throughout the entire Scriptures. If our understanding of this were taken away, we should be practically in the same darkness as we were before we got the truth. The mystery is that we are to be associated in the sufferings of Christ now, and in his glory in the future. Whoever has not yet found this key has not yet found the plan of God, in its simplicity and beauty.

God ordained that the kings of Israel should be anointed, and that the high priest of Israel should be especially anointed. We are to remember that there is an antitypical King and an antitypical Priest—Christ, the great Prophet, Priest and King—who is to bring blessing to the human family as a whole. We perceive that in the type there was an under-priesthood, and the Apostle points out that there is an antitypical under-priesthood associated with Jesus and his work.

The word anointed in the English translation of the Hebrew word Messiah, and its equivalent in the Greek is Christos, Christ. So, then, our thoughts properly turn to Christ as the Anointed of God. He is to do the great work appointed by the Father. We look back and see when he received his anointing. It was not when he was in the heavenly courts, nor when he became a human being. He was not yet the Anointed One, though he was in full harmony with the holy Spirit of God.

But there came a certain experience to our Lord when he was thirty years of age. At that time he consecrated himself to do the Father's will and work. Then it was that he received the special anointing. This constituted him in an incipient sense the anointed King and Priest of God. Still he was not ready to take his great power and reign; but if he proved faithful in carrying out his covenant, he would in due time become in the fullest sense the great Anointed of God, would reign over the earth for a thousand years, and subsequently would have further great honors and privileges. We can see all this very clearly portrayed in respect to our Redeemer.

THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST

To whom, then, does the Apostle in 1 John 2:27 refer in the words ye and you? The heavenly Father purposed, as previously stated, that more than our Lord Jesus should constitute this Anointed One. He purposed that the Lord Jesus should be the Head of an anointed company, who should constitute his body. And this is implied in the type in the under-priesthood, who received a measure of the anointing oil. They prefigured the real priesthood to come: "Ye are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter 2:9.

And as we further study, we find that this is the mystery mentioned in the Scriptures: to wit, that the great Messiah so long promised should be composed of many individuals; and that these many individuals, with the exception of the Head, should be gathered out from the children of wrath, from fallen mankind, and should be justified through the merit of their Head—the merit of his human sacrifice.

All, then, who have joined the Lord are counted as members of that one Body, "the church of the living God," "the church of the first-born," whose names are "written in heaven." (1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 12:23) Looking back to the institution of the church, we see that it could not be instituted until Jesus had presented himself as a sacrifice, that the merit of his sacrifice might be made applicable to all those who would become members of his body—those who would make the same consecration unto death that he had made, and who would then walk in his footsteps.

At that very time there were some of this class waiting. They had been Jesus' disciples, hearkening to his words. They believed his testimony that if they would take up their cross and follow him they should partake of his glory. Under the influence of this promise they became his followers. But they could not receive the anointing until he had made satisfaction for their sins. Therefore our Lord instructed them to wait at Jerusalem until this blessing came upon them. The Scriptures tell us that the anointing came upon them at Pentecost. It came from the Father through Christ, after his ascension. Indeed, St. Paul tells us that all blessings come from the Father, who is the Fountain of blessings; and all come through the Son, who is the Channel.—1 Corinthians 8:6.

Just what the anointing is, is difficult for us to comprehend or to explain. Only in proportion as we comprehend it can we make it plain to others. The Lord has endeavored to make it as plain as possible to us by the use of various terms and figures. He calls it a begetting, in the sense that a new life is started. The spiritual nature begins in us at the moment we receive this begetting. And whoever receives it cannot retain it unless he grows and has the Lord's spirit perfected in him.

VARIOUS QUALITIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The spirit is spoken of in the Scriptures from various standpoints—apparently with a view to giving us a conception of it, and with the thought that it is a difficult matter to grasp. It is called the spirit of truth. No one can have the holy Spirit and be in ignorance of God; and his growth in spiritual things will be in proportion to his growth in knowledge. If he does not grow in knowledge, he cannot grow in the spirit; therefore this spirit is called the spirit of the truth.

It is called also the spirit of a sound mind; for our judgments are all imperfect and human and naturally, therefore, contrary in some respects to the mind of the Lord. And the transforming influence which gives us a new view of matters and enables us to see things from God's standpoint is the influence of the holy Spirit; therefore, it is called the spirit, or disposition, of a sound mind.

It is called the spirit of love; for only in proportion as we cultivate this Godlike quality can we receive this spirit. Whoever has not the spirit of love cannot have the holy Spirit. Love is necessary before we can receive this spirit. God is Love. And so all must be of this disposition who would be his—they must be in sympathy, in harmony with him.

It is also called the spirit of obedience in the sense that those who possess this spirit desire to do the will of God. It is an anointing in the sense that it is the qualification by which God recognizes us as his children and as those who are heirs of his promises and who are to consider themselves his ambassadors. He recognizes only those who are thus designated by the holy Spirit. These are to fill the office of kings and priests.

These various definitions and descriptions of the power and influence of the spirit enable us to better understand the matter. The term holy Spirit stands in a broad sense for any holy influence or power or disposition emanating from God. The phrase covers the thought of the spirit of truth and the spirit of righteousness, because all that is true and right is of divine arrangement and order. This is the holy Spirit, or holy influence, or holy power, then, that works in any way that God may choose. It may be through the Word of truth given out through the printed page, or it may be made manifest through the influence of the life and example of some of God's people—but in whatever way it operates, it always operates for good.

GIFTS VS. FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

Because the matter was so hard to understand, the Lord, in the first place, gave the early church special signs, which were called gifts. Some received the gift of tongues, some the gift of performing miracles, and some the special gift of healing. Then there were other gifts that the Lord gave, such as apostleship, etc. But these different gifts were merely manifestations of the holy Spirit at that time. The gifts were not the holy Spirit, but were manifestations of the holy Spirit. After they had accomplished their work in the early church, those gifts passed away. This does not mean that the holy Spirit ceased to be the begetting power amongst the Lord's people; but unless there had been some such manifestation of the power of God in the beginning, we would not have been so well able to understand the facts. Jesus, before Pentecost,

communicated his spirit to his disciples and enabled them to work miracles.—Luke 10:17-20.

A measure of the spirit is given to all the Lord's children to be profited by, to make use of. And so we see that when the gifts of the holy Spirit passed away, the fruits of the spirit remained, to be manifested and developed. "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Galatians 5:22, 23); and a person after receiving the holy Spirit will begin to manifest this fruit of the spirit. If one does not manifest this fruit, there is every reason to doubt if he has been begotten of the spirit.

If a person has some of these qualities, we are to remember that some are naturally quite gentle, meek. We are not, therefore, to think it a proof of the possession of the holy Spirit, if one has a little meekness and gentleness. He might have these qualities naturally. But we should expect that when a knowledge of the truth comes, instead of being heady and puffed up, he would be all the more gentle and meek. Wherever we see a boastful, heady, haughty spirit, unloving, unkind, etc., we would have reason to think that the holy Spirit had not been received, or was not making proper development in that heart.

This is a matter regarding which the Lord does not allow us to judge others; but he expects us to judge ourselves. Whoever has this holy Spirit should develop it. Those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit had previously come into the proper attitude of mind to receive it, and the Lord is pleased to begin there the work which is so difficult for us to understand. This spirit of God brings rest, peace, joy, because we have submitted ourselves to God. And this peace and joy should increase more and more, as we are more and more filled with the holy Spirit.

HINDRANCES TO FULNESS OF THE SPIRIT

The Bible tells us that the Lord Jesus had the spirit without measure. But we, in our imperfect state, are not able to receive the holy Spirit in the same measure. If our hearts are entirely emptied, then they may be made the fuller. But if there be errors of doctrine in our mind and heart, these will prevent us from receiving the fulness of the holy Spirit. Gradually the new creature will cast out the earthly mind, and will get rid of the errors of doctrine, etc., that have been hindrances. And as we get rid of these we shall be made partakers of the holy Spirit in an abounding measure.

The holy Spirit that we receive of him is our assurance that we belong to the Lord. And as long as this spirit abides in us, it is a witness and a guarantee that we are still the Lord's. Both classes, the little flock and the great company, receive the anointing of the Lord, the begetting of the holy Spirit. The Apostle says that "we are all called in the one hope of our calling." (Eph. 4:4) We all have received this anointing of the holy Spirit, or we could not belong to the body of Christ at all. It is now a matter of development.

Those who continue to develop in the spirit of the Lord will attain a place on the throne with Jesus. But there will be some who will not be accounted worthy to reign with him; yet they have received of the Lord this anointing, this begetting. These will not be of the body of Christ, because they failed to progress on account of lack of zeal in carrying out their covenant.

In the type of the high priest the anointing oil ran down over the garments. In the antitype the anointing of our Lord Jesus has flowed down over all the body since Pentecost, giving us this special relationship with the heavenly Father. The anointing which comes upon the Lord's people must sooner or later affect their outward conduct by manifestations of greater meekness, patience, brotherly-kindness, affection and generosity of word and deed. All of this is illustrated in the anointing oil used upon the kings and priests of Israel, which typified the spirit from which we have an anointing, or lubrication.

But this smoothing and softening of character must not be expected to take place suddenly, as was the case with the change in our minds; on the contrary, it will come gradually. Nevertheless, the renewed will is to take control of the earthly body and impart its spirit and disposition to it so far as possible, and should begin the work at once. If the spirit, or disposition, of love to God dwell in one richly, it will soon be manifest to some extent. Let us be constantly on the alert to grow in the spirit of love and obedience, and to let the spirit of Christ dwell in us richly and abound.

CONSECRATION AND BEGETTING

No one can be a member of the new creation before being anointed of the holy Spirit, or begotten of the holy Spirit. The purport of the Scriptures is that a double work is necessary, the one part applying to the flesh, the other to the new creature. That which is sacrificed is not the new creature, and that which is anointed is not the old creature. We repeat: It is the new creature that is anointed, and it is the old creature that is sacrificed.

The anointing and the begetting of the holy Spirit are practically the same thing and quickly follow justification. It is as justified men that we are baptized into death, and it is as members of the new creation that we are constituted members of the ecclesia, or body of Christ. It is the Father's acceptance of us that is the basis of our begetting of the holy Spirit, our anointing.

While the two terms, begetting and anointing, are used to represent what is to us practically the same thing, they are two different figures. The begetting thought is one that pertains to the state of the new life, the state of the new nature. The anointing thought pertains to the office. God is calling out a people to become joint-heirs with Christ in the kingdom. The anointing is the divine recognition of them as kings and priests. So far as we are concerned, the matter is represented by both expressions.

The word Christ signifies anointed. God has declared that he will have an anointed King and High Priest to be his agent in the blessing of the world. He has declared that that great King is, primarily, the Lord Jesus Christ. He also declares that instead of the Lord Jesus being the sum-total of the Anointed One, it is his good pleasure that there shall be members added to him. And the adding of these members has been the completing of this Anointed One.

Our coming into the body is our coming under the anointing. One is a member of the Anointed the instant he is begotten. In thinking of the begetting and the anointing, we are merely viewing the matter from two different angles. We of today were not anointed eighteen hundred years ago, although the anointing came at that time upon the church. The anointed office may be forfeited, without the spirit-begotten life being forfeited, as in the case of the great company.

But the instant we are individually inducted into that body, that instant we come under the anointing. "The anointing you have received of him abideth in you." Our share of it is just as much a personal matter as was the begetting. Let us repeat the statement: Our begetting is individual—our baptism, or anointing, is collective, but the one is as personal as the other.

SAME ANOINTING FOR BOTH JESUS AND THE CHURCH

The anointing that came upon the church at Pentecost and that ran down upon all added Jewish members subsequently, was the same anointing that Jesus received at Jordan, the same anointing that was later poured out upon the Gentiles, as manifested first in the case of Cornelius and his friends, when "the holy Spirit fell upon all them which heard the Word" at the mouth of St. Peter. It is the same anointing that has come down throughout the age upon all the members of the body—all the one anointing.

But while it is the same anointing, or baptism, yet Cornelius had no share in the anointing, or baptism, at Pentecost, nor had the disciples any share in the anointing at Jordan; for it did not become a personal matter to any member until he was individually begotten, and thus inducted into the body. To our understanding the one thought appertains to both of these different features, as illustrating different parts of the process.

At the beginning, Jehovah God foreknew and foreordained that one hundred and forty-four thousand should constitute the Anointed One, of which Jesus is the Head. And he made the arrangement that all those begotten of the spirit should thereby come into that body, and be counted as its members. These have their names written as such in the Lamb's book of life. But he also made the arrangement with them that if any of them failed to keep the terms of their covenant, they would cease to be members of that body class. And this class evidently will in glory consist of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, although many other thousands have been associated with them all through the Gospel age; not all, however, have maintained their standing.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." (Rev. 3:21) The grand outcome of the matter, the fixity of the matter, is in the future. All those who come to the Lord, come through consecration, and are for the time being counted in as members of this anointed class. And the anointing will abide with them so long as they continue in this condition of obedience.

DOUBLE RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST

The expression, begetting of the spirit, then, is used in the Scriptures to describe that personal experience by which God accepts the individual as a new creature, and starts the new nature. This new nature subsequently prospers, develops, and if faithful will be born of the spirit. The terms begetting and

birth are used symbolically to represent the beginning and the completion of the new creature.

The baptism, or anointing, of the spirit, of course, relates to the same holy Spirit, and in some measure to the same experiences as the begetting, but from a different angle. The baptism of the holy spirit is not a thing that comes to us individually, but collectively. The baptism of the holy Spirit came upon the church at Pentecost and was not repeated day by day, nor ever, except in the case of Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, and "his kinsmen and near friends," whom he had called together in his house to hear the words from the lips of the Apostle Peter. At that time a similar baptism to that of Pentecost was granted—"the holy Spirit fell upon all them which heard the Word" (Acts 10:24, 44), indicating that the Gentiles also were to have an opportunity to become members of the Anointed.

The word baptism signifies immersion. St. Paul explains that we are all baptized, or immersed, or anointed, by the one spirit into one body. The anointing, or baptism, of the spirit came first to our Lord Jesus, extended down to the church at Pentecost, and has been with the church as an anointing ever since. All of us who come to God, by Christ, confessing our sins and asking forgiveness through his merit, and who yield ourselves to be dead with him, by baptism into his death, are immersed into membership in his body, thus coming under the anointing.

The result of this action is two-fold; we become, first of all, members of Christ in the flesh, and he accepts us and treats us as such. We are first baptized, or immersed, into death—his death, his baptism. Then the figure changes; and we are raised up out of this baptism into death, as new creatures. Thereafter our flesh is counted as his flesh. So our relationship to Christ is two-fold: one appertaining to the flesh, the other to the spirit.

Very many have not noticed this double relationship to Christ—as new creatures, and also in the flesh. The force of this is brought to us in the words of the glorified Christ to Saul of Tarsus: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME? . . . I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." (Acts 9:4, 5) Thus our Lord declared that the persecution of the church in the flesh was a persecution of himself. What the church suffers is a part of the sufferings of Christ. The sufferings of Christ will not be filled up until the last member of his body shall have finished his course.

THE LORD'S DECISION STILL FUTURE

Our membership in the spiritual body of Christ is also two-fold. First we have a tentative membership at the present time—though we are accepted of God as if it were complete. Thus the moment of the acceptance of our consecration is the moment when we receive the holy Spirit. We are consecrated with Christ unto death—we are risen with him as new creatures, sharers with him in his resurrection. And yet this number, begotten of the holy Spirit and thus associated with Christ in membership in the spiritual body, contains three classes: (1) The little flock, which will be the body of Christ beyond the veil, the "more than conquerors"; (2) the great company, who will fail of being of that highest class, but who will be companions of the bride class (Psalm 45:14); (3) some who will become reprobates and go into the second death.

It is not for us at the present time to pass judgment upon any one. It is not for us to say that this one or that one belongs to the little flock or to the great company. According to the Scriptural instructions, we know that the Lord will not make public his decision of this matter until the end of this age. Then he will make a decision as to those who will receive the higher nature and those who will receive the subordinate nature.

We are all "called in the one hope of our calling" (Eph. 4:4), and it is for each of us to make our calling and election sure. Our trials, our difficulties, our weaknesses, are so different that only the Lord will know or can determine who are worthy. The Apostle declares that he would not even judge himself, let alone others. There is one that judgeth, even Christ.

TWO CLASSES OF FIRST-BORNS

The church of the first-borns, that is to say, all who will attain to perfection of life, everlasting life, as the first-born company, are in comparison with the world a small number. The picture of humanity that our Lord gave in the sermon on the mount represented the world of mankind in general as going down the broad road to destruction. Then he depicted a narrow way leading to life, a way that he himself opened up and made possible. He tells us that of those who find this narrow way only a few, comparatively, will enter it and walk in it.

In another Scripture we are told that all who go on the broad way will ultimately be brought to a knowledge of the truth, and by Messiah's kingdom will be enlightened and blessed with an opportunity for coming into harmony with God; and that in that time there will be a highway for their return to human perfection. Here, then, we find three ways. In the present age, however, there is only one way leading to life.

Examining what the Scriptures say as to who will gain life everlasting as a result of the present life, we find that merely the church of the first-borns get this blessing. The life that will come to the world will be attained gradually during the thousand years, when step by step they will rise up, up, up to perfection. But the life that is offered now must be striven for under adverse conditions. We are to receive it by (1) begetting, and (2) resurrection to perfection. This resurrection we shall receive at the close of this Gospel age.

The Scriptures show us that of the two classes who will attain this great blessing, one class will come off conquerors and get spiritual life, but not the highest. The other class will come off "more than conquerors," and reach resurrection on the highest plane. These will be of the divine nature. In this class we are striving to have a place—to share with Christ in the chief resurrection. Those who lag behind and are careless of their consecration vows will nevertheless be finally put to the test. Matters will so narrow down with them that they will be obliged to determine whether they will prove their loyalty to God or not. Those among them who wilfully sin will go into the second death. Those who strive for everlasting life will be brought to perfection in a great time of trouble, even though they will lose the great prize of joint-heirship with Christ.

GODLINESS ATTRACTS PERSECUTION

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12.

Godliness represents in general the condition of righteousness, opposition to sin, as God is opposed to sin—a condition in harmony with justice, as he is just; generosity and kindness and love, as he is generous and kind and loving. There are kind, generous and noble characters in the world who are not Christians. These may have more or less of opposition from others who are evilly disposed—as darkness always opposes light; yet these noble people exercise moderation in their righteousness—they are not righteous overmuch. They do not go to an extreme in their religion, as it is sometimes expressed. These fine characters might occasionally get some persecution, politically or otherwise; but even the enemies of such would have respect for them.

But the Apostle in our text limits persecution to "those who live godly in Christ Jesus." What is the difference between living godly and living godly in Christ Jesus? We answer that because of their special relationship to Christ Jesus, God's people have a special enlightenment. They see more clearly the principles of God's justice. They have a more exacting rule by which their lives are governed. Others do not see these deeper things of the divine plan and the special arrangement God has made with the church.

Those who are "in Christ Jesus" have an intelligent knowledge that they have entered into a covenant of sacrifice. They realize that they are not to compromise their religion in any way; they are not to compromise with sin, nor with the world. They must uphold the principles of righteousness, even to the detriment of their own earthly interests.

The godly not in Christ Jesus—those who have a measure of godlikeness—may indulge in a great many things that would not be wrong for the world—not sinful, not immoral, not unkind. With the Christian, however, all of his time, talent, influence, money, are consecrated to the one service, according to what he understands to be the Lord's Word and the spirit of that Word. The worldly man who is righteous might feel perfectly free to give of his money for various causes and purposes, that would be reasonable and proper in themselves; while the Christian would ask himself, What is the Lord's will, the Lord's way?

THE CHRISTIAN STEWARD RESTRICTED

The Christian is restricted in his use of money; for he always considers as to how the Lord would have him use it. The Christian uses his money for the preaching of the Gospel and the publishing of it in various ways; while other people might use their money for large benefactions and endowment of colleges. The Christian would reason: There are many opportunities for people to get education along earthly lines, and I believe the Lord would have me as his child to use his money to help people get spiritual education.

Likewise in the use of his time; the natural man might say, We will have a certain evening for attending a good opera. We will not go to any disreputable place, but we will spend a certain amount each season on the opera. Or, we will be patrons of art and music and literature. We must adopt a course that will win the approval of society. That will be the wise thing to do. But the Christian says, My time, my money are consecrated to the Lord. I am his steward, I can use these in a better way. A worldly man may be a patron of art and spend a thousand dollars—or ten thousand dollars—on a single painting, because he wants art to flourish. Or he might buy a fine piece of sculpture to adorn his home, but this is not the course for me. I must consider the Lord's will for me as his servant.

The Christian has limitations which the worldly do not have. But we are glad for all good men and good women, who can be good and noble even though not in Christ Jesus. We are glad to esteem them. There are noble people in the world. There are some godly ones outside the church, godly to a certain degree; and they are likely to come to see something of the truth, if they are really noble characters. The godly of this world will get a blessing in the restitution time. Every godly thing that they have done, every act of generosity, will get its reward. And by cultivating their higher sentiments, they will have fewer steps to retrace.

SPECIALLY GODLY ARE SPECIALLY PERSECUTED

The persecutions which come to the godly in Christ Jesus are special persecutions. We are not to expect much of this from the body of Christ. A man is not expected to use his fist to strike his own eye, nor is it to be expected that one hand will injure the other hand. It may be that the skin on one hand is rough, and will sometimes scratch the other one. But we cannot be members of the same body and persecute each other. Persecution is something that is intended and pursued, or followed up. Persecution is not merely one act or one word—it is a succession of unkind words and acts with a view to punishing some one for adhering to an opinion or course of conduct.

So persecution comes from a certain class called by Jesus the world. But the class that Jesus called the world are those who had a form of godliness, but did not have the power thereof. Christianity has its counterfeits, as has money. So the Apostle speaks of a class who would take the name of the Lord upon them and misuse that name. And there are people in the world today who do not know the difference between the genuine and the counterfeit—between truth and error—and who do not want to know, and who keep out of the way of being told. They somehow know that there would come a certain measure of condemnation to themselves if they recognized the real facts and did not act in accordance with them.

They are not all bad people by any means. There are very many good people among the tares; but there is no real wheat among the tares—no real nutriment. But these tares pose as the church of Christ; the tare systems pose as Christianity. And from this class usually come the persecutions. They try to crowd out the wheat, or to choke it and make it unfruitful. It was so in our Lord's day. Those to whom the Lord referred as persecutors were not the Gentile world of his day, but the worldly ones of the Jews—those who were not fully consecrated to the Lord, but who thought they were.

Nicodemus was a fine character, and Gamaliel was a fine character—and so were a great many who did not become Christ's disciples at all. Evidently many were seeking after righteousness; as, for instance, the young man who came to the Lord and asked him, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" The Lord answered, "Thou knowest the commandments." The young man said, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth up." He was a noble character, and Jesus looking on him loved him, even though he was not a disciple. And Jesus said to him, "One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up thy cross, and follow me." But he went away sorrowful. He did not want to become a member in Christ Jesus. He did not want to give everything to the Lord. He was very rich—"had great possessions," and he preferred to hold on to his wealth.—Mark 10:17-22.

There were others who went through many of the forms and ceremonies, and who kept the various admonitions of the law, and its feasts and fasts; but they were not the "Israelites indeed in whom was no guile." And later they became the persecutors of Christ and those who walk in his steps of sacrifice.

PROFESSED CHRISTIANS PERSECUTORS

And so those who live godly in Christ Jesus have their persecutions, not so much from the worldly class as from professing Christians. There is a class in churchianity today that has a great deal of pride and self-satisfaction. They are upholding a large institution. If anything seems to be inimical to that institution, they are wrathful and wish to persecute. Some say respecting those who proclaim present truth and who live saintly lives as followers of Jesus Christ: If we let these people alone and let them teach these things, all that we have been upholding for centuries will crumble. Did not Luther hand down truth to us? Did not Calvin give the church truth? Have we not the teachings of Wesley? No, no; we will not have these "new doctrines"!

But we see that these people are persecuting the truth and its representatives because of misunderstanding. We should have a great deal of sympathy and not feel specially angry with them. This does not mean that we should be glad of persecution—no persecution "for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous." (Heb. 12:11) But if we know that we are suffering for righteousness' sake, then we know the spirit of God rests upon us. It is those who know that they suffer for Christ's sake, and who take it gladly because it is the will of God, that may rejoice, because the persecution is working out in them blessed effects. Let us then

"Be still beneath his tender care,
For he will make the tempest cease;
And bring from out the anguish here,
The afterward of peace."

"THE LORD YOUR GOD DOTH PROVE YOU"

Why does God permit his people to suffer? Why does he not shield those who are his from suffering, just as a loving parent would shield a child? The Scriptures reply that it is because God is working out a great plan that will eventually bring blessings to all who will do righteously; for God wishes to show the evil effects of sin, its deteriorating effects. God's purpose is that after the six days of sin and death are ended, in the seventh day there shall be a blessing for the whole groaning creation. "Jehovah God will wipe away tears from off all faces."—Isa. 25:8.

And there is a particular reason why God should permit persecution to come upon his consecrated ones. "The Lord your God doth prove you," test you. Why? What is he proving? We profess to be his loyal children. We profess to be laying down all that we have. And now "the Lord your God doth prove you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."—Deut. 8:2; 13:3.

How much will you endure? How patiently will you endure? To what extent will you endure? Those who will endure most, and endure most patiently, will give evidence of the best character. And those who demonstrate the best character will have the highest positions in the kingdom. Each will get a position according to his faithfulness. But as star differeth from star in glory, so it will be in the kingdom. He who fights the greatest fight against his own nature and demonstrates most the love and zeal of his heart, such is the one who will have a high place.

"How goes the fight with thee?
The lifelong battle with all evil things?
Thine no low strife, and thine no selfish aim;
It is the war of giants and of kings.
Heed not the throng of foes!
To fight 'gainst foes is still the church's lot.
Side thou with God, and thou must win the day;
Woe to the man whom Satan fighteth not!"

THE SOLITARY WAY

Alas! How few may know the grace it takes
To tread the solitary way. Alone!
Ah, yes, alone! No other human heart
Can understand the nameless sorrows there—
The nights in weeping spent, and yet, when dawns
The day, to greet the world with radiant smile,
And scatter sunshine while you whisper low
To your poor heart, "Canst bear a little more?"
Alone! Poor heart, and dost thou question, Why?
Dost think it strange that thou must walk this way?
Ah, no! Thou dost but follow in his steps
Who went before, and of the people there
Was none with him! Alone? Yet not alone—
Hath not thy blessed Lord and Master said,
"My presence shall go with thee"? Ah, my soul,
No longer, then, a solitary way!

December 24, 1913. G. W. SEIBERT.

"WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS"

MARCH 1.—Luke 12:13-34.

"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."—V. 34.

Jesus was surrounded by a multitude of Jews, one of whom, recognizing him as influential, requested that he admonish his brother to give him a share of the family inheritance. Jesus declined, saying that he was not a judge or a divider. It would be well if the followers of Jesus would follow their Master in this, as well as in other matters. Too many are disposed to be busybodies in other men's matters, and overlook the fact that their commission of the Lord is to preach the Gospel.

Society has provided certain rules, laws and regulations—"the powers that be are ordained of God." Whatever these laws will not accord us we should let drop. We should be content with such things as we have and such things as divine providence insures us. As Jesus had another work to do, so have his followers. That other work is the preparation for the glorious Messianic kingdom. The riches which it promises us so far transcend all earthly riches as to make them appear, as St. Paul declared, loss and dross, not worthy to be compared with the blessed things our Lord promises.

Jesus backed up his refusal to intervene with a caution against covetousness. This implies that the estate properly belonged to the brother, and that the one who addressed Jesus desired more than his legal rights. He was coveting that which legally belonged to another. Jesus would have him, and us all, see that the abundance of earthly possessions, wealth, is not the sum of life. A man may be miserable while rolling in wealth, or he may be happy in comparative poverty. The basis of happiness is measured by the soul's relationship to God and hope in him.

The Jews were a typical people—natural Israel, in comparison to spiritual Israel of this Gospel age. God's promise to natural Israel was that if they would keep the law, they would inherit the promise made to Abraham, and be used by God as his kingdom to bless the world. Their difficulty was that, being sinners like the remainder of men, they were unable to keep the divine requirements, hence were not qualified to be used of God as his kingdom for scattering his blessings to the nations. Nevertheless, the hope of the kingdom was the thing ever uppermost in their minds, sought for by all of them.

Jesus came into the world to give himself a "ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2:6), and to begin the work of calling and drawing "Israelites indeed," to constitute his associates in the Messianic kingdom. He could, and did, keep the law perfectly, and additionally, laid down his life sacrificially for Adam and his race. This sacrifice permitted him to make good for the unintentional short-comings of all "Israelites indeed," in whom was no hypocrisy. While they could not keep the law and thus obtain the kingdom, they could by accepting Christ have the righteousness of the law imputed to them, and thus be acceptable with God. Hence Jesus' preaching was wholly along the lines of the kingdom to the people who had for centuries been striving to approve themselves to God as worthy to constitute that kingdom. The first opportunity for membership in the kingdom class was granted to the Jewish people; and only in proportion as they rejected the favor did it pass beyond them to the Gentiles. As St. Paul said to some, "It was necessary that the Gospel should first be preached to you; but seeing ye reject the grace of God, . . . lo, we turn to the Gentiles." (Acts 13:46) In view of these facts, we see that the teachings of Jesus were not addressed to the world, but to people who claimed to have separated themselves from the world, and to be seeking or desiring to attain a joint-heirship in the Messianic kingdom.

Indeed, the entire teaching of the New Testament is to such persons. These alone have the hearing ear; and we are instructed that "He that hath an ear, let him hear." Again, we are instructed that the Gospel of the kingdom is to be preached to the meek, the humble, the broken-hearted; for only these are in any sense of the word prepared to receive the message. All others are blind and deaf to the Gospel of the kingdom. All who do not now hear or see will have their eyes and ears opened by and by, during Messiah's reign, because he tasted death for every man. But such will fail entirely as respects the glorious high calling of this Gospel age—the kingdom.

"SOUL, TAKE THINE EASE"

Our Lord gave a parable illustrating the comparative foolishness of all earthly ambitions. This does not mean that earthly ambitions are the worst things; but rather that they are poor in comparison to the one great possibility, the kingdom. It is a pearl of great value, to obtain which all other pearls—all other valuables, all other ambitions, and all other hopes—are to be set aside, and counted as dross.

The parable tells of a rich farmer who, instead of using his riches in doing good, was miserly—taking pleasure in accumulations. He built greater barns and storehouses, and consoled himself with the thought that he had plenty and more than enough, and could thenceforth take his ease. The parable points out that ere long he died. We query, What advantage did the man really have through his accumulation of great wealth, which he failed to use? He left it for others to quarrel over, and possibly to be more or less injured by. He was a foolish rich man. Instead of leaving his wealth thus, he should have enjoyed himself in spending it wisely for the good of others and to the glory of God. Thus he would have been rich toward God. But on the other hand, he was an illustration of those who are not rich toward God; for he laid up his treasure for self.

Many read into this parable things that it does not contain. They infer that the rich man went to eternal torment, but nothing in the Lord's words so intimates. The expression, "this night shall thy soul be required of thee," signifies this night you lose your life—you die in poverty. Earthly riches will be of no account to you in the future if you have not laid up spiritual riches in the heart, in the mind and in good works, which would make you rich in the future.

That rich man, instead of being benefited by the riches which he accumulated, will in the future life be disadvantaged. He might have used his riches sacrificially, or he might have consecrated his entire life to God through Christ and then faithfully laid down time, talent, opportunities, wealth. Thus he would in the same proportion have been laying up treasures in heaven, so that in the resurrection he would have been received of the Lord as a faithful follower, to share his glory, honor and immortality—to be a member of his kingdom class, whose commission it will be for a thousand years to scatter the divine blessings secured by the death of Jesus to all of Adam's race.

That rich man, having missed his opportunities, will nevertheless come forth during Christ's Millennial kingdom; for we read that all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth. But instead of coming forth approved, to a share in the first resurrection, he will come forth disapproved of God, and his resurrection opportunities will be those described as the resurrection of judgment. (John 5:29, R.V.) He will come forth to shame and contempt, which will continue until he shall, under the judgments of that time, learn his lesson and form a better character; or, refusing to do so, he will be cut off in the second death.

SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM

We are not to understand the good Teacher to mean that we are to look amongst the kingdoms of earth hoping to find one of them his kingdom. On the contrary, he informs us that his kingdom is future. "My kingdom is not of this world"—this order of things. (John 18:36) For his kingdom, God's kingdom, we pray, "Thy kingdom come." We hope, we wait, we prepare, for that kingdom. We are to seek it in the sense of seeking to do those things which will make us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." We are to lay up treasures in heaven. We are to use our pounds and our talents so wisely that at the second coming of the Savior, when he calls first for his servants and reckons with them, we may not only be amongst his servants, but hear his "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord"—the kingdom joys—"Have thou dominion over two cities" or "five cities."

There is one definite procedure for those who would be heirs of the kingdom. (1) They must recognize themselves as sinners, unworthy of divine notice. (2) They must recognize Jesus as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (3) They should realize that while his sacrifice is the basis for the ultimate cleansing of the world, the reconciliation of all the willing and obedient to God, nevertheless that work has not yet begun. That work is to be accomplished by him during the thousand years of his kingdom reign. (4) They are to hear the Lord's message declaring that he is now seeking the members of the kingdom class, and that the way to membership is a narrow way. "Whosoever will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me, and where I am there shall my disciple be." They are to realize that the testing of this class is through much tribulation; that God is calling for not only saints, but those whose saintship will endure fiery trials, testings, in respect to their love for God and for the brethren, and in respect to their loyalty, even unto death.

From the time of making their full consecration to be the Lord's servants, faithful unto death in the service of righteousness, they will regard that heavenly kingdom as the great

treasure beyond all comparison of value. They will seek it daily, hourly. Their hearts will be there—with the treasure. It will be the theme of their thoughts by day and of their meditations by night. Earthly occupations will still be necessary to them, in order to provide things needful and honest; but no earthly prize will have any value in comparison to the heavenly prize, in their estimation. Such will be the successful heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to those that love him more than they love houses or lands, parents or children or self.

1913—REPORTS FROM FOREIGN MISSIONS—1913

BRITISH BRANCH REPORT

Dear Brother Russell:—

Enclosed is a summarized report of the work of the British Branch for the year ending October 31, 1913. We are very glad to be able to report continued increase in almost every branch of the work—in the output of SCRIPTURE STUDIES and in the volunteer matter, but specially in the distribution of literature to advertise public meetings in connection with Class Extension and other special work. The total output of STUDIES from London is 138,717 volumes, the local (British) sales being 111,630 volumes, an increase for the year of 27,418 volumes. The volunteer matter has been well distributed during the whole of the year, and the demand still continues.

Altogether during the year we have dispatched 11,627,000 copies of the BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY and EVERYBODY'S PAPER, a circulation approaching a million copies per month. This shows an increase over last year's figures of 4,250,000 copies. The colporteurs have on the whole done better, and all have done very well. With improved methods of canvassing better results are gained; indeed, some of the latest additions to the colporteur force are doing best of all. Two young brothers recently sold in one of the towns in the north of Scotland 330 books in one week. Certainly the work is easier in some places than in others, and Scotland has always been easier than England; but the growing interest aroused by the sermons, by the special meetings and the general unrest of our times has created a demand which makes the work of colporteuring less difficult. Even the opposition lends a hand to some extent; it helps to advertise the work.

Book-loaning has made considerable increase during the year; good work is reported both from the larger and the smaller centres. The visits of the pilgrim brethren are still greatly appreciated by the classes, and opportunity for public witness is usually taken advantage of. Class Extension work has greatly extended during the past year and the results are very encouraging indeed.

In this small country, so thickly populated comparatively, it has been found advantageous to link the classes within prescribed areas, for the furtherance of the harvest work. Results so far are satisfactory and prospects good. Considerable encouragement has attended evangelical work in certain centres where the population is particularly dense. Nearly three hundred meetings have been held, and quite a few study classes have been formed. In the scattered parts of Wales the truth has been witnessed to, sometimes in the open air, in accordance with the custom of the country. There is no difficulty in securing a good audience amongst the Welsh people, but it seems that there are but few of the "wheat" class amongst them.

The loyalty of the brethren has been demonstrated, and their strength greatly taxed by the distribution of no less than 6,000,000 tracts to advertise public meetings during the year. The difference of late in the attitude of the masses in this country towards the truth was clearly shown at the successful meetings held lately by yourself and Brother Rutherford. Naturally our enemies feel disturbed and, being impotent, wreak their spleen upon the Lord's messengers, especially yourself. However, no weapon formed against us has been allowed to prosper, and we are encouraged by the many evidences of the appreciation of the message. We are looking forward to a strenuous campaign until the work given into our hands is finished, when we hope to share with our Lord, yourself, and all the saints in the privileged work of healing the nations. With much love in the Lord,

We are your servants in him, BRITISH BRANCH.

SUMMARY OF OUTPUT OF SCRIPTURE STUDIES—YEAR ENDING OCTOBER 31, 1913:

	1913	1912	Increase
STUDIES, all kinds	138,717	106,097	32,620
(To Australia, out of above	27,087	21,885)	
Total British local sales	111,630	84,212	27,418
Total increase			32,620
Local increase			27,418

OUTPUT BIBLE STUDENTS' MONTHLY AND OTHER TRACTS:

B. S. M.	5,661,020	Tracts	297,000
E. P.	5,618,900	Hz	50,295
11,627,215, or tract pages			185,365,600
Books (Manual, Manna, Poems, etc.)			3,248
Booklets (h, s, t, p, etc.)			19,817
Letters—out			18,601
Letters—in			19,508

SWEDISH BRANCH REPORT

Dear Brother Russell:—

It is once more my highly appreciated privilege to send you the usual Annual Report of this branch of the wonderful harvest work, and I hope that you, as the Great Chief Reaper's special representative, will be pleased with the results it shows—the results of our humble efforts to uphold the banner of our Redeemer and King—the results of our efforts to proclaim that joyful message, now "meat in due season" for the "household of faith," and to "lay down our lives for the brethren," even as he laid down his life for us. Our constant prayer has been, and continually is, that we, by the Lord's grace, may be enabled to please him in all our doings, so that at the end of our race-course (which we now believe to be very near), we may hear his blessed "Well done."

Although we most heartily wish (in order to prove our love to the Lord and our appreciation of the truth given us) that we were in a position to report ten times as much work accomplished, and that all of that work had been much more perfectly executed, yet we cannot but give praise to God for the rich blessings granted us in so many ways.

Since present truth (as a result of your faithfulness and zeal) reached our shores, between fifteen and twenty years ago, the true spiritual Israelites in this country have not experienced a more interesting and successful year than the one just closed. This is surely due in great measure to the fact that the Lord's people here have been appreciating more than ever the "fat things" spread upon his table by receiving the Swedish WATCH TOWER twice every month, the two encouraging and helpful sermons published in different Swedish newspapers every week, and the regular Swedish PEOPLE'S PULPIT, to say nothing of the six volumes of the STUDIES, the different pamphlets, etc. Notwithstanding the fact that during this year we have experienced some severe testings and trials in the work, in that some of our co-laborers seem to have grown faint and weary, it has in many respects considerably exceeded other years, as the appended figures show.

The spiritual condition of the Swedish brethren in general, as far as we are able to judge, is better than ever. The development of the fruits of the spirit amongst the brethren everywhere in this land is very gratifying. We have had the pleasure of seeing the harvest message accepted with great joy by many humble and truth-hungry souls, some of whom are already engaged in the various branches of the work.

Forty dear brethren and sisters are giving either all or part of their time to the colporteur work, and the prospects are encouraging for an increase in numbers.

The number of books sold is about equal to that of the preceding year. The free distribution of volunteer matter has also been comparatively good. Of the nearly 700,000 "Eko fran talarstolen" (PEOPLE'S PULPIT) the largest part have been used in connection with the advertising of public meetings held in practically all parts of the country.

The list of subscribers to the Swedish WATCH TOWER has grown from 1,881 to 2,174, who have paid kronor 5,244 (one kronor equals about 27c) in subscriptions against kronor 2,995 the foregoing year. Yearly subscriptions to the Swedish newspapers which publish your sermons have been received through this office to the number of 1,919, and half-yearly subscriptions to the number of over 1,500.

The regular pilgrim service, in which five Swedish brethren have taken part during the year, has been extended greatly. The friends appreciate these visits very much, and write us frequently to this effect. Besides this, more than 100 extra public meetings were held all over the land, many in places where we had never held meetings before.

About 3,500 copies of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES were sold at these meetings, which had a total attendance of nearly 50,000 very attentive listeners. We also had two good general conventions (the first in Orebro and the second in Stockholm), and a large number of well-attended and spiritually profitable local conventions in different parts of Sweden.

The voluntary donations to the Tract Fund have increased by several thousand kronor. Seeing that all of the many donors

have little of earthly possessions, this sum (kronor 32,887) represents a great deal of self-denial and sacrifice for the truth's sake. As the different branches of the work have grown from year to year, the office-work has increased correspondingly. Twelve noble brethren and sisters in Christ have given very faithful and unselfish service in the office during the year (and several of these for many years). I am often tempted to feel proud of their record.

The prospects for the new year are brighter than ever in different lines, and we are firmly resolved to use every opportunity as faithfully and wisely as possible, realizing that the great storm of trouble is near at hand. Louder and louder peals the thunder, and darker grow the clouds.

As the harvesters in the fields of the land often find it necessary to withdraw, as the clouds become threatening and the winds blow, so the reapers in the Lord's harvest field may by and by be compelled to cease active service. But as every tiller of the soil knows that just before a storm is an excellent time to sow certain kinds of seed, so those engaged in the service of the truth are determined, by the Lord's grace, to use every opportunity to sow the precious grains of truth during the remaining months, realizing that the crop of the future will be of enormous proportions.

Please find enclosed herewith a list containing thirty-one new names of those who have taken the Vow. We daily remember you, our beloved Pastor and brother, and "all saints," in our petitions to the heavenly throne, and are glad to know that you continue to remember us.

With much Christian love from the Bible House family of Orebro, and, indeed, from all the Swedish brethren, I am

Your co-laborer in the Harvest, AUG. LUNDBORG.

SUMMARY OF THE WORK.

Copies of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES circulated at cost	25,357
Vol. I., Magazine edition, sold at cost	15,104
Total	40,461
Various other books and booklets—MANNA, TABERNACLE SHADOWS, etc.	18465
Total	58,926
Eko från talarstolen (PEOPLE'S PULPIT), issued free	696,895
Other free tracts and copies of the Swedish WATCH TOWER	86,704
Total	783,599
Amounting in tract pages to	14,591,320
Number of subscribers to the Swedish WATCH TOWER	2,174
Number of sermons in newspapers	312,500
Bibles sold	124
Number of meetings held under the auspices of the Society	1,576
Number of miles traveled in preaching tours	102,903
Letters and cards sent out	6,470
Letters and cards received	5,485
Total shipments by mail and by railroad	59,637

EXPENDITURES.

Pilgrims, Conventions and other meetings	kr. 20,965.37	= $5,666.32
Translations, printing, binding, paper, etc.	kr. 30,283.78	= 8,184.81
Freight and postage	kr. 3,712.56	= 1,003.39
Special services	kr. 6,094.86	= 1,647.26
Office expenses, rent, light, heat, etc.	kr. 6,839.69	= 1,848.56
Total	kr. 67,896.26	= $18,350.34

RECEIPTS.

Voluntary donations to the Tract Fund, 1,928	kr. 32,887.01	= $8,888.38
Swedish TOWER subscriptions	kr. 5,244.92	= 1,417.54
Receipts from publications	kr. 28,383.43	= 7,671.20
Total	kr. 66,515.36	= $17,977.12
Deficit received from Brooklyn	kr. 1,380.90	= 373.22
	kr. 67,896.26	= $18,350.34

DANISH BRANCH REPORT

Dear Brother Russell:—

I have the pleasure to submit to you a report of some of the work done in connection with our efforts to spread the harvest message in Denmark. Ours is a small country, the laborers are not many, and the prejudice is great, yet the testimony has somewhat influenced quite a number, and a few honest souls, more awake to the signs of the times than the majority, have been reached, and are being garnered. We believe that the friends are growing in grace and knowledge, and we find that the public is now more willing to attend the public meetings.

Public lectures have been delivered in 45 different places—in some of these places several lectures, in a few regular lectures every month. The cards sent in, and the books sold at the meetings, show that some, at least, became somewhat interested through the lectures. Some of the work in connection with the public lectures has been done by brethren sent out by the Copenhagen class. Class meetings have been held by brethren doing pilgrim work in all the places where the friends meet to study present truth. Now we have several brethren with good qualifications for pilgrim work, and we hope to accomplish more during the remainder of the time before the night comes.

More free literature has been distributed than formerly. We count it a great privilege to know the precious message, and to be able to do our little part in proclaiming it.

Your brother and fellow-servant in Christ,

CARL LUTTICHAU.—Copenhagen.

SUMMARY OF THE WORK.

Output of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES	3,122
Output of various booklets	3,343
Total	6,465
Tracts free	365,000
Letters and cards received	1,250
Letters, cards and parcels sent out	2,148
Copies of the Danish WATCH TOWER sent out monthly	909

AUSTRALASIAN BRANCH REPORT

Dear Brother Russell:—

It is with great thankfulness to the Lord of the harvest that we present herewith the annual report of harvest work done in these lands. The report is far beyond what we had dared to hope for. If you will compare the figures with those of last year, you will see that they speak of a great increase of zeal and willingness to sacrifice both self and substance in the interest of bringing others to the same joy and peace and consolation which have come to our hearts. The friends have cooperated splendidly in the work and those who could not engage in much activity have helped some, and thus made it easier for others to do so.

There are about twenty-one colporteurs in the field, and others are doing a little as they are able. All the ground has been gone over. Indeed, it seems to be getting near the time when the "man with the ink-horn" can report, "It is done." Yet the volumes have gone out this year as never before in Australia, notwithstanding the virulent opposition. It has seemed that just as soon as a spark of interest was aroused, the great adversary had his messengers here ready to oppose and slander. Nevertheless, the number of interested ones keeps increasing. We have about 980 WATCH TOWER subscribers and, comparing the population of Australia and New Zealand with that of America, it is possible that the proportion of subscribers is not much, if any, below that of the United States.

For the first time in the history of this Branch we have gone through the year without increasing our indebtedness to Brooklyn, and we are sure that in the amount contributed to the Tract Fund, etc., there is represented much noble sacrifice and methodical planning.

The friends in the various states have again undertaken to write wrappers for the posting of the PEOPLE'S PULPIT to each house in the country, and in N.S.W., W.A., S.A., Queensland and Tasmania they have also undertaken to pay the postage. This might have been added to the Tract Fund contribution if we had particulars.

We believe that the classes are growing in numbers as well as in interest and grace. We are realizing more and more that the day of our deliverance is not far distant, and this inspires us the more earnestly to seek to be ready for the great consummation of our hopes.

No doubt a visit here by you would do us all a great deal of good. We hope it may be the Lord's will for you to come.

We are glad that Brother Hollister is on his way, and will arrive in time to spend Christmas with us. Our Christmas convention promises to outdo anything that we have previously held. These conventions have been a source of great encouragement, and have given an impetus to the work.

There has been a steady flow of inquiries from the output of the PEOPLE'S PULPIT, and we now have about 1,300 names on the subscription list, many of whom take a number of copies each month for distribution. We believe that one copy of the social number has been delivered, either by mail or by hand, to every house in Australia and New Zealand. While the expense is great the result is splendid.

We are looking forward with hope to the opportunities of the new year. We know not what may be in store for us, but we are resolved to endeavor to trace the Lord's will, and to trust in his grace for help in every time of need. It seems that the coming year is bound to be full of testings, and one feels how much he needs to guard his heart in all humble loyalty and faithfulness if he is to come off an overcomer and share in the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

We are yours in the service of Christ,

Australasian Branch W. T. B. & T. Soc'y.
R. B. NICHOLSON, Sec'y.

SOUTH AFRICAN BRANCH REPORT

My Dear Brother Russell:—

Once again it is my privilege to submit the annual report re the progress of the harvest work in Africa. While there has not been an increase in the number of volumes put out from this office, still I am convinced that the influence of the truth in South Africa is greater than it was twelve months ago.

Since that time we have added eight newspapers to the list of those publishing the sermons in this sub-continent. The sermons are now in circulation in eleven papers and in four different languages. We frequently hear from readers who, having received blessing through the sermons, are anxious to inquire further into the truth.

During the year the work among the natives has advanced considerably. A class of about fifty Zulus has been gathered out by Brother Tshange. This work is receiving our special attention and, with the aid of the recent issue of the Zulu tract, "Where Are the Dead?" we hope to see the class grow still further.

The work among the white population continues to enjoy the Lord's blessing. Class meetings are now held at Durban, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Balfour and Pt. Elizabeth.

There is one brother colporteuring in the Cape Province and he is meeting with fair success. A dear brother from Durban is, at my suggestion, spending his holiday with the brethren at Johannesburg, to help build them up in the knowledge of the truth. His services are much appreciated by the brethren there.

During the year I have made two pilgrim tours, one in the Transvaal and Orange Free State, and one in the Eastern Province of Cape Colony. Reports of both of these are already in your hands.

We are duly impressed by the thought that we have entered what may be the last year of the harvest work, and earnestly desire grace and strength to embrace every opportunity for service ere the night close down. The financial and statistical report for 1913 is enclosed. Asking for a continued remembrance in your prayers, I am, with much love to yourself and to all the dear brethren,

Your brother and co-laborer, WM. W. JOHNSTON.

1913 SUMMARY FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

Bibles sold at cost	45
STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES	1,264
DAILY HEAVENLY MANNA	204
Other Bible-help booklets	1,053
Free papers	47,632
Letters dispatched	1,197
Meetings held	325

THE FAITHFUL ARE WATCHFUL

MARCH 8.—Luke 12:35-48.

"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching."—V. 37.

Today's lesson continues the Master's exhortations to his faithful ones—that they prepare themselves for his "Well done!" and the participation with him in his kingdom. He had said, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (V. 32) The Lord purposely left his followers without definite information respecting the time for the establishment of his kingdom. He had illustrated the interim of time between his going and returning in the parable of the talents. He as the Master had left his servants in charge of his goods while he went to a far country, even heaven itself, to be invested with the kingdom authority; and at an appropriate time he would return to receive his servants, and according to their faithfulness would make them sharers with him in his kingdom, and then would begin his rule over his subjects, for their blessing and uplift out of sin and death conditions—for their deliverance from the reign of Sin and Death.

REGARDING THE LORD'S SECOND PRESENCE

Today's lesson opens with a parable. If in a great house, the master were about to be married and to bring home his bride, the servants would on that particular night be especially active, wakeful, attentive, that they might receive their lord with proper attention. They would not know exactly the time of their master's coming; but they would be continually on the alert that they might hear his knock and open instantly. So Jesus declared all of his followers should be on the alert for his second coming. It was not that he would bring his bride with him, rather he comes that he may receive his bride here. Indeed, the faithful servants are then to be made the bride, according to the other picture.

The thought is that Jesus' followers should take their ideals of alertness from the extremest experience of earthly service. Jesus intimated that his followers might be looking for him sooner than he would come, saying that if he shall come in the second watch or in the third watch or whenever, blessed are those servants if he finds them watching for him, alert, ready to receive him. He declared that he will grant such servants a special honor. He will gird himself, make himself their servant, and cause them to sit down to a sumptuous feast which he will provide.

This Bible students understand to signify that at the parousia of Jesus, his second presence, he will first of all make himself known to his faithful followers, while the world in general will be ignorant of the fact that he has come. His manifestation to the world will come later; as we read, "He shall be revealed in flaming fire"—judgments. When he shall appear [to the world], we [the church] shall appear with him in glory.—Colossians 3:4.

It is our Lord's parousia that is described in today's lesson—His earliest manifestations of his second advent. The world will see him not, and know not of his presence, and his church will know of his presence only by his "knock"—by the intimations given in the Scriptures—the fulfilment of prophecy. It will then be for the watchful ones to recognize this fulfilment, and by faith to open their hearts and minds promptly to acknowledge the Master's presence and all that presence implies of the nearness of his kingdom and of the proving of all who will be found faithful, worthy to share in that kingdom as members of his bride.

For such as receive him he will make a feast. Out of the divine Word he will bring things new and old, for their refreshment and comfort. The Bible will become to them a new book; they will feast upon the riches of God's grace, and the dark things will become clear, the hidden mysteries shall be revealed. The Master himself will be the servant, the revealer, the setter-forth of these viands of truth. Many Bible students believe that we are now living in this very time; and that each faithful, watchful follower of Jesus will be granted a hearing of the knock and the privilege of participating in this feast, which many tell us they are now enjoying.

"But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken into." The great Teacher here intimates that Satan, the prince of this world, is the master of the present order of things on earth; and that at his second coming he will bind this strong man, or master of the present order, and overturn present institutions and establish instead the long-promised reign of righteousness. It will be this thorough transition from the reign of Sin and Death to the reign of Righteousness and Life, which will cause the great time of trouble mentioned everywhere throughout the Bible as marking the closing of this Gospel age—"a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."—Daniel 12:1; Mark 13:8; Matthew 24:21.

Here and elsewhere Jesus speaks of his second coming as thief-like. The thought is that he will be present for a time, unobserved by the world, known only to the bride class, the salt of the earth, whom he will remove—changing them from earthly nature to heavenly. Verse 40 confirms this thought, and instructs all the Lord's faithful that they should be ready for his presence, to render up at any hour their accounts and experience the change.

"TO GIVE THEM THEIR PORTION"

St. Peter was perplexed. Was this parable especially for the apostles, that they should watch, etc., or was it for all the people? he inquired. But the Lord did not answer him directly. He merely assured St. Peter that at the appropriate time the Lord would appoint a steward over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season. This is not very different from what has been the Lord's usual method of dealing with his family. While a measure of the spirit is given to each for his profit; and while the holy Spirit thus given is to guide the recipient into a knowledge of the things of God, nevertheless the Lord has been pleased to use special instrumentalities at various times.

For instance, St. Peter apparently for a time was a leader amongst the apostles, in opening the Pentecostal door, and later in opening the door to the Gentiles—preaching to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert. Later on the Lord seems to have specially chosen St. Paul to be his particular messenger to the Gentiles; as we read, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name unto the Gentiles." (Acts 9:15) Similarly Enoch, Abraham, Moses, the Prophets, and others during this Gospel age, have seemed to be especially used of the Lord to draw the attention of his people to his Word. In the case of the apostles, there was of course a plenary or special inspiration, which does not appertain to others of this age since.

While the Lord has thus appointed special servants in handing to his household meat in due season at various times, it was required of each one who would partake that he should prove, test, determine whether or not the teaching was of God. He was to prove all things by the written Word of God, which the Apostle Paul declared is sufficient that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished. Any servant not found faithful, it is intimated, would be supplanted by another.

The servant at the end of the age, at the time of the Master's coming, if found faithful, would be especially blessed, and be given a general charge respecting the spiritual food to the Lord's family, the "meat in due season." But if he should prove unfaithful and fail to recognize the Master's presence, and manifest an unkind spirit toward the household, ministering to his own earthly wants rather than to the spiritual needs of the family of God, he would be removed in that day—cut asunder, separated, allowed to go into outer darkness with the world in general, in utter ignorance of the times and seasons, etc., of his Lord. The assumption is that the displacement of the one servant would mean the recognition of another to supply the household of faith.

On the basis of this parable the Lord explained a general principle of his dealings; viz., that any servant, knowing his Master's will and not doing in harmony therewith, would receive stripes, punishments, tribulations, of some sort in proportion to the degree of his knowledge and opportunity. On the other hand, any servant, even if he did things worthy of stripes, yet did them ignorantly, would receive proportionately fewer stripes. In a word, the general principle is that "to whom much is given, of him much is required."

OUR GOLDEN TEXT

The heart of this lesson is found in Verse 37, which refers to all of the Lord's servants who will be living at the time of his second coming—who in the earliest stages of his second coming, in the time of his parousia, his presence, will be faithfully watching, on the alert to serve every interest of the Lord's cause, seeking his will, doing his will, searching the Scriptures, obeying the Scriptures, to the best of their ability. These will be informed to a certain degree respecting the time in which they will be living, as the Apostle points out, saying: "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." "Ye are all children of the light, children of the day." "For the day of the Lord shall so come as a thief in the night, in the which they [the world] will say, Peace and safety; and they [the world] shall not escape [the tribulations of that day]." "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day shall overtake you as a thief." "Ye are all children of the light, children of the day." (1 Thessalonians 5:1-8) "Let us therefore walk, not in darkness, but in the light."

The secrecy observed respecting the time and the manner of the second coming of Jesus will prove to be a strong test. All of the Lord's consecrated ones who are overcharged with the cares of this life—business, pleasure, etc.—will be slow to hear the knock; and even when they hear, they will be too much engrossed to give heed.

However, there will be a great blessing on those servants whom the Lord at that time shall find watching—not watching the sky, as though they would see Jesus, when he is now a spirit being, invisible to humanity, but watching the Bible testimonies, watching the trend of the times, watching their own hearts, watching also the interests of the church of God, seeking to build one another up in the most holy faith, laying aside every weight and every besetting sin. Let all of us who claim to be virgins—pure ones—who claim to be the Lord's servants as well as his brethren—let us be found of him in peace, seeking first the kingdom of God and the righteousness which it inculcates; let us be found alert, watching for opportunities of usefulness in the proclamation of the kingdom message, and in helping the bride to make herself ready.—Revelation 21:9; 19:7.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

HEARD HIM LECTURE SEVENTY TIMES

Dear Brother Russell:—

Just a little anniversary note: Twelve years ago today, in Marten's Hall, St. Louis, I met and heard you for the first time—having since listened to you seventy times.

You discoursed that day on "The resurrection of the good unto life, and the resurrection of the evil unto damnation." One of my eyes was opened by the unreasonableness of a twenty-four hour Judgment Day, as exposed by you—a sort of a burlesque on my Methodist training. The other eye was opened by the reasonableness of the Scriptural thousand-year Day of Judgment, which you explained.

I had been reading THE WATCH TOWER about five months, and had "gathered in" a little of its message, as indicated by the notations on their margins; but I think the impression made on me that day fixed upon me, somehow, a determination to know God—to study his revealed Word. What it would lead to, of course, I could not comprehend. But I thank our dear heavenly Father for his merciful and patient leading. I thank him for the great responsibilities which are now mine! I am happy to be in the truth and to know the spirit of the Lord; and my earnest prayer is for wisdom to properly manifest in my daily life the fruits and graces of that spirit.

I wish to express to you my gratitude for your helpfulness all along the way. I love you for it. I pray daily for the all-sufficient grace to you-ward—for the heavenly Father to sustain and cheer you, and to make you the happiest of men. Your confidence in, and loyalty to, Almighty God has borne much fruit for others as well as for yourself, and will certainly meet with a great reward—shortly.

Somehow—I don't know how—I thought I could see a climax to culminate in the Seventh Volume, and from the first I have prayed that God might prepare my heart for that Seventh Volume. This harvest message as a whole has included so much. I feel confident that this great anticipation for the consummation of the divine plan of the ages, in narrowing down the rays of prophecy and present truth to the focal-point, "It is done," has carried me over many bridges where rail ties and pillars had been removed.

I am praising God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father, for an appreciation of, and a participation in the precious blood! With tenderest love to my Pastor, I remain,

Your fellow-servant in Christ, C. E. STEWART.

EXPERIENCE OF TWO COLPORTEURS

Dear Brother Russell:—

Having heard of an experience of two colporteur sisters, I thought that I would acquaint you with the same; for a word from you in THE WATCH TOWER would prevent a recurrence in other places.

These two sisters, both of them full of zeal, had gone to canvass a town assigned to them. There is a small class in the town; so they first sought to get acquainted with its members.

The town had been canvassed before, and bitter opposition had been aroused by the preachers and others. Instead of encouraging the sisters, the class commenced to tell them that it would be no use to canvass there—"Why, you will not sell any books here," etc.

This discouraged them for a time; but realizing that they were in the Lord's work, and looking to him for strength, they determined to go forth and colporteur in his name and strength.

The result was that in ten weeks they took orders for 1,550 volumes and delivered the most of them, as well as assisting with a series of four meetings. If these sisters had followed the advice of the class, this splendid opportunity for witnessing would have been lost.

May the Lord continue to bless and keep you in all your ways and his presence be with you to the end!

THE WATCH TOWER is getting better and better as we near the end; and how precious are its lessons to all! As we visit each place we hear many expressions of appreciation from the friends. I close with Christian love.

Your loving brother in Christ, THOS. P. YATES.

SWORD OF TRUTH FLASHING RIGHT AND LEFT

Dear Brother Russell:—

Wherever I go, among college men or others, I find present truth permeating remarkably, able financial and business men even conceding that an unparalleled panic is coming. Great numbers advance some of present truth that must have come from the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and do not know where it came from. This demonstrates to my mind that these fundamental truths which are to unify all the human race are making rapid advance beyond those of the ideas of federation that are now operating to some extent among the denominations. Ashamed of the spectacle of a house divided against itself, as nominal Christendom is, they are striving for an impossible unity, which at best can be but nominal.

The triumph of truth is now beginning to show a glorious reality; thanks be to our heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus, and to you, the faithful under-shepherd, and to all of the co-workers for the kingdom of heaven!

Standing on the "sea of glass" we are lost in wonder as we see clearly this mighty conflict—the sword of truth flashing right and left, forcing out the adversary from his refuge of lies. The words of a poet, "Lean far out into silence and listen for the thunder of the voice of God," have now a literal application for those who have the hearing ear. Marvelous!

Surely Satan is being bound! Longing for that day when truth shall triumph, the whole groaning creation have cried in hope,

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again;
The eternal years of God are hers."

O glorious day! At last it has come—literally in sight!

Your brother trying to help in the harvest work,
NEWTON T. HARTSHORN,—N. H.

THINKS "WATCH TOWER" TIMED TO MINUTE

Dear Brother Russell:—

A deep sense of appreciation to the Lord for the results of your labors in his name, particularly for the many blessings I am receiving from the reading of back TOWERS, and especially from the one just finished (June 1, 1900), urges me to express my thanks to you and to the Lord. I never received so much in such a short space as in this WATCH TOWER. It seemed as if almost every paragraph was written specially for me and timed right to the minute. I notice in so many of the letters written by the dear friends that questions which perplexed them were so often answered in the next TOWER, without suggestion. I have the same experience, both with the current TOWERS and the old ones; in fact, some of my experiences and the reading following them have startled me by their remarkable evidence of the Lord's leading and providence.

Some of the letters are so inspiring, and it is so interesting to watch the Truth grow! I read a little faster than a year's WATCH TOWERS a month, so while I have lost many blessings in experiences, yet the Lord makes up to me in this way.

I have recently seen a little souvenir with your picture and some quotations, with comment. It touched me deeply, and I hope to get some when I place my next order.

My wife (Sister H.) continues to make beautiful progress along the narrow way, and is truly a great help and inspiration to me. In harmony with comment on the MANNA text for Sept. 1, we are very thankful to God for the leading he provides for us. It is our prayer that you may be kept faithful and strong till all the divine pleasure may be fully accomplished in you. May we all meet soon in the general assembly of the church of the first-borns!

Your brother in hope. W. E. HULLINGER.

PILGRIM BROTHER HAYDEN SAMSON—DECEASED

Many of our readers knew and dearly loved Brother Hayden Samson, who has served the Lord and the Brethren under the auspices of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society for the past fourteen years. For several years past he has been in feeble health—yet persevered to lay down his life in the service of the Lord, the truth and the brethren. Returning home he experienced a severe attack of indigestion January Twenty-Fourth. He got relief, however, and went to bed as usual. The next morning, Sunday, his body was found in bed apparently asleep. He had passed beyond "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," with evidently no struggle, no pain. We rejoice with the dear Brother, believing that he has gone before to the heavenly condition—where so many of us are hoping ere long to join the Savior and him and all the members of the body of Christ.

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JOB'S EXPERIENCES TYPICAL OF HUMAN HISTORY

"All these things happened unto them for ensamples [margin, types], and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages are come."—1 Corinthians 10:11.

The Book of Job is credited with being the finest piece of literature in the Hebrew language. It is a poem: and all scholars admit that no translation yet given does it justice. Martin Luther, after reviewing his last effort to translate it into the German, said, "Job is suffering more from my version than from the taunts of his friends, and would prefer his dunghill to my translation of his lamentation." The Book of Job "is admitted, with hardly a dissenting voice, to be the most sublime religious poem in the literature of the world," said Samuel Cox. "I call that one of the grandest things ever written with pen. . . . There is nothing written, in the Bible nor out of it, of equal literary merit," said Thomas Carlyle.

Whoever was used of God as the penman, his name is not given. The book is introduced with a prose narrative of Job's losses and sufferings. (The account of Satan's conversation with God concerning Job should be considered as allegorical—after the style of *Pilgrim's Progress.*) Then his patient endurance is set forth. Next follow the poetic colloquies between Job and his three friends, then Elihu's argument, then the Almighty's address, then Job's confession. The conclusion, relating to Job's return to favor and blessing, and his death, is in prose.

Some have assumed that the Book of Job is merely a parable; and that Job himself is merely an imaginary character. But if this were the case, the teachings of the book would not be different. However, we see no cause to doubt that such a person did live and pass through the experiences related. In Ezekiel 14:14 and James 5:11, Job is classed with other holy men, which would not be the case were this narrative merely a parable. Besides, there are particular details given, such as are not common to parables.

The fact that Job lived a hundred and forty years after his adversities, or probably over two hundred years in all, together with the fact that neither he nor his friends make any allusion to Israel or Moses or the Law, nor to Abraham and God's Covenant made with him, seems to indicate beyond doubt that he belonged to the Patriarchal age. Possibly he lived about the same time as Abraham. His home was evidently in Arabia, and probably not far from Palestine.

Job is introduced as a man of great learning and influence; as a man of great piety, who knew and reverenced God and appreciated justice; as a man of great generosity, who considered the widow and the orphan; and as a merchant prince of great wealth, who by his numerous servants and three thousand camels, carried on an extended and very prosperous traffic.

Suddenly disaster came upon him and he was bereft of his children, his wealth, his influence and his health. He sought in vain for an explanation as to why God should permit such evils to befall him. Yet still he trusted in God, saying, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him!" His wife urged that it had been without divine appreciation that he had sought to do justice and mercy all his life, and exclaimed, "Curse God and die!"

His three friends came to visit him, and, taking much the same view, told him in lengthy argument that he must have been a great sinner and a hypocrite. But, conscious of his own heart-honesty toward God, Job defends himself and goes to too great an extreme in declaring his innocence, but silences his critics. He seems to realize his need of some one to represent his cause before the Lord. He cries out that he is as righteous as he knows how to be; that he cannot reason the matter with God, being so much beneath him in knowledge

and power. He declares that the wilfully wicked are not so troubled, while he who has pursued righteousness is so afflicted that life has no further pleasure and he wishes that he had never been born. (Chapters 9, 10 and 16.) Feeling his own insufficiency to state his case before the great Jehovah, he desires a "daysman [a mediator] betwixt" God and himself. —Chapters 9:33; 16:21.

Job's masterly reply to the false reasonings of his friends (which many improperly quote as inspired), and his expressions of confidence in God and of his ultimate deliverance, are clearly presented in Chapter 13:1-16. And then, with prophetic wisdom, in Chapter 14, he presents a most wonderful statement of the course of God's dealing with mankind.

THE PROBLEM OF THE AGES

The question which perplexed Job and confused his reasonings was the same that for centuries has confused others of God's people; namely, Why does God permit evil (calamities, afflictions, etc.) to come upon his faithful servants? and why are the wicked permitted to flourish? But not until the Gospel dispensation was it possible for any to know the mind of God on this subject; for it is one of the deep things which could be revealed only by the spirit of God, and only to those begotten of that spirit, as St. Paul explains. (1 Corinthians 2:9-14) And the holy Spirit was not thus given, as a guide and teacher, until after Christ had redeemed us and ascended up on high, there to present his sacrifice as the price of our return to divine favor, peace and communion.

Although many are still in the dark on this subject, it is now open and clear to all the earnest ones to whom "it is granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," to understand "the deep things of God." (Matthew 13:11; 1 Corinthians 2:10) These see that the reign of evil, the reign of Sin and Death, under Satan, the prince of this world, is permitted for two reasons: first, that all men may gain a full experience of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the bitterness of its legitimate fruit; and, second, that God's people may be fully tried and tested as to their loyalty to God in the shadow of affliction and trial, as well as in the sunshine of health and prosperity.

Thus while God did not directly cause the evil state of things which surrounds us in nature and among men, but let it come upon men as the legitimate result, or fruit, of disobedience, sin, yet he does make use of the wrath of man and the sins of men and the animosity of Satan to work out grand designs which they do not comprehend, and of which his children know only by faith in his Word of revelation. For instance, how little did Satan and those malicious Jewish priests and Pharisees and those heartless Roman soldiers know that they were assisting in the working out of the divine plan when insulting, mocking and crucifying the Lamb of God!

And so it is with the many afflictions of God's people—especially those of the little flock, the bride of Christ. Trials are designed to fit and polish them for the greater usefulness and honor in the future developments of God's great plan. Thus, regardless of the wilfulness or the ignorance of the persecutors, these trials of faith and patience are working out for such a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." This they do by preparing the called ones to be heirs of glory, by cultivating patience, experience, brotherly sympathy and love—which is God-likeness. Such, and such only can rejoice in tribulation and realize that all things—bad as well as good; unfavorable, as well as favorable—will be overruled in God's providence for their ultimate benefit.

JOB'S HOPE OF A RESURRECTION

But, returning to our consideration of Job, let us note in Chapter 14 some of his prophetic wisdom. The first four verses graphically picture what all of experience realize—that human life under present conditions is full of trial and sorrow, from the cradle to the tomb. And Job shows that he realizes that as a son of fallen parentage he could not be perfect, free from sin, clean, in the full sense of the word.

In verses 5, 6, he tells the Lord that he recognizes the fact that the authority and power to limit man's days are in his hands, but urges (not seeing the ministry of trouble), Why not let me and all men live out our short time in peace—even as we would not afflict a hireling who already has a heavy, burdensome task!

Verses 7-10 are close reasonings respecting the utter hopelessness of man in death, so far as any powers of his own are concerned. A tree may die and yet its root retain life, which, under favorable conditions, may spring up into another tree. But when man dies there is no root left, no spark of life remains. He giveth up the spirit of life, and where is he?

Having confessed that there is no ground for hope inherent in man, Job begins to express the only, the real hope of our race—a resurrection—see verses 12, 13. Man lies down in death and loses all power to arouse himself—nor can he be resuscitated from the sleep of death by any one, until God's due time. This will be the resurrection morning, the Millennial day, when the present symbolic heavens shall have passed away, and the new heavens or new spiritual ruling power—Christ's kingdom—shall have come into control of the world. In this Job fully agrees with the teachings of our Lord and the apostles.

The more he thinks of that blessed time when evil shall no more have dominion, but when a King shall reign in righteousness and princes shall execute judgment, the more he wishes he might die and be at rest. He exclaims (verse 13), "Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the grave [*sheol*]; that thou wouldst keep me secret [hidden] until thy wrath be past; that thou wouldst appoint me a set time and remember me!" Job had faith in a resurrection, else he would never have uttered this prayer for death—for hiding in the grave. But he preferred death, and desired to sleep (verse 12) until the morning, for one reason only—that he might have no further experience with sin and with God's wrath—evil.

A short period in the end of the Gospel age is specially called "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," because it will be "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." Yet the entire period from the time Adam fell is called a time of divine wrath, and properly so; for in all this long period "the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness," in a variety of ways. While Love is a controlling principle in the divine government, it can operate only in harmony with Justice and Wisdom. It was both just and wise to let man feel the real weight of condemnation to death incurred by wilful transgression, in order that when Love should in due time provide a ransom and a resurrection, the culprit might the more gladly avail himself of the provided favors of restitution and everlasting life. Thus death and all the evils permitted to come upon the culprit race are manifestations of God's wrath, which will be yet further shown in the great time of trouble. This will be followed by full and clear manifestations of God's love and favor in Christ and the glorified church during the Millennial age.—Romans 1:18.

In verses 14 and 15, he puts the question pointedly, as though to determine and settle his faith; but he immediately answers affirmatively: "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee [and awake out of the sleep of Adamic death—compare John 5:28, 29]; Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands"—for his people are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.—Ephesians 2:10.

ELIHU'S HOPE OF A REDEEMER

When Job had refuted the arguments of his three friends, Elihu (whose name signifies God himself) spoke from a different standpoint, reproving the three friends as well as Job. Elihu shows Job that he had been reasoning in part from a wrong premise—that he must not expect to fully comprehend all the ways of One so far above him, but must trust in God's justice and in his wisdom. And in Chapter 33:23, 24 he shows the one thing necessary to man's recovery from the power of death, and his restoration to divine favor, saying, "If there be with him a messenger as defender, one of a thousand [i. e., a rare one] to declare his own righteousness for man, then will God be gracious unto him [man] and say, Release him from going down to the grave; I have found a ransom."

This is indeed the case with man. God's wisdom and justice cannot be impugned. The sentence of death is justly upon all men through father Adam. (Romans 5:12) But God has provided us a Redeemer, Christ Jesus our Lord; and he, in harmony with the Father's plan, became a man, and then gave himself a ransom-price for all by paying the death-penalty that was upon Adam. And as soon as the bride, otherwise called his body and the temple, is complete, this great Mediator will stand forward to declare his righteousness as for, or applicable to, every one who will accept it.

Then will follow restitution, as pictured in verses 25 and 26. Physically, those for whom the Mediator stands shall be restored to a perennial youth, in which death and decay will find no place. They shall find acceptance and communion with God in joy and peace; and he will restore them to the original perfection, lost through sin in Eden. But an acknowledgment that God is just, and that the restitution was unmerited will be required. This is indicated by verses 27, 28: "He will chant it before men, and say: I have sinned and perverted the right; and it was not requitted me. He has redeemed my soul from going into the pit and my life that it may be brought to the light."

Elihu's words were as wise as any of those spoken by Job's comforters—probably wiser; but they were merely human wisdom, so far as we can discern. In Chapter 34:29 he asks the

question, "When he [Jehovah] giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" Evidently the young man sought to draw a line in the criticism of Job, agreeing with neither Job nor his friends, but endeavoring to be moderate in his position. He defended the Almighty, claiming that if God had not so ordered, Job's adversities could not have come upon him.

To Elihu it seemed clear that God had a hand in Job's experiences. Satan could not have sent all these calamities unless God had permitted it. Neither man nor angel of whatever rank could thwart the divine will. God, not Job, had the authority to decide what should be done. God alone had the right to order all of life's affairs. Incidentally Elihu showed that Job was more righteous than were his friends; and that while he was imperfect, like all, yet he was not being punished on this account.

A DIFFICULT LESSON FOR MANY

The Christian may very well draw a lesson from Elihu's question. Although the words are not inspired, yet they are very wise. We can recognize the truth they contain—that when God purposes to give peace, quietness, the whole universe will be in obedience to his laws, and none can make trouble.

If we have difficulties, if we have persecutions, if we have troubles of any kind we should look to God. We should say: This thing could not happen to me unless the Lord permitted it. We have come under special divine care. God has promised that all things shall work together for good to us who are his children. The lesson of trust is one of those difficult lessons for us to learn and apply—to realize that all of life's experiences are under divine supervision and that nothing can happen to us but what is for our highest good. This is not now true of the world, but merely of God's family. By and by God will make all things work out blessings for the world.

It is in respect to these who are his children that all things now work for good. When we are in difficulty, we are to look up in confidence and trust to the Lord. Our heavenly Father wishes us to exercise faith in him. St. Peter tells us that we are "kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." Therefore we greatly rejoice, even "though now for a season we are in heaviness through manifold trials" and temptations. "The trial of your faith is much more precious than that of gold that perisheth."—1 Peter 1:5-7.

FALSE PEACE OF MANY

There is another way by which some may have quietness. Many in the world enjoy a measure of peace, or rest from worry. Yet they are unaware of the great truths which we enjoy, and are in blindness, ignorance, superstition, error, through Satan's delusions. They have a feeling of security and ease, through the blinding influence of error and falsehood. Those of the world who come into relationship with God, are therefore sometimes awakened from false security. Then they gain the true peace and rest of heart. The Lord says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." No true rest can be gained otherwise.

The Lord's people have a peace and rest of mind through the knowledge of the Lord's plan, the knowledge of his justice, mercy and love, and a blessed realization that he is our God. All these things give us peace and quiet and rest of mind. While the world are troubled more or less, God's children have a peace that the world knows not of, that the world can neither give nor take away. And when the trials are all over, the Lord will make up for all the troubles of the present time, for all his children have suffered. We shall then look back on these trials and consider them but light afflictions, only for a moment.—2 Corinthians 4:17.

TESTS OF LOYALTY AND DEVOTION

When the Lord permits great clouds of trouble to come upon us, we should first look to see if we can discern any wrong-doing in ourselves which might properly bring chastisement. We should have joy in the Lord. But perhaps we have not been living close enough to the Lord. Yet these clouds of affliction do not necessarily mean that we have not been living close to him, as we have seen in the case of Job.

We remember likewise in the experiences of our Lord Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before his crucifixion, how he said to his disciples, Peter, James and John, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." We remember that God did not give him quietness, but allowed trouble like a great flood to sweep over his soul. He was troubled to know surely whether he had been entirely loyal, faithful and obedient, as was necessary to maintain the Father's favor. We are told by the Apostle Paul that our Lord Jesus "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him out of death—and was heard."—Hebrews 5:7.

We find that the Father sent his angel to minister unto his dear Son, in his deep distress. As soon as the angel had given our Lord the assurance of the Father that he was well pleasing in his life and conduct, he became perfectly calm. And the assurance sustained him in all the trying experiences which followed—the trial before the Sanhedrin, before Pilate, the treatment of the soldiers, the journey on the way to Calvary, and in the midst of the trying process of execution which followed.

Only at the last, when the Father, because Jesus must take the sinner's place, withdrew his presence from him in his dying moment did our Lord manifest disturbance of mind. Then he cried out in agony of soul, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was necessary for our Lord to experience the entire cutting off from God and from all relationship to God, in order to pay the full penalty for Adam's sin. This experience was at the very last moment. The heavenly Father permitted this, for it was necessary to our Lord that he should realize the meaning of the sinner's separation from God.

We do not consider it necessary that in every case our Lord's true and faithful followers should have a similar experience. We are not, as was our Redeemer, the ransom, the Sin-bearer for the world; but it would not be surprising if some may have similar experiences to those of our Lord. Some of the saints have died, exclaiming: "I am sweeping through the gates of the New Jerusalem!" while others have had dying experiences more like those of our Lord, and have cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

We can be content to leave our experiences entirely in the hands of him who loves us, and can have an inward peace and calm and a rest of soul, knowing that no outward storm will be permitted but such as the Father sees will bring forth in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness, if we are properly exercised thereby.

RESTITUTION FOR MANKIND PICTURED

In the concluding chapters of the Book of Job, Jehovah addresses his afflicted servant, reproving his temerity in attempting, with his little knowledge, to judge God. This Job acknowledges, and finds peace in trusting God. Job's three friends, however, are severely reproved by God. But when they obey God and go to Job and offer up for themselves a burnt offering according to the Lord's commandment, and Job prays for them as God further instructed, they are restored to divine favor. At once Job's prosperity returns—his friends and influence are restored; his wealth was exactly doubled, for he had twice as many flocks and herds and camels. He had also the same number of sons and daughters as before, and the Scriptures note that there were "no women found so fair as the daughters of Job."

This ending of Job's career with a general restitution is incomprehensible to those who have never seen that the plan of God in Christ provides for a "time of restitution" of all things lost in Adam, to all of his race who will accept them under the terms of the New Covenant. (Acts 3:19-21) But those who do see this plan of God can readily see, too, that Job's experience was not only actual, but also typical. He seems to represent mankind. Man was at first in the divine likeness and favor, with all things subject to him. (Psalm 8:4-8) Because of Adam's sin Satan obtained an influence in human affairs which has resulted in degradation, sickness and death. God, however, has never really forsaken his creatures, and is even now waiting to be gracious unto all in and through Christ Jesus our Lord.

ENDURING HARDNESS AS GOOD SOLDIERS

"Thou, therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."—2 Tim. 2:3.

There are many illustrations used in the Bible, and all of them very forceful. The one which represents the Christian as a soldier, has a great deal of meaning. We are not to suppose that the angels in heaven are soldiers, nor that that term would be applicable to them. There is no war going on in heaven, but there is a war going on here on earth.

Six thousand years ago our first parents became entrapped, and the whole race was sold under Sin—became the servants of Sin and Satan. More and more this influence has prevailed —not that all willingly surrender to Satan, but that he puts darkness for light and light for darkness, and thus deceives mankind and leads them captive at his will.

All who desire to be in harmony with God would be out of harmony with Satan and sin. And they might at times have resisted these, and have tried to do God's will. But there was no organized undertaking for the overthrow of sin until Jesus came. His mission was to overcome Satan, overcome sin, and to bring everything into full harmony with God's arrangement.

Earth, this province of God's great empire, being in a rebellious state, needed to be conquered and restored, and Jesus undertook the work, with divine backing.

The first step was laying down his own life as a ransom-price for the sin of the whole world, and thus making good for the original transgression. But before taking his power and exercising it in the overthrow of Satan and sin, Jesus, according to the Father's will, began the selection of a church class, variously styled members of his body, his bride, his companions and brethren in the kingdom, his royal priesthood, under himself as the great royal High Priest. All those who have heard the message, and whose hearts have been responsive, who have recognized the wrong conditions here prevailing, and who have felt sympathy for the race that is here sold as slaves of Sin and Death—all these have been invited to become members of this select class.

TERMS OF WARFARE STATED AT BEGINNING

These were informed at the very beginning that it would be necessary for them to fight a good fight. They were invited to enlist in the army to battle against Satan, and instructed that they should have full confidence that ultimately faith would have its victory. They were also told that they must suffer, laying down their lives as their Head and Forerunner laid down his life—not living for the world, but contrariwise, accepting his arrangement and living altogether for the purpose of carrying out their consecration with him.

The final honor to which God has invited them is to a share in his great kingdom, with his Son. This implies a change of nature to all who have become soldiers of the cross, followers of the Lamb; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." These are called to forego the rights and privileges of the present time, and by their lives to leave their mark, for a testimony to the world, for the benefit of mankind, and especially for the glory of God and for the calling out of others who might desire similarly to walk in the narrow way.

The warfare that these are called upon to wage is a warfare against sin and the powers of darkness. (Eph. 6:11) They are pledged to the Lord for right, for truth, for goodness. They are thus to fight the good fight. These soldiers will find, too, that some of their greatest difficulties are right in their own person. They have tendencies toward sin, because of being members of the human family, children of wrath, of sin, even as others. Their relationship to the Lord is as new creatures.

SELF OUR SPECIAL FOE

The new creature is obliged to fight against and to control the flesh. This is a great battle which each fights for himself. Each soldier may more or less assist and set an example to the other soldiers, but the chief battle is with himself. It is a hand-to-hand conflict. Although he is expected at all times to be on the alert against the wiles of Satan and the world, yet his special fight is with the enemies in his own flesh. St. Paul himself had taken the shield of faith—wherewith to quench the fiery darts of the wicked—and the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God Timothy was a young soldier, and the Apostle was encouraging him with advice. He had already come into the Lord's company, under the Lord's standard.

THE QUALITIES OF A GOOD SOLDIER

St. Paul intimates that any one of us may be a good soldier, or contrariwise, a bad soldier, a poor soldier. We can imagine some soldiers who would be very disregardful of orders, not prompt to obey the command of the Leader. We can see that a good soldier is (1) one who is very much in sympathy with the Captain of his salvation. He is an intelligent soldier, and sees that he has on the proper armor, that he wears it properly and that he gets the very best possible use out of this armor. He sees that in his walk he has a soldierly bearing, as a proper representative of the King, and of the great kingdom so near at hand.

(2) He is not ashamed of his flag, nor of the garment of Christ's righteousness. He is to lift up the standard of righteousness everywhere. He enlists in this warfare, knowing that it means his death—the death of the flesh, of the human nature. He is to be a good soldier—not merely outwardly loyal, merely wearing the uniform, but having the full spirit of the cause. This means that whatever experiences come to him he is to receive these thankfully, and be glad to have the privilege of enduring something for his Captain and in the interests of the kingdom to which he has sworn allegiance.

The thought which the Apostle is impressing is that all good soldiers should endure hardness—hard, distressing conditions, circumstances that are quite unpleasant, difficult. Earthly soldiers are obliged to tramp through water and mud, enduring long, wearisome marches. Sometimes they are short of rations, sometimes obliged to sleep on the ground. Sometimes their battles are waged in the face of great opposition.

So the soldier of Christ is to endure whatever experiences may come to him, under the guidance of his Captain, not only willingly, but gladly, rejoicing that he has been permitted to enter this army of the Lord, knowing that these experiences are working out for him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." These various hard experiences of the Christian are designed to work out for his good, that he may "lay hold on eternal life," and gain a share in the kingdom with his Redeemer.

CARELESS LIVING A FORM OF PROFANITY

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."—Exodus 20:7.

This command was not given to the Gentiles; for the Lord had no dealings with the world. It was given to the Jewish people, who had come into relationship with God through the Law Covenant. We have every reason to believe that many of the Jews tried very hard outwardly to keep the Ten Commandments, the keeping of which meant life, the failure to keep which meant death. All of their endeavors failed, and they continued to die.—Romans 7:10.

Notwithstanding the endeavor of many to observe this command of our text, St. Paul declared respecting them that the name of God was blasphemed through them amongst the Gentiles. (Romans 2:24) We cannot suppose that the grosser meaning of blasphemy was the Apostle's thought. Blasphemy was a terrible thing among the Jews. Even a parent who heard his own child blaspheme was instructed to stone that child to death for so doing. We suppose the Apostle meant that the kind of living practised among the Jews really blasphemed God's name before the world. They were professedly God's people. And if under divine instruction, divine care, and divine recognition, they did the things dishonoring to God, they were blaspheming his name.

While the Ten Commandments were not given to the church, yet every feature of the Ten Commandments is a command; for by the character of our consecration we are bound to seek to know God's will, even beyond the mere letter of his Word. Hence, while the church is not under the Law Covenant, we are under the general instruction of the Ten Commandments. Therefore the Apostle says that "the righteousness of the law [the true meaning of the law] is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."—Romans 8:4.

It is not supposable that any real child of God, any consecrated follower of Christ, could have a desire to take the name of the Father in vain. Hence the apparent meaning of this command is not applicable to us; for since we have become his children, and have received his spirit, it would be the farthest thing from us to wish to profane his name. But as the Jews profane the name of the Lord by careless living amongst the Gentiles, so there is a great danger of Christians profaning his name by careless living. And this is indicated in the Scriptures as being a danger.

Our Lord speaks of some who, at his second coming, will say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works, and in thy name cast out devils?" And he will say, "I do not recognize you." They have been deceiving themselves. (Matthew 7:21-23) They did not come in by the door of the sheep-fold, and have never been recognized by the Lord as his sheep. Amongst them there will perhaps be a great many who have done philanthropic and reform work.

But the thousand years of Christ's reign will be the time when God will institute the real reform work, through Christ's kingdom. Now the Lord is working in the hearts of his people, through his promises, seeking the particular class who are moved and exercised by these promises. Thus he is finding a little flock, a peculiar people, to be joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom.

LET US TAKE NOT HIS NAME IN VAIN

From this standpoint, all of God's people should be very much on guard that they do not take the name of the Lord in vain when they profess to be his people, his children—when they profess to be the followers of Jesus and call themselves Christians. It would be far better if many professed Christians did not take the name of Christian at all. The only ones who may properly take Christ's name are those who really become his disciples. The only condition under which any may become his disciple is to take up his cross and follow him—give up his life, surrender his will.

Although this commandment was not given to spiritual

Israel, we can readily see how the spirit of it applies to us. We have taken the name of Christ as our name. We profess to be members of the body of Christ. And the holy name of the Head belongs to all the members of his body. The honored name of the Bridegroom belongs to his espoused. What carefulness the thought of this should give us, and how appropriate it is that we should see to it that we have not taken that blessed name in vain; that we appreciate the honor, the dignity, the responsibility, of our position as his representatives and ambassadors in the world! Let us, therefore, walk circumspectly, taking earnest heed that we bring no dishonor to that hallowed name; but on the contrary, that we honor it in our every thought and word and deed.

"What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation [behavior] and godliness." "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [behavior]; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." —2 Peter 3:11; 1 Peter 1:15, 16.

LAWFUL ON THE SABBATH

MARCH 15.—Luke 13:10-17; 14:1-6.

"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."—Mark 2:27.

Much confusion prevails amongst Christian people respecting the Sabbath day. One fruitful source of this confusion is that few realize that God's arrangements with the followers of Jesus are totally different from those which he made with natural Israel under the Law Covenant. Everything under that covenant was a type and contained a valuable lesson for Christians, but to mistake the type for the antitype is to confuse our minds and to miss the beauty and force of the antitype.

There was no Sabbath day before the Jewish law, except in the sense that the word Sabbath signifies rest, and that we are informed that God rested on the seventh great day, or epoch, of the creative week. Enoch, who walked with God; Abraham, the friend of God, and others pleasing to the Lord, knew nothing about the Sabbath, even as they knew nothing about the Atonement Day and its sacrifices, or other matters appertaining to Israel's Law Covenant.

The Apostle Paul explains that the Israelites were a house of servants, under Moses; but that the church is a house of sons, under Christ. (Hebrews 3:1-6) God's method of dealing with the house of servants would very properly be different from his method of dealing with the house of sons. Commands are given to the servants without explanation why or wherefore. But the Apostle explains that God deals with us as with sons. To the true Christian the heavenly Father makes known his plans, his purposes, his arrangements, in order that his sons, who have his spirit, may sympathetically enter into those plans, by obedience to the extent of self-sacrifice, not because of command, but because of joy to do the Father's will.

Jesus and the apostles were Jews, and were under obligation to the Law Covenant up to the time that Jesus by his death became the "end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Since that time the followers of Jesus are in no sense of the word bound by the Jewish law. They are interested in the Ten Commandments, because those commandments in an outward way indicate the will of God; and all the sons of God are anxious to know the Father's will, that they may voluntarily do it. But God does not address the house of sons, "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal"; for so surely as they have been begotten of the holy Spirit at all, they will not wish to kill, nor wish to steal.

In dealing with the house of sons God, through the Head of the house, has set up a new law, which is all-comprehensive and means much more than the law of Moses was previously understood to signify. It is the law of love. As the Apostle declares, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The law is comprehended in the one word love—love supreme for God, and love for our fellow men. Finally, Jesus declared, "A new command I give unto you, That ye love one another as I have loved you." This he said to us who are laying down our lives one for the other.

SEVENTH DAY—FIRST DAY

Early in the Gospel dispensation the followers of Jesus began to meet on the first day of the week. Apparently the custom had its start in the fact that Jesus rose from the dead on that day, and appeared several times on that day to his followers; and on the following first day of the week he appeared again. It became a custom amongst the disciples to have their fellowship on that day, not that it was commanded of the Lord, but because of their desire to remember the Master and to have fellowship with each other. Quite probably they kept the Sabbath day and the first day as well, for a time. They evidently had difficulty in realizing how completely they had passed from the domination of Moses and his law to be under the headship of Jesus and his guidance—"the liberty wherewith Christ makes free" indeed.

Although Christians have now abandoned the observance of the seventh day in favor of the first day of the week, many erroneously think that God authorized the change. But not so; the Christian is not under law, but under grace. It was from privilege that the early disciples met together on the first day, and not by instruction of God. So it should be still, and so it is yet with some. True Christians cannot have too much opportunity for fellowship together for the study of the heavenly Father's Word, and for offering him the worship and homage of their hearts.

True Christians undoubtedly are glad that there is a special day of the week set apart, in which they can more particularly give themselves to prayer, worship, praise and Bible study, and good works—even though the enforcement of such a Sunday be by human law and through a misconception. Glad would many of the Lord's people be if their earthly affairs were so arranged as to permit of two Sundays in each week, or more. But in order to enjoy Sunday properly, the Lord's consecrated people should be freed from the misconceptions which so generally prevail.

THE SABBATH OF REST

Israel's law provided two Sabbaths. One, every seventh year, found its multiple and fulfilment in the fiftieth year, the year of Jubilee and of full release. The other was every seventh day, and found its fulfilment through its multiple, in the fiftieth day—the day of Pentecost—the day which foreshadowed the rest into which the people of God may enter even now.

The Apostle refers to both of these in Hebrews 4:1-11. The Sabbath day has its fulfilment in the rest and peace of heart enjoyed by the antitypical Israelites. It is a perpetual Sabbath with them. They enter into rest. They have reached that place where they have the peace of God ruling in their hearts. They rest from their own works—from all hope that they could commend themselves to God by works of any kind, Sabbath keeping or otherwise. They enter into rest because they see that God has provided in Jesus the help necessary for all, that they are "complete in him." This rest or peace no man taketh from them. It is theirs so long as they abide by faith in Christ, in God.

But, as the Apostle points out, "there remaineth a rest for the people of God"—a future rest. The church will enter into that rest when they experience their resurrection change, when they are made like the Savior and enter into the joys of their Lord. That will be the complete rest. So far as the world is concerned, the great Messiah's reign of a thousand years will be the Sabbath of the world in general, in which they will have the privilege of attaining perfection in every sense of the word and thus will enter into rest by coming into harmony with God.

Jesus did many of his miracles on the Sabbath days, partly no doubt to emphasize the fact that the great Sabbath, the thousand-year day, the seventh thousand-year day of earth's history, will be the time of his kingdom, in which all mankind will be privileged to be healed from sin and sickness, sorrow and pain, and to be brought to the full perfection of human nature, to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary.

TO DO GOOD ON THE SABBATH

Since Jesus according to the flesh was a Jew, and therefore bound by all the commandments of the Jewish law, it follows that he could do nothing contrary to that law. He could not set it aside, nor was it proper that he should explain to the Jews the real meaning of the Sabbath. All that would come later, under the holy Spirit's instruction, after Pentecost, after the begetting of the spirit; for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But Jesus could, and did, correct certain of the misapprehensions of the law which had crept in through the teachings of their rabbis, the Doctors of the Law, and the Pharisees.

These for show exaggerated the letter of the law in some respects, while they entirely ignored its spirit. Thus when the disciples of Jesus, passing through a wheat field, rubbed some of the grains in their hands to hull them before eating, the Pharisees complained that they were breaking the Sabbath—they were threshing and winnowing. Jesus showed that this was not the purport of the law. It was not made to hinder any good or necessary work, but to benefit the people. According to the Doctors of the Law, to search for a biting flea

would be sin on the Sabbath day, because it would be "hunting." Thus in various ways they made the reasonable law of God to appear unreasonable to the people; and while thus particular in trifles, they ignored the weightier matters of the law, which appertained to justice, love and mercy.

In the lesson before us we have two instances of healing on the Sabbath. A woman had an infirmity which had bowed her down for eighteen years. Jesus released her from her bondage on a Sabbath day. He laid his hands upon her and said, "Thou art loosed from thine infirmity"; and she was made straight and glorified God. But the ruler of the synagogue was indignant and said unto the people, There are six days in which you can come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day.

This was intended as a special rebuke to Jesus, intimating that he was not so holy and so careful of the Sabbath as he should be, but was a violator of the law. But Jesus replied: "Ye hypocrites! doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to water? and ought not this woman, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bondage on the Sabbath day?" And his adversaries were put to shame.

The other case was that of a man troubled with dropsy. Jesus, knowing their attitude of mind, discussed the subject in advance on this occasion, asking the Doctors of the Law and the Pharisees, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day or not?" They made no answer. Then he took the sick man and healed him, and inquired of the critics, "Which of you having an ass or an ox fall into a pit would not straightway draw him out on a Sabbath day?" But they could not answer.

A proper understanding of the Sabbath, the rest which God has provided for his people, is a great blessing. "We who believe do enter into rest"—an abiding rest, a perpetual Sabbath. And all such are glad to have special opportunities, as these may present themselves, for gathering together in the name of the Lord, for worship, praise, study and fellowship. Without regard to which day, the Apostle suggests to us, Let us forsake not the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; and so much the more, as we see the day drawing on—the glorious day of Messiah's kingdom approaching, and the shadows of night and darkness, of ignorance and superstition passing away.—Heb. 10:25.

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

MARCH 22.—Luke 13:18-30.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."—Matthew 7:21.

Few apparently have noticed that nearly all of Jesus' teachings related to the kingdom of God. This was because the kingdom of God is the great divine remedy promised for the release of mankind from the curse, and the blessing of the willing and obedient with an uplift out of sin and death conditions, a return to harmony with God and the everlasting life which he is pleased to give to all who love him. All that took place in the world prior to the coming of Jesus was merely preparatory. Life and immortality had not even been brought to light before the first advent. Thus we read, "Christ hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." There were hints, suggestions and promises of coming blessings; but the method of procedure, etc., was not brought to light.

The typical sacrifices of Israel taught a great lesson; viz., that better sacrifices must be offered before the blessings could be received. The typical kingdom of Israel taught that Messiah would be a great King, and rule with great power. But when the last of the kings of David's line, Zedekiah, was dethroned, the Lord through the Prophet declared, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: until he come whose right it is; and I will give it unto him."—Ezekiel 21:25-27.

The work of Jesus at his first advent, his sacrificial death as an atonement for man's sin, was necessary as the foundation or preliminary to the setting up of God's kingdom for man's deliverance from the power of sin and death. But, although the Redeemer died eighteen centuries ago, the kingdom is not yet set up. We are still praying, "Thy kingdom come." Nevertheless, when enlightened by the words of our Lord and the apostles, we see that the divine program has not stopped. An elect church is being sought, which is to be the bride of Christ and his joint-heir in his kingdom, and not until this great work shall have been accomplished can the kingdom come. After the full number of his elect church shall have been perfected in the first resurrection, they shall reign with him, as he promised—"a royal priesthood"; "kings and priests unto God."

There should be no doubt that these features of the plan of God constitute quite sufficient reasons why the Savior should preach and teach so much respecting the kingdom. The different parables illustrative of the kingdom treat it from different standpoints, just as we might take different photographs of persons or of a building, or of the same person or thing at different ages or stages of development or from different angles. So some of the parables of the kingdom tell about the persecutions which would come upon those who would be the heirs of the kingdom. Others tell that there would be a great outward appearance of prosperity, while the true kingdom class would be still a little flock.

One parable at least tells about the future work of the kingdom, after the Church is completed and sits with Christ in his throne. This is the parable of the Sheep and the Goats, which has its fulfilment positively dated by the expression, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them the one from the other, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats."—Matthew 25:31, 32.

This dividing of the world, the Gentiles, will progress for a thousand years, and eventually will make a most complete separation, identifying the sheep of the Lord's favor and introducing them to the blessings intended for them, and destroying the goat class as being really servants of sin and of Satan. These will go away into everlasting punishment, symbolized by fire. The punishment will be everlasting, even though they will be unconscious; for "the wages of sin is death," not torment. Therefore the everlasting punishment will be an everlasting death, from which there will be no redemption, no future recovery.

A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED

Two illustrations of the kingdom occur in this lesson. In the one the Lord likens the kingdom to a grain of mustard seed, which from a small beginning would become quite a large bush, and the birds of the air would lodge in its branches. This evidently was intended as a picture of the outward appearance of the church—very prosperous, so prosperous as to invite the birds. Elsewhere Jesus declared that the birds represented the wicked one and his agents, ever ready to take away the seed of truth and to work adversely as respects the Gospel program. (Matthew 13:4, 19) In Revelation also the great Teacher speaks of the church as becoming Babylon, confusion, and as being "a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." (Revelation 18:2) The picture fits.

Again the Master illustrated the experiences of his church as an embryotic kingdom. His second parable tells of a woman who hid some leaven in three measures of meal until the whole batch was leavened. This, Bible students are coming to understand, signifies a corrupting of the divine message—the spiritual food which God had prepared for the church. A woman in symbolic language represents a church system; and the Master tells us that such a church system will mix leaven, or ferment, in the food of the family of God until the whole mass will be corrupted. For be it noted that leaven in the Bible is always used as a symbol of corruption, of sin. This parable shows that the faith once delivered to the saints would be lost, vitiated, mixed with error, until it would no longer be nourishing to the family. St. Paul pictures the same matter, saying that in the latter days "some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons."—1 Timothy 4:1.

These false doctrines are what are troubling the people of God today. Our hearts are better than our heads; for the hearts of the consecrated are in tune with the Infinite One, while the creeds of the dark ages are quite out of tune. The blessings that are lately coming to Bible students are largely the result of breaking loose from the creeds formulated in the dark ages, and getting back to the teachings of Jesus, the apostles and the prophets—the only inspired authorities. Their words alone constitute the proper food whereby we are to be nourished. The Word of God is sufficient, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished.—2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

Some dear Christian people, looking at matters evidently from a wrong angle, are still deceived into thinking that it is possible for the church, as the kingdom of God in an embryotic condition, to do the work which God assigns to that church in her future glorified, perfected condition. Such shut their eyes to the fact that the number of heathen in proportion to the

number of Christians doubles every century. Such try to count up Christians by the hundreds of millions, entirely ignoring the fact that Jesus has declared that the Gospel church, the elect, who are walking in his steps, will be altogether but a little flock.—Luke 12:32.

THE CALLED SAVED

The blessing of the heathen is not merely for those now living, but for all who have ever lived. Messiah's kingdom will triumph gloriously in the Lord's due time. The knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth (Isaiah 11:9), until none shall need to say to his neighbor or to his brother, Know thou the Lord; for all shall know him. (Jeremiah 31:33, 34) It is in order that all may come to a knowledge of the truth that God has promised that "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust"; that "all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth." A faithful few will come forth to glory, honor, immortality and a share in the kingdom; and the unreconciled many will come forth later, that the love of God may be testified to them, and that they may have the opportunity of the rewards and chastisements of the kingdom, to help them back to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary.

Some inquired of the Lord, Will there be but few saved? Jesus did not give a direct answer to the question, doubtless for two reasons: (1) The holy Spirit had not yet come, and his followers could not then be prepared to understand the plan of God thoroughly. (2) It was not due time to explain all the particulars of the spiritual salvation of the church, to be like unto her Lord, and then later the human restitution of the world to the image and likeness of the first Adam. Jesus applied the matter to his hearers personally, saying: "Strive ye to enter in [to the kingdom] by the narrow door; for many, I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house is risen up and shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open unto us, he shall answer and say to you, I know you not whence ye are."

For a certain period of time the door to the high calling of the church stands ajar. Jesus opened up his new way of life through the veil; that is to say, his flesh—his sacrifice. (Hebrews 10:19, 20) The possibilities of entering into this way were first presented to the Jews; and after finding the suitable ones of that people, God has directed the message hither and thither amongst the Gentiles for these more than eighteen centuries. Apparently the gathering of the elect has been nearly completed. As soon as the last one completing the elect number shall have qualified for glory and shall have passed through the door, it will shut.

About that time, a great awakening of religious thought will come to the world, in the midst of a great time of trouble. Then many will begin to say that they have been neglecting the great prize, that they have failed to purchase the pearl of great price on the cheap terms on which it was offered to them—their little all. Then there will be great lamentation amongst this class, and a crying, Lord, Lord, are we not to be of the bride class? But the Lord will disown them as respects the bride company. Then they will be in great sorrow. Weeping and gnashing of teeth will prevail. This will not be in some far-off place of eternal torment, as once we supposed; but, as the narrative intimates, it will be right here on the earth, amongst a class who neglected the privileges of the high calling when they knew of it.

Bringing the matter down to his hearers, but still leaving it applicable to all who have heard the message throughout the Gospel age, the Lord intimates that some of these will have been in close touch with him and his followers. They had a form of godliness and claimed to have done many mighty works, yet the Lord will disown them as respects any privileges in the kingdom. They will not even have a share in the earthly kingdom. It will be given to the worthies of the past who lived and died before the high calling was opened up.

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets and faithful ones of the past are to be princes in all the earth, the visible representatives of the invisible Messiah and his church in glory. The heirs of the kingdom will not be entirely Jewish, because the Jews as a nation were not sufficiently holy and because the Lord could accept only the holy. When the call to joint-heirship in the kingdom would go out to the Gentiles, some would come from the East, the West, the North and the South, and have a share in the kingdom. The Jews were first in God's favor and the Gentiles last; yet some of the first with privilege and opportunity would fail.

WHAT DOTH JEHOVAH REQUIRE?

MARCH 29.—Matthew 7:24-29.

"What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"—Micah 6:8.

Jesus sought to impress upon his hearers that it was not sufficient for them to hear that a kingdom of God was coming, and that it would bring certain blessings to the world. It was not sufficient that they should know that a kingdom class was being called out of the world to be Messiah's joint-heirs in that kingdom. Action would be necessary on their part if they would attain to this high privilege which God had granted to them. "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works," wrote St. James. Not that we are to attain the kingdom by our works; for, imperfect through the fall, we are unable to do perfect works, acceptable to God. It will be our faith in God and in the Lord Jesus that will bring us the victory, if we gain it; but the victory will be accounted only to those who shall, to the best of their ability, work out their salvation with fear and trembling. God will work in such, and through Christ bring them off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors.

Jesus gave an illustration, or parable, declaring that those who heard his message and rendered obedience thereto would be like a wise man, who built his house upon the rock, where the descending rains would not wash away the foundation from underneath, nor in any wise harm it. The storms of life are sure to come; and the great crisis of life, death, is sure to come. Amidst those trials there will be calmness, confidence and security for such as have accepted the Lord's arrangement and have been walking to the best of their ability in the footsteps of Jesus. To them death will be merely a transition from the earthly state to the heavenly, by the power of the first resurrection—"changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 15:50-52) Their faith and confidence, built upon God's promises, can never fail them. For such there is laid up a crown of life, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give them at that day.—2 Timothy 4:8.

On the other hand, Jesus intimates that many who heard his words and expressed great appreciation of them, would fail to take the proper steps to attain the glorious kingdom privileges which he presented. They would allow custom, habit, love of pleasure, love of ease, the spirit of the world, to hinder them, either from making the proper, full devotion of themselves to God, or from carrying out that purpose. Such indeed might to some extent encourage themselves with hopes of the kingdom which would never be realized, because they never took the proper steps. They did not build their faith upon the proper foundation. Perhaps some of them built upon the law, and thought that they could commend themselves to God by their own endeavors, without the imputation of the merit of Christ. Such would be greatly mistaken. His death is our redemption-price, and his appearance in glory as our Advocate is to make good for our unintentional shortcomings.

With all such, the day of stress and trial will surely come; and their faith structure, being without a proper foundation, will give way. They will suffer the loss of all their hopes. This, however, does not signify, as many of us once supposed, that they will go to eternal torment. Evidently nearly all Christian people, misled by the creeds of the dark ages, read into the Word of God many things which it does not at all contain.

COMPARE ST. PAUL'S PARABLE

The Apostle Paul used a similar illustration, saying, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid—Jesus Christ." "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon"; for the day that cometh shall try every man's work of what sort it is. Those building with the gold, silver and precious stones of divine truth, developing their faith and character in harmony with the divine requirements and arrangements, will suffer no loss in the great trial day at the end of this age. But others who build with the wood, hay and stubble of human tradition and self-complacency, will find that their entire faith structure will be consumed; for the fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is.—1 Corinthians 3:10-15.

Nevertheless, the Apostle tells us that even those who will suffer the loss of their faith structure, if they have built upon Christ, will themselves be saved, though so as by fire. They will be what is sometimes termed a tribulation class, described

in Revelation 7:14-17: "These are they that have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him in his temple day and night." On these, God has various blessings to bestow. These will be in proportion to their obedience and loyalty and faith.

The class that the Apostle mentions as building with gold, silver and precious stones, will be a little flock, a royal priesthood, who will sit in the throne, wearing the crowns, and be joint-heirs with Jesus in the kingdom. But the class building upon the rock without proper materials, yet saved so as by fire, will be the great company class, the antitype of the Levites, who instead of being in the throne, will before the throne serve those in the throne; instead of wearing crowns, they will be granted palm branches, indicating a victory of an inferior kind. The priestly class will be the antitypical temple of God; the Levite class, the great company, will serve God in and through that temple class.

Nor is this all the salvation which God has purposed. These two classes include merely the spirit-begotten ones of this Gospel age. The ancient worthies are to constitute another class of saved ones—saved to an earthly perfection, to be princes in all the earth, glorious representatives of the invisible, spiritual, heavenly kingdom class. Then finally will come the blessing of all the families of the earth who shall prove willing and obedient during the thousand years of the kingdom reign, and who will be gradually lifted up, up, out of sin and degradation, by resurrection power, back to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed through the precious blood of Jesus. On the other hand, all intelligent, wilful opposers of God and righteousness, after a certain period of opportunity, will be destroyed in the second death—whether they belong to the class that is now on trial, a class of spirit-begotten ones, or to the class which will be on trial during the period of Messiah's reign. "All the wicked will God destroy."

THE PEOPLE WERE ASTONISHED

No wonder the people were astonished at such doctrines as Jesus gave forth, even though they but imperfectly understood these, for none could perfectly understand except through the enlightening influence of the holy Spirit, which was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified. (John 7:39) The teachings of Jesus had a positiveness quite different from the various speculations and wonderings of the scribes. So it is always with the truth. Wherever there is confusion and mysticism, we may be sure there is error and ignorance. Hence the necessity that all who preach Christ should have the anointing, or ordination, to preach, which God alone gives through the begetting of the holy Spirit.

OUR GOLDEN TEXT

"What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" At first one might be inclined to say, Why, that is different! There is nothing in the text of Scripture to say that in order to be an heir of the kingdom one must take up his cross, deny himself and follow in the footsteps of Jesus, self-sacrificingly!

This is true; but we should notice that the one is a requirement and the other a privilege. God does not require sacrifice. What he requires is loyalty and obedience, but not sacrifice. Whatever is sacrificial is so much more than the divine law requires. Thus in the case of Jesus, the divine law could not require him to do more than to obey it—to love God with all his heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love his neighbor as himself. But could not all this have been done by Jesus without the laying down of his life at all! Surely! Hence the Scriptures represent that when Jesus presented himself at Jordan, he consecrated all that he had to do the Father's will, even unto death—not merely to keep the law. He delighted to do the Father's will, even beyond what the Father demanded in the law. (Hebrews 10:5-7) And so must it be with all who would be acceptable footstep followers of Jesus and attain with him glory, honor and immortality on the heavenly plane.

The Prophet Micah addressed the Jews, and his message was from the standpoint of the law. He was encouraging the Jews to do their best to fulfil its requirements. Nevertheless, we know that no Jew ever fulfilled the law except Jesus, because all except him were fallen, imperfect. He alone was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners."

During the Millennial kingdom of Messiah, this same law of God, given to the Jews through Moses, will be given to the whole world of mankind through Messiah. The requirements will be to do justly, to love kindness, to walk humbly with God. The reason why Messiah's ministration of this law will be a success, while Moses' ministration of it was a failure, so far as bringing any to perfection was concerned, is that Messiah's kingdom will be fully prepared and authorized to forgive sinners and to help them up out of their imperfections—back to the image and likeness of God as it was originally represented in Father Adam.

The privilege and right to thus forgive sins and to thus lift the sinner out of degradation belong to Messiah, by virtue of his sacrifice for sins which he finished on Calvary. The right to life which he there laid down without forfeiting he will be prepared to give to mankind during the Millennium; and only the wilful rejectors will perish in the second death.

"O! we long to see thy glory
Streaming wide o'er all the earth;
Every error, old and hoary,
Flee to realms that gave them birth.

"For this glorious culmination,
Not for long shall Zion wait:
Soon will come her coronation;
Lo, her King is at the gate."

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

HOW DID SAUL OF TARSUS SEE JESUS?

Question.—"And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of [before the] due time." (1 Cor. 15:8) How could Saul of Tarsus have seen Jesus, if he was personally in heaven, and was to remain there until the end of the age?

Answer.—The Lord evidently designed that Saul should have the opportunity of being the twelfth apostle, to take the place of Judas. In order to be an apostle, it was necessary that he should be a witness to our Lord's resurrection. And so Saul of Tarsus was given a demonstration which made him an eye witness to the fact of the Lord's resurrection from the dead. He tells of it in this way: after detailing how Jesus had been seen of above five hundred brethren at one time, St. Paul says, "And last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

The miracle that was performed to enable Saul to see Jesus was not sufficient to save his eyes. If Jesus had been a flesh being, Saul's eyes would have been spared. But the fact that he was permitted to see, and with unveiled eyes (for it is not the natural order of things for a natural eye to see a spirit being), is a proof that some power was miraculously exercised which enabled him to see the Lord.

As to how this comports with the thought that Jesus went away, and that the heavens were to retain him until the end of the age, we have this to say: He left the world, telling his disciples that in the end of the age he would come in great glory to establish his kingdom. But nothing in this statement indicates that he might not be present at some time previous to this. This may be illustrated in the typical Atonement Day sacrifices. The high priest went into the Most Holy and offered the blood of the bullock; then he came out again and offered his second sacrifice, the goat. He then returned to the Most Holy.

"SITTING ON THE RIGHT HAND" A FIGURE

The Lord came to earth and was present among men. He finished the work that he had to do here. Then he ascended and appeared in the presence of God (the antitypical Most Holy) to make an appropriation of his merit (the blood of the antitypical bullock) on our behalf. We read that, having finished this work, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, until the time should come when the kingdom would be delivered over to him, and his enemies would be made his footstool. But the words sat down do not mean that he sat down on a literal seat, and has remained inactive during this age. The thought is that he was seated at the Father's right hand in the sense of being given this permanent position of honor, diginity.

The Scriptures declare that at his second coming, our Lord will be seen "sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." (Matt. 26:64) We understand, then, that it was in the official sense that he left the earth for the entire Gospel age, giving up all work as a man—and all work directly for mankind, until the close of the age. But he appeared to Saul, to enable him (as before stated) to be the twelfth apostle, in order to fulfil the Scripture statements concerning Judas. (Psa. 109:7, 8; Acts 1:15-20) This seems to have been an exceptional matter; for the power of the holy Spirit was to operate in the world during this Gospel age. We understand that Saul of Tarus had only a momentary glimpse of our Lord.

GIVING COUNSEL TO ONE IN TROUBLE

Question.—If a person in deep distress of mind should appeal to us for counsel, should we refuse to listen lest we thereby be hearing evil or evil speaking of another?

Answer.—We should not refuse to hear one who is in deep distress of mind and who comes to us for counsel. But we should suggest to the one in trouble, Now perhaps there is something about this matter which might be a reflection upon another. Perhaps you can state the trouble in such a way as not to tell me the name, and without even describing the person, so that I would be able to recognize him from the description. Thus, too, I might be able to give unbiased advice. If we found that another was involved, we would inquire, Have you fulfilled the requirements of Matt. 18:15? Have you spoken to the person?

If he answers in the affirmative, we should ask, And it makes no impression? And is he [or she] still continuing the wrong-doing? If he says that the party is not now continuing the wrong, but that he has made no apologies, then we would say, But we cannot require one to apologize. We can merely require him to cease from doing injury. You may be very thankful to the Lord that you have been relieved from the pressure of the trial.

Or the person might tell us that he had taken the Scriptural step, and that the party still continues to do injury. Then we would say, Have you taken the next step—to take two witnesses and go to him? If he says Yes, we would advise, Then just continue to the conclusion. You have done well thus far. If he said that he had taken the two witnesses and they had followed the course laid down in Matt. 18:15 very carefully, and that the injury had been stopped, we would say, Well, then, I would stop also. You have no authority to punish him. That belongs to God.

If the brother should say that he had taken the two parties and had gone to the offender, and that he would not listen to them, and that the wrong still continues, then we would advise that he go to the two and ask them to join him in bringing the matter before the church—preferably one of the two being an elder—for they should go primarily to the elders. If the elders are not such persons that confidence could be placed in them in such a matter, they are not suitable for eldership. And the one who was the elder would be the proper one to bring the matter before the church. Up to this time the case should not be discussed outside of these two witnesses.

THE LORD LOVETH A CHEERFUL GIVER

Question.—"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come." (1 Cor. 16:2) Does this injunction apply to all the Lord's people?

Answer.—We understand that the principle applies to all. This is not a law, however. The Apostle did not make laws for the church. He would not have had authority to make laws. He taught that all of the Lord's people are put on their own responsibility as to the use of the things they have sacrificed to the Lord.

What God commands is to be esteemed, not as a matter of sacrifice, but of obedience. Under the Jewish law, each of the Lord's people, each natural Israelite, was directed to give a tithe, a tenth. If he made a hundred dollars a month and gave one tenth of it, it would be ten dollars; if he made fifty dollars a month and gave a tenth of it, it would be five dollars. But the fifty dollars, or the one hundred dollars would include all that he would earn each month—not the net earnings, but the gross earnings.

If out of a hundred dollars the Israelite, after paying his tithe, was obliged to spend forty dollars for rent, ten dollars for gas, thirty dollars for food, ten dollars for himself and ten dollars for his wife, he would be out exactly ten dollars, or he would have to cut off five dollars from his wife's allowance and five from his own.

But Christians are not compelled to give one tenth. There are some in the Bethel family, however, who are giving one tenth. One of the family recently gave one fifth out of the net. We think a principle is here involved—a principle of sacrifice; and that if we follow the Apostle's advice, we would lay by something every week or every month to give to some who are in real need, and thus exercise a spirit of benevolence, like our heavenly Father, and that we may be able to have at least a small share in the support of the Lord's work. We believe that to whatever extent we have this thought before our minds we are likely to have a special blessing. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself."—Prov. 11:25.

"THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF FAITH"

Question.—"But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven (that is, to bring Christ down from above), or who shall descend into the deep (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead)?" (Romans 10:6, 7) What is meant by one's descending into the deep, to bring Christ from the dead, and by ascending into heaven to bring him down from above?

Answer.—The Apostle here means that some in his time were doubting and did not believe the message that the Messiah had come. They might have said that Jesus was a wonderful man, and that he did many wonderful works. But they were saying, "We do not believe that he was the Messiah and was put to death and then rose again. If you are willing to say that he was only a good man, we can accept that assertion, and are ready to call ourselves Christians. But harmony with God can be attained only by keeping the law."

This, the Apostle said, is not the language of faith. The Christian exercises faith in the Gospel message. He does not ask how any one could go to heaven to bring Jesus down to earth, or how any could go down to the grave and bring him up. A Christian will accept the facts as they are. Others are not in the attitude to believe God. The essential features of the Gospel are that Jesus came from above—that he was holy, harmless and undefiled, and gave himself a ransom-price for sinners. God recognized the merit of his work and raised him from the dead, and he ascended on high, there to appear in the presence of God—first for the church class, later for the world. All this the Christian accepts by faith.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

PERSONAL AND CLASS RIGHTS

Dearly Beloved Pastor:—

I have never thought it wise or expedient to write to you before, except on one occasion, and then only to express my love and to inform you that I had taken the Vow. I feel the same reluctance in writing now, lest I unwisely interfere with your time, but feel that it is the proper thing to do.

For a time some of the brethren have been holding in their homes regular meetings which have not been arranged for by the church. In some cases these meetings are conducted by brethren who are neither elders nor deacons. In other cases, certain deacon brethren in their love and zeal found an opportunity for assisting some beginners, and after a time began holding regular meetings in their interest, confining their meetings to evenings which did not conflict with the regular meetings of the church.

These matters came before the church and were discussed, resulting in the following resolution, which was voted upon and carried:

Resolved—That, while we do not question for one moment the good intentions, love and zeal for the Lord and the brethren, on the part of those who may participate, in our judgment the holding of regular meetings in ———, apart from those arranged by the church as a whole, are not to the spiritual benefit of the church of ———, tending, amongst other things, to prevent amongst the whole body here, that full measure of fellowship which we feel so greatly in need of at the present time.

Personally, I supported the resolution when it was voted upon. Later, after some misgivings as to whether I had acted wisely, I began giving the matter much prayerful thought, searching through the TOWERS and the Volumes for all the help I could find. Eventually, I came to the conclusion that so far as I was concerned I had made a mistake, and had participated in a resolution that to my mind has the tendency to interfere with the freedom and liberty of others.

Last night at a regular business session, the matter came up again for discussion, the brethren interested in some of these meetings having addressed a letter to the church, requesting the church to appoint a chairman for their meetings. After three hours' discussion the matter remains unsettled. And now I find myself confronted with a serious problem, which is giving me much concern. I find myself taking the opposite view from the other elders, and standing alone as an elder in the position I have taken; namely, that the resolution which we passed was unwise and inexpedient, having a tendency to destroy personal liberty, and being specially injurious to some of our brethren.

The position is taken that the passing of this resolution does not tend to bondage nor in any way to interfere with the rights of others. But to me it now appears as being in a measure, "an appearance of evil," which I desire to avoid, having in my mind this thought, that the good which might be accomplished by the resolution from one standpoint, would be more than offset by the injury it might do from another viewpoint.

I have not been and will not be contentious, but I do want

to know and to do the Lord's will; and finding myself taking the opposite view from the other elders and some of the other members of the class, I feel greatly concerned and ask your advice. Taking into consideration the present and future interests of the class, I feel that the matter is now too important to be in doubt about. I am,

Your brother in his blessed service, J. J. B.

OUR REPLY TO THE FOREGOING

We have endeavored to set forth in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. VI., what we believe to be the Scriptural teaching covering the queries of this letter. Repeating now, and seeking to make the matter applicable to the case in question, we would say:

Each spirit-begotten child of God, by virtue of his anointing, has a right to speak, to preach, to declare his heavenly Father's Word and message. The right to preach is not confined to bishops, nor to those upon whom they lay their hands, nor to elders and deacons chosen in the Scriptural manner by the stretching forth of the hands of the ecclesia. There are natural limitations, of course, such as lack of ability, from any cause, to hold the attention of an audience. Except the Apostle's restriction that the sisters are not to do public preaching, there are none.

With this broad view of the divine commission, the anointing or authorization of the holy Spirit, we perceive that none has a right to interfere with another. As Jesus said to the Apostle John, "Forbid him not."—Mark 9:39.

However, while none may interfere with or bind his brother, we may give over some of our own liberties. Recognizing that God is a God of order, and that every good work is prospered by order, and following the instructions of our Lord that his followers should assemble themselves together as one body, we realize that in taking our places in the body, we lose some of our own personal independence, liberties, privileges. We are glad to do this, for we believe it to be the Lord's will, because he instructs us: "Forget not the assembling of yourselves together." So all who thus become associates, or members, in a class of Bible students thereby surrender individual rights. They operate as a class, deciding which meetings are necessary and which are unnecessary, which of their number would best lead and serve the class, which render other service, etc.

From this viewpoint, it would not be proper for brethren associated in a class to start new classes and still consider themselves members of the original class. For a member of a class to individually start another class separate from anything provided for by his class, would mean to ignore it, to break off his relationship with the older class and would indicate that he would no longer in any sense of the word recognize himself, either as a servant of that class, or as a member of it, or as a sharer in its privileges. In reassuming his own personal liberty he laid down his privileges as a member of the class.

Hence from this standpoint we would say, that the brethren and sisters who participated in the organizing of the new classes evidently had only the best intentions, and quite probably did not consider at the time the real force and meaning of their action in organizing the classes.

It would look, too, as though the parent class and its elders and deacons had not fully provided for all the desires and necessities of the class; otherwise there would have been no incentive or reason for the starting of new classes aside from their arrangements. A sharp look out by the servants of the class should always be maintained, to see that the spiritual needs of the interested are supplied; and a sufficient number of elders and deacons should be chosen and appointed.

While we sympathize with the sentiments of those who drew up the resolution, we incline to doubt the wisdom of the movement. We believe that the better way for all concerned would be for all parties to confess their error. The class and the elders might very properly say: "We regret, dear brethren and sisters, that we had not such a grasp of the situation as would have enabled us at the time properly to supply the needs of the class as respects meetings. We promise to do our duty more faithfully in the future."

Those who started the new classes would, we think, do well to say: "We regret, dear brethren and sisters, that we did not take a broad enough view of the subject and put in a request for the meeting, to the intent that the need might have been supplied through appointments by the class."

With such apologies and resignations, we believe the entire matter will adjust itself and everybody feel relieved of a tension, and quite probably the results will not be far different from what they are now, except that the new meetings will be under the appointment of the original class.

THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION

Answering various inquiries, we report that the DRAMA is not a mere statement of the divine plan—not a mere sermon. It therefore appeals to the public. We trust that its effect will be a broadening of human intelligence and interest in respect to the Bible and the plan of God therein set forth. It is in four parts of two hours each. All witnessing it, we believe, will have larger conceptions of God, of the universe and of humanity—everything. Freed from some of the shackles of error and superstition and ignorance, some, we hope, will be the better enabled to receive the knowledge of God which the Bible sets forth. Many who have witnessed the DRAMA and heard its lectures express great delight. One minister is reported to have said: "I have learned more in these two hours than I learned in the entire three years of my theological course in the U. B. College at Dayton, Ohio." Catholics, Protestants and Jews—all come, all are interested, and no ground for offense is given to any.

The DRAMA is exhibited in Cincinnati at Music Hall; in Cleveland at The Temple, Prospect Ave. and E. 22nd Street; at Victoria Theatre in St. Louis, and at the American Theatre in Toledo—twice every day. In Boston it is shown in three parts every Sunday. Approximately twelve thousand people are now being reached daily in the cities mentioned.

Our pictures are very beautiful, very costly, and require a great deal of time for preparation. We are, therefore, limited as to the number of sets of the DRAMA we can put forth; we are limited also by the expense incidental to each presentation—for rent, light, operators, etc. We shall not be able to reach very far for some months.

Many more brethren have prepared themselves to be operators than we shall be able to employ for a good while. However, we have in mind something which we will mention as soon as it is ready, which may give opportunities of service to many more than are now employed. As for the sisters, we are relying upon the classes at the various cities where the exhibition is shown to supply the volunteers for ushers.

VOL. XXXV BROOKLYN, N. Y., MARCH 1, 1914 No. 5

CONSECRATION AS RELATED TO PRESENT-DAY CONDITIONS

Consecration is another name for sanctification, and signifies a setting apart. Sanctification, consecration, is intimately related to justification, because, although there is a partial justification when one turns from sin to God, there could not be a full justification, a justification to life, until such time as the person had made a full consecration. It would appear, then, that from the time when one starts toward God, when he turns away from sin, and seeks to know and to do God's will, there is a certain degree of consecration, setting apart to God, as in contradistinction to following evil. Each step that he takes toward God is a step toward sanctification and toward justification.

Looking back to the picture in the type as illustrative of this, we see that a Levite or a priest when first approaching the Tabernacle, desiring to enter, would discern in the distance the wall of white surrounding the Court. With more or less knowledge of what was inside he would approach it. When he reached the gate, he would see that the court was a sacred place, and that none would be received in any sense within its enclosure except as he recognized the sacrifice on the brazen altar just inside.

PROGRESSIVE STEPS OF JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

And so with a person who is in a semi-consecrated condition—a semi-justified condition. His first great lesson at the gate of the Court is that he is a sinner, that God accepts not sinners, and that only those who approach him through recognition of the great sacrifice will be received. Having recognized the sacrifice, having trusted in the death of Christ for justification from sin, his next step would be a deeper consecration, and thus a fuller justification. If he proceeds, this would bring him to the brazen laver of the Court, which would represent a washing away of the filth of the flesh—the becoming more and more clean in life, doing all in his power to free himself from sin. This also is acceptable to God.

But still he is neither justified completely nor sanctified

completely. As he presses on, earnestly desiring to come still nearer to God, he comes to the door of the Tabernacle. There he finds that he can go no further except by death—the death of his human will, the surrender of all human rights and interests. He recognizes, further, that this death must be a sacrificial death, and that he needs to be accepted of the High Priest, that the High Priest must make good for his imperfections by the imputation of his merit before the heavenly Father will accept his full consecration.

His consecration takes place, therefore, before his justification to life. He must present himself in sacrifice before Jesus can accept him, before he can present him to the Father, that he may become one of his members. It is to be a membership in the earthly body of Christ, for suffering and death, and a membership also in the spiritual body, for life and glory. The sealing of his consecration will be the divine acceptance of that consecration, which is indicated by a begetting of the holy Spirit. And begetting of the holy Spirit is indicated by his appreciation of the deep things of God, as represented in the altar of incense and the table of shew-bread; in experiences of chiseling and polishing, and by opportunities to serve. In some cases these various steps are taken almost simultaneously.

After acceptance on the part of God, the consecration must be persisted in, maintained. We must abide in Christ, in order to be sharers in the royal priesthood beyond the veil, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. If we in the present time suffer with him, then we shall also reign with him in glory.

AS TO THOSE CONSECRATING SINCE EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE

Some have been concerned as to what evidence, if any, a person consecrating himself since 1881 would have that his consecration had been accepted of God. We would say regarding this that something would depend on how recently the person had made the consecration. If very recently, he would have no sure means of determining. If a year or two had passed, and he had not in the meantime received any evidences of the holy Spirit's begetting—if he had not received increased ability to understand and appreciate the truth; if he had not experienced a love for the truth and a desire to serve it; if he had not found some opportunity for serving the truth, and some experiences of trial—in such case he would have reason to doubt the divine acceptance of his consecration.

But in such a case we would be inclined to wonder if the consecration had been properly made. Our thought would be that in one way or another God accepts every consecration, that a broken and contrite heart he will in no way despise. He did not despise those in ancient times who consecrated their lives to him—the prophets and the faithful Israelites of old. They were not despised nor rejected. They found opportunities for service and they had this testimony (Hebrews 11:5), that they pleased God; and they received a special blessing as a reward for their obedience and for all the sacrifices they had made. But this did not mean with them a begetting of the holy Spirit.

We have every reason at present to believe that the number of the elect is not yet completed, because of many crowns having been forfeited. We see coming in, day by day and week by week, some who give evidence of the Lord's acceptance, who evidence that the Lord is permitting them to lay down their lives in his service. But the time will undoubtedly come in the near future when the number of the elect will be complete. Then only such vacancies as might still occur by some falling out would remain. In that case there might be a number in the consecrated attitude, whom God would accept to take the places of some who would drop out. These would receive the begetting of the holy Spirit, and would find opportunities for serving the truth and for suffering for the truth's sake.

The evidences seem to be that there are still quite a number of vacancies in the elect number, because there are people coming into present truth and consecrating who have come directly from the world. This would seem to indicate that there are not at present a sufficient number fully consecrated to complete the 144,000. If there were, these would be given the preference over those not consecrated.

THE AVERAGE CHRISTIAN'S PRESENT POSITION

It would seem that throughout Christendom we can see today a great many who have taken the steps of consecration to a greater or less degree and more or less intelligently. Some recognize the Redeemer and the necessity for his work of salvation, and the fact that he gave his life as an offset for sin. Some have gone further, and with more or less intelligence have "washed at the laver."

But it seems that the great majority have not gone much further—that they do not see the propriety of going further. The majority of professed Christian people today do not go any further than to live a moral life. They have not reached the point of consecration to God, and hence have not yet reached the point of vital justification. The majority have perhaps gotten to the laver, and are desiring to wash and be clean.

As such come to learn the message of the kingdom as it is now going forth—that a full consecration to death is the only condition upon which any may be followers of Jesus—some of them gladly avail themselves of this knowledge and offer. They gladly go forward to the extent of full consecration, full justification; and by reason of their surroundings, and the fact that the majority of professed Christian people in the various denominations are behind them as regards attainment, instead of being ahead of them, these are looked upon as peculiar. The majority do not discern that this peculiarity is the very thing that God requires of those who would be joint-heirs with Christ—of those who would follow in the path of devotion and faithfulness, that they may be accounted worthy of reigning with Christ in his glorious kingdom.

THE GREAT COMPANY

A class mentioned in the Scriptures as the great company, who will come up out of great tribulation and wash their robes and make them clean in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14), and who will eventually attain to the position of antitypical Levites, is worthy of consideration. These have passed the various stages of full consecration and divine acceptance and the begetting of the holy Spirit. They became new creatures in Christ Jesus and entered into the Holy. But through an insufficiency in the matter of zeal, and a lack of stamina, because of their unfavorable environment in Babylon, these are failing to go on, failing to see that a full sacrifice of earthly things is the only condition upon which they can gain the heavenly things.

These are seeking to be followers of Christ and followers of Mammon, seeking to please the Lord and to please the world, having some of the Lord"s spirit and some of the spirit of the world, and in general not making progress, and not putting off the things of the flesh—anger, hatred, malice and strife, envy and evil speaking, the works of the flesh and of the devil, and therefore are not putting on the fruits of the spirit—faith, fortitude, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, meekness, gentleness, love.

It must be admitted that these have not had the right instructors, and they have gotten wrong conceptions—misunderstandings of the Lord's Word. Nevertheless, we cannot but have faith that God will guide these who are really his children, and will, through suffering, lead them to take a positive stand.

We do not think we should understand the Scriptures to teach that the great company will attain to the same degree of spiritual development as the little flock. It is true that God has only the standard of perfection for any of his creatures; but there are many who demonstrate by their lives that, if everything were favorable, they would be very loyal to the Lord and very loyal to righteousness. It is merely because the narrow way is so steep, so up-hill and rugged, that they have not the courage to go on. They fail to display that love and zeal which the Lord has set as the mark for participation in the royal priesthood.

We believe that the Lord would probably expect no more from the great company class than he would expect from the angels—as though he would say of each of these, Doubtless this person, under favorable conditions, would prefer to be my child and to live in harmony with me, and he would not think of living in sin, and would even suffer death rather than deny my name. If such be the test of the great company class, there might be a million who have demonstrated this degree of loyalty in the past, during this Gospel age. Some of these probably have even suffered martyrdom, when they were put to the final test.

OPPOSITION OVERRULED FOR BLESSING

We think there is good reason to believe that a considerable number who have made consecration are still in Babylon. We do not know this, however. We are near to the battle of Armageddon, near the time of the overthrow of Babylon; and we are seeking to give the Message of the truth as wide a circulation as possible, to the intent that this class may hear and come out, even though too late to win the great prize. That they are considerable in number is intimated in the 19th chapter of Revelation, where we are told that when Babylon falls the number of those released at that time will be a great multitude, that the voices of these will be "as the voice of many waters."

We believe that at the present time there are a great many in the nominal churches whose minds are gradually becoming more and more awake to the truth. In various pulpits, where the truth is opposed, many things of the Gospel of the

kingdom are being proclaimed; and this will have the effect of awakening and informing some of this class. Even though those bringing forward these truths declare them in spite and envy, nevertheless the message of the Gospel is preached. (Philippians 1:15-18) Many thus have their attention called to certain truths, which we would never be able to give them —many whom we could not reach.

For instance, some of these ministers mention that we believe the nominal church to be Babylon; others say that we believe that our Lord is now present, in his second advent, and is gathering his jewels (Malachi 3:17); still others are telling that we believe the end of the Gentile times will come in October, 1914. All these truths are being stated in a slanderous way. But we should not be surprised if the Lord will overrule for the good of his people many of these things.

Not long ago, to our great surprise, a brother told us that his first knowledge of the truth came to him through a Morehead tract. Another man heard his preacher say that we were the anti-Christ. He wanted to see what anti-Christ looked like, and he came to see and hear us, and got the truth, just on account of slanderous statements. So we have to be a target, that the Lord's message may go forth. We are not to think it strange, as though some strange thing happened unto us, that we are caused to be a gazing stock, and pass through fiery trials. Let us rejoice that we are accounted worthy to suffer with Christ, that when his glory shall be revealed, we may be glad also with exceeding joy.—1 Peter 4:12-14; Hebrews 10:32, 33.

THE SPIRIT OF HELPFULNESS

"Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification."—Romans 15:2.

The Apostle Paul does not say in our text, Let the younger ones please their neighbor, nor does he say, Let the older ones please their neighbor; but he says, "Let every one of us please his neighbor." All of the Lord's people should have such an interest in one another and in the Lord's cause, and should have so much of the spirit of the Master, that they would seek rather to sacrifice themselves than to gratify self, especially at the expense of others.

If we have the spirit of the Master, we shall find various ways in which we will sacrifice self without waiting for specific directions. The law of love will incite us to act contrary to our own natural preferences, if by so doing we shall help one another in the good way.

In his letter to the Corinthian church the Apostle illustrates this principle by a practical application re the Greek custom of offering their meat in their temples. After having been thus offered to the idols, the meat was considered to be especially sacred. Thus nearly all of the meat available was offered to idols, so that whenever one wished to have meat he could find none that had not been thus offered.

Those who had come out of idolatry into Christianity, knew that the worship of idols was wrong; for they had learned that there is only the one true God. They also knew that the meat itself had not been hurt by being offered to idols; for an idol is nothing. But they should have been willing to deny themselves meat rather than to injure the conscience of a weak brother who still thought that the meat thus offered was sacred, or who thought that it was contaminated. The Apostle declares that he would abstain altogether from eating meat rather than risk stumbling a brother who could not take the broader, truer view. To stumble such a one, might be to throw him out of the right way entirely.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR INFLUENCE

The Apostle did not say that it is not right to eat meat; but that he was willing to forego his rights and privileges in order to edify another. These others of whom he spoke had not come to appreciate fully the fact that meat offered to idols had not been hurt thereby. To set meat before a piece of stone would not injure it; and so to set it before an idol would not hurt it. But St. Paul could better afford to give up eating meat altogether than to stumble a brother.

The principle is obvious. We should, if necessary, be willing to deny ourselves some of our privileges if this course would be of any assistance to a brother and would avoid stumbling him. Some of the Lord's people have very sensitive consciences, others are less sensitive. The longer one has been in the school of Christ and the more ability he has, the more easily should he discern what would be pleasing to the Lord. As a Christian, he would not want to do anything to offend the Lord, even if he were to go without meat for the remainder of his life.

But if he could take the position that his own conscience would approve of a certain course, then the question would be, Would he allow his intelligence, his poise of mind, to work injury to a brother? Would he wish to stumble a brother, to make him weak, to lead him to violate his conscience? Or would he wish to lose all his influence for good over his brother? The Apostle answers this suggestion in the negative; he says, When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak consciences, ye sin against Christ. "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."—1 Cor. 8:1-13.

RE SUNDAY OBSERVANCE

Applying the above principle—our responsibility for our influence—to Sunday observance, we are not to feel a bondage, as the Jews did on their Sabbath day. But we should avoid driving tacks or making any unnecessary noises. We should avoid singing or playing on an instrument anything that would not generally be recognized as in keeping with things sacred. We should avoid what would be considered by others as not observing the Sabbath. We should do this for the sake of our influence. To our understanding every day is a part of the great Sabbath into which we have entered—rest in Christ. We have a greater liberty. But we are not to use this liberty to the injury of others.

Many people think that any kind of labor is a violation of the Fourth Commandment. From our viewpoint we know that the Sabbath of the Jew was typical; and we see what the antitype is. We are enjoying the antitype of that Sabbath. But while we might have liberty to work on Sunday, our so doing might stumble our neighbor. We would not be violating any principle in not observing Sunday; but for the sake of not stumbling our neighbor, we are glad to rest from our work and to give ourselves to the study of God's Word.

Christian people generally do not observe Sunday in the way they think they should observe it. The conception of many is that they should observe it as rigidly as the Jewish law set forth; and that neither the ox nor the ass, the automobile, the street cars nor the steam cars should be used. Indeed, they would not think it right to go any great distance on the Sabbath.

As a matter of fact, the nominal church of today are not living up to their own conceptions of God's law. As we get opportunity, we would like to assist these people to get a truer meaning of the Sabbath, that their consciences be not hurt, but be free from uneasiness. Sunday should be a day that is quiet and reverential in every way, and devoted specially to the service of God—a day in which business is restricted, and as far as possible eliminated. But the interests of the Lord's work forbid our always refraining from the use of steam cars, street cars, etc., on Sunday.

Remembering that the word Sabbath signifies rest, as the Apostle used it (Heb. 4:9, margin), we can see that the church of Christ keeps the Sabbath, or rest, every day, and recognizes God's arrangement in connection with this matter. Those who keep every seventh day as a Sabbath, but who fail to enter into and keep the rest of faith, are not keeping the true Sabbath, but keeping another, so far as the church is concerned.

The Sabbath arrangement was for the Jews. We have the better arrangement under our covenant. We enter into rest, our Sabbath, every day; and we are hoping soon to enter into the still greater Sabbath. In that Sabbath, the Millennium, we shall have not only rest of heart, but also perfection; and we shall then not be beset by the trials and difficulties of life. During his ministry Jesus chose the Sabbath day in which to perform miracles, heal the sick, that he might show forth the kind of works which he will perform during the great Sabbath day, the seventh-thousand-year day—the Millennium.

HELPING, NOT HINDERING, OUR NEIGHBORS

We can apply this principle in a general way. We can apply it to our conversation with Christian people. There is a way of taunting people on their ignorance, etc. This is not love; for love does not delight to expose another's weaknesses. The more careful we become in our words and our actions, the more polite we shall be, the more helpful.

"Politeness is to do and say
The kindest thing in the kindest way."

One may be polite for the sake of policy or for the sake of principle. Our pleasing of our neighbors should be for their edification. We should be glad to do all that we can for their assistance, their edification, their uplift, their upbuilding. If we can speak a pleasant word, a kind word, it would be for upbuilding; and we should speak it, instead of speaking an unkind word.

In our desire for the upbuilding of others we are to have in mind primarily the upbuilding of the Lord's people in spirit-

ual things. As the Apostle says, we are "to provoke one another." We know that there are different ways of provoking others, and St. Paul shows us the right way. What the Apostle had in mind was the reverse of provoking to anger, hatred and strife. Some of the dear brethren who are evidently very sincere have not caught the spirit of the truth on this subject; and wherever they go, they are apt to stir up the evil mind of others, instead of stirring up their good mind and provoking to love and good works.

We are to please our neighbors so far as it would be for their good, and according to right principles. But to upbuild one in injustice would not be right. We should not think it right to let our neighbor's chickens run all over our garden; and we think that he would thus be more edified by our firm stand for right. But we must not tell him how to manage his chickens. We must do our best to keep his chickens off our place; but we would make a mistake if we were to go in and order our neighbor's chickens, house and children. To do so would be busybodying. We shall have enough to do to look after the weaknesses of our own family.

THE END OF THE AGE A PERILOUS TIME

"In the last days perilous times shall come; men shall be traitors, heady, . . . lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."—2 Timothy 3:4.

The expression, "the last days," or the latter days, the closing days, refers, not to the end of the world in the sense that many expect this event, but is a Scriptural designation of the present time, the end of this age, when the reign of Righteousness is about to begin. We are glad to be living now in this harvest time! "The harvest is the end of the age." (Matthew 13:39—Diaglott) The warning given by the Apostle is that, instead of the world's being Christianized and converted to God at this time, the reverse condition will prevail. It will be a time of great peril—peril to the Lord's people—peril for those who have started out to follow Christ. However, it will not be so much a perilous time for the world.

The only ones who are on trial for life or death are those who have been released from the Adamic condemnation. To these the time described by St. Paul will be one of severe testing. The whole course of the world will be turned aside from the high standard that might have been expected. Men will be traitors. As long as it will be of advantage to them to perform a contract they will do so; when not advantageous they will not fulfil the contract. It will be a time when every man's hand will be lifted against his neighbor. Selfishness will be rampant. Each will do what will be to his own interest, regardless of obligation. There will be manifest headiness and selfishness and self-conceit. Men will be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." This condition is to be a sign of the end of the age.

Every thoughtful person must perceive that this condition of things is prevailing now. Whenever a contract is found to be unsatisfactory—whether it be a marriage contract or a business contract—the dissatisfied contractor is liable to break the agreement. This party to the contract then assumes the attitude of one who declares, Force me to keep it if you can. The Lord's people will keep their word and be firm for principle and true to their contracts, even when these prove disadvantageous to them. This attitude is pleasing to the Lord.

PREVALENCE OF THESE CONDITIONS UNIVERSAL

We find headiness of spirit in the world everywhere—a loss of respect for authority. No doubt there has been too much respect for authority in the past. Now the pendulum is swinging to the other side, and there is no respect for authority. This condition has been brought about by a lack of reverence for God—the inevitable result of loss of faith in the Bible as the Word of God. As people lose faith in the Bible, they lose faith in God, and become more selfish and more self-willed. This condition of affairs has been brought about by false doctrine, error. People think that God is their adversary, purposing to do them harm.

The higher critics have been seeking to put away what they have considered the absurdities of religious thought, and to this end have done away with the Bible. Bible students see that the absurdities have been brought about by the creeds and not by the Bible. But the world, losing confidence in God, are becoming more heady than ever before. Even the reverential fear which once held them is departing, and there is a disposition to doubt everything. People are in the condition of mind where they say, "Let us eat, drink and be merry"; nobody knows about the future; the preachers are all confused. Everything has come about by evolutionary processes. Let us enjoy the present. Let pleasure be our aim in life. This would seem to be the attitude of the world. They are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

WORLDLY SPIRIT IN SOME OF THE CONSECRATED

These conditions of our day make it a perilous time for the church. Do you ask, Would not the church, on the contrary, be more than ever led to love God? And would this not guard them and keep them from danger? We answer that some of God's people are becoming more and more immersed in the world. The spirit of the world surges all around them. With great difficulty could these come to realize that the whole world is astray in their ideas and ways. The tendency of all such is to have the mind of the world, even though they be spirit-begotten.

This worldly spirit, the Apostle suggests, would affect the church to some extent. Consequently some of the Lord's people would thus come into special peril at this time, because of neglecting their covenant with the Lord. Others would remember that covenant, and watch and pray, and so make good progress. Those who are living close to the Lord are, for this reason, developing in mind and heart. But these are few.

The great company class, while still loving the Lord, are becoming immersed in the spirit of the world. Even those who are living nearest to the divine standard will be more or less imperiled through this spirit, unless they continue diligent in prayer and the study of God's Word. What we see going on about us seems natural to our minds. The way in which other people spend time and money is a temptation to the Lord's people which must be steadfastly resisted.

A SUBTLE TEST

The Lord's people spend and are being spent in his service—by volunteer work, by attending meetings, by holding meetings and in various ways, according to opportunity. They are living separate from the world—distinct lives, lives of consecration. The world now has an eight-hour day. The Lord's faithful people would, on the contrary, make theirs a sixteen-hour day. But all these present-day conditions constitute perils. For us to do what others do, and to devote to the Lord's service only what the world considers a reasonable day's work, would not be fulfilling our covenant of sacrifice at all. Those who seek merely to do right, and to put in eight hours or so a day faithfully, after the manner of the world, will be judged from this standpoint; and they will merely obtain a place in the great company. They are not fulfilling the conditions of the covenant of sacrifice.

But the little flock will serve the Lord with such delight that they will scarcely know how to cease their efforts. They recognize that their bodies are fully consecrated to the Lord, and they are daily putting them to death in a reasonable, rational manner. In view of these perilous times, let us each ask himself the question, To which class do I belong?

COURAGEOUS DEALING—PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

"Deal courageously, and the Lord will be with the good."—2 Chron. 19:11.

There is a divine oversight of the affairs of those who serve God recognized here, and a divine blessing may be expected eventually upon all who deal justly. All heathen religions, as well as the Christian religion—the religion of the Bible—incline to lead the devotee to expect divine blessing. But no other religion sets forth, as does the Bible, a just God. No other religions are founded on the principle of justice. This is one reason why the Bible has had potent influence for liberty. Wherever it has gone, it has been "Liberty enlightening the world."

There is no partiality with the Creator—no class distinction with him—neither high nor low, rich nor poor, noble nor peasant. It is for this reason that when the teachings of the Lord were before the Israelites they were a liberty-loving people. In proportion as they fell into idolatry, they lost this spirit.

BIBLE BRINGS SPIRIT OF LIBERTY

With the spirit of liberty, of course, will go the spirit of heroism. Therefore the Bible is the source of the valiant qualities of the early church in their withstanding persecution. Later on, when human traditions and heathen philosophies were heeded instead of the writings of Jesus and the apostles and prophets, the spirit of subjection, the spirit of slavery, the spirit of fear, the spirit of ignorance, proportionately prevailed, and brought on the dark ages. With the blessed in-

fluence which comes from the Word of God, we see, since the time of the Reformation, the spirit of liberty more manifest. Wherever the Bible has gone, the spirit of liberty has gone. Wherever the Bible has not gone, the spirit of liberty has not prevailed.

Witness, too, the so-called Christian countries where the Bible has been ignored—Russia, Spain, Portugal and large districts of France, Poland, etc. Wherever the Bible is, liberty is more and more manifest. Even where the people do not recognize the Bible, the spirit of its teachings has had its effect. There is something of a realization that all are of one flesh and blood, one common brotherhood. God created of one blood all people that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. (Acts 17:26) There are, of course, advantages in the way of birth, education, etc. Various circumstances affect conditions. But all mankind are responsible to the Creator, who is the great Judge over all. He is to be looked to as the One who will give rewards and punishments.

SPECIAL DEALINGS UNDER LAW COVENANT

Our text gives the words of the great king of Judah who became a reformer. He found that various degrees of injustice had crept into the customs of the people under the previous kings. In appointing officers and judges, King Jehoshaphat exhorted them to give their opinion according to the principles of justice. He said, "Deal courageously, and the Lord will be with the good." The Lord would bless those who would be faithful. The Lord would be with the good work that they would do, if they would do it faithfully.

We are to remember that there was a special arrangement existing between God and the people of Israel. Under that arrangement the Lord was to bless them in proportion as they were loyal to him and to the principles of his government. We are not, therefore, to apply these words indiscriminately to other nations, if some in other nations had attempted some kind of reform. God was not undertaking to deal with other nations at that time. He was letting them get a general lesson under their own supervision.

TEXT NOT APPLICABLE TO NATIONS TODAY

God intervened only where it would be injurious to allow certain peoples to carry their evil course any further; as, for instance, in the case of the Ninevites, the Sodomites, and the Amalekites. We could not say that we could apply this text today; and that if some good people were in public office and should deal courageously and put down all the wrong and uplift the right, God would give them success in the work. God is not dealing with the nations at all.

His whole dealing at this time is with the church. The world today is still doing as it has always done, seeing what it can do for itself. In all probability these reformers today who would deal courageously would bring upon themselves great persecution if they should attempt to interfere with many of the entrenched vices. We have an example of this in New York City at the present time. Entrenched vice is hard to handle. Occasionally the world produces men who handle such things in a noble way. There are noble men inside and outside the church. But we cannot say that the Lord would be with all of them.

It is a mistake to say that the present governments are under the grace of God. The Bible says that the governments of this time are under the influence of the prince of this world, and that he has the upper hand at the present time. But when Messiah takes his great power and reigns, then Satan will be bound. Then all the evil influences will be brought under the control of the Messianic kingdom. From that time onward, the saints will deal courageously in Messiah's Millennial kingdom, and shall reign for the purpose of putting down sin, until eventually Christ shall have accomplished the work of causing God's will to be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven.

CHURCH TO JUDGE COURAGEOUSLY IN NEXT AGE

The point we notice, then, is that our text was applicable to the Jews, because they were a typical people of God. The king of Israel made use of these words to certain ones whom he appointed judges in his day. The church is now being prepared for the work of judging in the kingdom. The Lord distinctly tells us that we are not to judge before the time. In the kingdom we shall judge. Then it will be our business to judge. Then we shall be required to render righteous and courageous judgment, in full accord with the Lord's instructions.

As the Apostle Paul says, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2) We do know it. Our experiences now are fitting us to judge the world later, that we may do it successfully, courageously, lifting up all mankind who will to the glorious standard of perfection. All the evil doers shall be cut off. Then every knee will bow and every tongue will confess, to the glory of the Father and of the Son.

CHURCH NOW JUDGES ALONG CERTAIN LINES

The Scriptures instruct us that now the church should judge its members along certain lines. We are not to judge one another's hearts. On the contrary, we are to take one another's word for their heart condition. But we are to judge one another's conduct. If one should live immorally, it would be the duty of the church to deal with him according to the immorality of his conduct. The Apostle asks, Why should you go to law with the brethren before unbelievers? If you are unprepared to judge yourselves in small matters, how would you ever be prepared to judge in great matters?

In our judging, we are to remember the lines along which the Lord would have us judge. The Lord will be with the good, we may be sure of that fact. But we are to deal kindly, affectionately. "Be kindly affectioned one toward another, with brotherly love." In dealing with one another, in proportion as we lay down hard, inflexible lines of judgment, in that proportion we would be fixing the gauge of the Lord's judgment with us. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." With what allowance we mete out to others, the Lord will judge us. We are to be sympathetic with others, and to remember that all need mercy and forgiveness, even as we hope for these for ourselves.

Whoever has a duty to perform, let him not fear but be courageous; and in doing unpleasant tasks which are necessary, let us perform them in a kindly manner, both justly and lovingly. Let us not fear man, but rather fear the Lord, and be intent on pleasing him.

PROFITABLE TABLE TALKS

APRIL 5.—Luke 14:7-24.

"Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—Verse 11.

A considerable number of advanced Christian people, Bible students, have in an informal way recently adopted the custom of having Bible talks during the meal hour. We know of many who are finding it profitable. To partake of heavenly food at the same time that we appropriate the natural is quite proper; the lifting of the mind from the things of the world to the consideration of heavenly things is advantageous in every way. We see that this was Jesus' custom.

Today's lesson shows the Master a guest at the table of a prominent Pharisee, speaking in a manner that would not be appropriate to any but himself. In a parable he criticised the gathering guests, because he noted that they selfishly chose the chief seats of honor, and because he would have them see that this selfish spirit would have to do with their character-building and with their fitness or unfitness for the honors of the kingdom for which they hoped.

When bidden to a public function, they should humbly take very lowly, inconspicuous places, not knowing how many might be more worthy than they in the estimation of the host. Then, if the host noticed them in a very humble place, and so desired, he might ask them forward to a more prominent place. Thus they would be honored and the honor would reach them in a proper manner; whereas, in taking a prominent place uninvited, they at least ran the risk of displeasing the host or the possibility of being asked to take an inferior place, the more honorable one being given to one considered more worthy; and thus they would be, in a measure, disgraced.

The Master declared that this principle held with him and with the Father; namely, that "whosoever exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The apostles set forth the same proposition, saying, "God resisteth the proud, but showeth his favor to the humble"; "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:6.

The thought is that the self-seeking, the proud in spirit, could not be trusted by the Lord in a high position. They might do damage to themselves and to his cause, with such a spirit. On the contrary, he will seek those who are of humble mind and who would not be injured by the exaltation, nor in danger of deflecting in the future work to which all of the kingdom class are called.

Turning to his host, Jesus gave him something of a compliment, saying, "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they bid thee again, and recompense be made

thee. But call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just."

The Pharisee had done something of the very kind in inviting Jesus and probably his disciples to dinner. He well knew that they were poor and would be unable to ask him in return. The Master's words may have been comforting to him. At all events, they set forth a grand principle, which should be recognized by all, rich and poor alike. If we get our rewards for good deeds in the present life, how will there be anything coming to us in the future?

Let us therefore follow the Master's instruction and seek to do kindnesses to those who cannot return the favor, assured that God will appreciate such things as done for mercy's sake, for righteousness' sake, and will give a proper reward. We do not understand the Master to mean that it would be wrong to invite friends or neighbors or kinsman who might invite us in turn, but that we are not to think that in so doing we are laying up any treasure in heaven.

There was more reason for the calling of the poor, the lame, the maimed, in Jesus' day than now. Today, by common consent, civilized people recognize a duty toward the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind. Homes are provided for them out of the public purse, by general taxation. Whoever enters into this matter of paying for the support of the poor in a proper spirit is doing something that in the sight of God is meritorious; but whoever pays such taxes from compulsion merely, without appreciation, evidently would not be deserving of any credit. However, all such institutions should be conducted in such a manner as would afford reasonable comfort and be good enough for ourselves or for our relatives, were we or they the persons in need.

Under such conditions it would be almost wrong to fail to co-operate with these provisions, to refuse such provisions and to expect private support from friends and relatives, at an additional cost over and above the taxes they pay. Everything in God's Word seems to inculcate the spirit of justice first, and the spirit of love, kindness and sympathy beyond justice. But it should be voluntary and not enforced, and an indication of the measure of the holy Spirit which we possess.

GOD'S GREAT FEAST

A person at the supper, after hearing Jesus' comments, remarked that it would be a blessed thing to have a share in the great feast with which the kingdom of God will be inaugurated. Jesus seized upon this as a text, and preached another sermon in a parable. As usual, his parable-sermon was in respect to the kingdom of God:

A man made a great supper and bade many guests. When the time for the supper arrived, he sent his servants to inform them, saying, "Come; for all things are now ready." But these with one accord began to make excuse. One said, I have bought a field; I must go and take a look at it; please excuse me. Another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I must be proving them; please excuse me. Another said, I have recently married; therefore I cannot come. When the servant returned and told his experience the Master of the house was provoked, and said to the servant, Go out quickly into the streets and the lanes of the city, and bring in the poor, the maimed, the blind and the lame.

The meaning of the parable is not far to seek. God had indeed provided a great feast. Long years before he had sent word to the Jewish nation that in due time such a great blessing would be open to them—the privilege of becoming members of the kingdom of God—sharers of it with Messiah. Yet, when Jesus appeared and the time came for the feast to be spread, those who had been bidden were careless.

Jesus and his disciples had been going about for some time declaring that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and that all who believed should make haste to associate themselves with it —to come to the feast—should be getting a part of the blessing. But the invited ones were full, covetous, money-lovers. When they heard the message of the kingdom they said, I am too busy with my worldly prospects. And so they slighted God's invitation, extended to them through Jesus and the Apostles.

The ones especially invited were the ones who specifically claimed to be the "holiness people"—the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law. In the parable, the rejection of the ones originally invited led to the invitation's being sent to others, in the streets and the lanes of the city. This meant that the poor had the Gospel preached to them. Publicans and sinners were received by our Lord, told about the kingdom, and invited to leave all their sinful and injurious practices, to accept forgiveness of sins, and to come in and participate as heirs of God's promise of joint-heirship with Jesus Christ their Redeemer.

Nearly all the preaching of Jesus and of his disciples, up to Pentecost and after, was to the poor of Israel—the publicans and sinners. The charge made against our Lord by the Pharisees who rejected him was that he received sinners, and that he ate with them.

GREAT FEAST REPRESENTS RICH BLESSINGS

The great feast of the parable figuratively represents rich blessings of God's providence for the church—the knowledge of the truth, justification from sin, the begetting of the holy Spirit, the privilege of appropriating the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word. All this is the feast which the Lord has spread for now eighteen hundred years, and to which he has been inviting, or calling, certain ones. First the Pharisees, the "religious lights," representatives of Moses, and secondly the poor, the sinful, the weak, the outcasts of Israel, the prodigal son class, were invited.

Some of the latter class came, but not enough to fill the places already provided. In other words, not enough of the Jews were "Israelites indeed," acceptable to God, to fill the foreordained number of the elect church. Hence the Master sent out his servants the third time, saying that they should go outside the city, into the highways and hedges, and urge the people to come in, that his house might be filled—not a seat left vacant.

This applies, evidently, to the sending of the Gospel to the Gentiles. For eighteen hundred years the Message has been going up and down through the highways and hedges, calling and inviting, drawing, such as have hearing ears and responsive hearts. In all, they will not be a great company. In all, they will not represent very many of the lights of the world. The Apostle writes, "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble," hath God chosen, but chiefly "the poor of this world, rich in faith," to be heirs of the kingdom.—1 Corinthians 1:26, 27; James 2:5.

Ultimately the full number purposed by the great Householder will have been called, accepted, and found worthy through Christ to have a place at that table—to share in that great feast. It will be the nuptial feast, in honor of the marriage of the Lamb, after his wife hath made herself ready. (Revelation 19:7-9) At that feast, we are assured, will be a secondary company, not worthy to be of the bride class. These may be figuratively styled the bridesmaids, the great company class; for after the account of the gathering of the bride we have the Lord's message to these subsequently delivered from Babylon, saying, "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

You can imagine the honors and joys of that great banquet! The aroma of the good things coming, already reaches us in the anteroom, before we enter the banquet hall. These odors come to us through the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word, assuring us of his faithfulness and of his provision of the things which "eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," but which "God hath provided for them that love him" supremely.

Those originally bidden will not taste of that supper, though, thank God! divine provision has arranged for another banquet, which through the kingdom will be spread for all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples—"a feast of fat things." —Isa. 25:6-8.

"JESUS HIMSELF DREW NEAR"

APRIL 12.—Luke 24:13-35.

"It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that was raised from the dead."—Romans 8:34.

We are to study today one of the most striking manifestations of Jesus to his disciples after his resurrection. Early in the morning of the day of his resurrection he had appeared to the women who came with spices to embalm his body. They had communicated to St. Peter and St. John that the Lord had been with them. These two most energetic apostles vied with each other to get to the sepulcher with speed. But they saw merely the empty tomb.

The disciples of Jesus were dazed, perplexed. Although he had told them that he would be crucified, and that he would rise from the dead on the third day, they had not comprehended the teaching. Even after hearing of his resurrection they were seemingly slow to connect it with what he had previously told them.

In the afternoon, two of the company were walking home, discussing their disappointment in Jesus—how, instead of becoming a great king, he had been crucified, and their hopes of associating with him in dignity and honor had all been dashed.

Jesus had been proven a fraud, to the satisfaction of their rulers. The fact that he was crucified seemed to settle the matter that he could not have been the Messiah, as he had declared and as they had believed.

THAT JESUS IS STILL FLESH IS UNSUPPOSABLE

While they thus talked, Jesus overtook them. They knew him not, because of his resurrection change. The Apostle Peter tells us that he was "put to death in flesh, but quickened in spirit." We understand this in the light of the explanation given of the resurrection change of the church. The Apostle Paul declares: "Sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory; sown an animal body, raised a spirit body." (1 Corinthians 15:42-44) And, of course, if the church is to experience such a resurrection change in order to be like her Lord, he must have experienced just such a change.

The same thought is impressed again by the Apostle's statement: "We shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The change which the church is to experience, in order to be fitted for the kingdom of God is the same change which Jesus experienced when he was raised from the dead, a life-giving Spirit—no longer a man.

Our Lord's title, "the Son of Man," still belongs to him, just as the title, "the Word of God," the Logos, still belongs to him. When the Logos was made flesh, the identity was not lost. Respecting our Lord's human experiences, we read: "A body hast thou prepared me"—for the suffering of death. (Hebrews 10:5-10) When he had accomplished that purpose, he no longer had need of human nature; but, as he had foretold his disciples, he ascended up where he was before—to the spirit plane, to the spirit nature, as well as, later on, to heaven itself.

To assume that Jesus is a fleshly being in heaven, bearing wounds and scars to all eternity and surrounded by spirit beings on a higher plane than the human, is to suppose that the Father never really exalted him again to the glory which he had with God before the world was (John 17:5), and is unsupposable. We must bear in mind, therefore, the Scriptures, which show that the Father highly exalted the Redeemer, not only restoring him to spirit-being, higher than human, but exalting him "far above angels, principalities, powers and every name that is named."—Phil. 2:9-11; Eph. 1:20-23.

"JESUS SHOWED HIMSELF"

St. Luke declares that Jesus showed himself alive after his resurrection. (Acts 1:3) Again he speaks of him as appearing. The narrative shows both terms are justified by the facts. He appeared and disappeared. He showed himself to some and not to others, and in every way manifested the fact that some great change had taken place in him after those three days. Not only did he appear and show himself in different forms, in different bodies, unlike each other, but also in different clothing. Then, too, when he suddenly disappeared, the clothing disappeared also.

When we say that Jesus, a spirit being, materialized, we are not to be understood as in any way sympathizing with the class called Spiritualists, who produce materializations of the dead. If we desire an illustration, let us go back to the Bible account of how Jesus, when he was the Logos—before his nature was changed from Spirit to human—appeared to Abraham, in company with two angels. We read that the Lord and two angels did eat and talk with Abraham, who knew them not, but "entertained angels unawares" until, eventually, their identity was revealed.

Just so it was with the two disciples en route to Emmaus: The stranger who overtook them sympathetically inquired, Why look and talk so sadly? They opened their hearts to him, astonished that he did not know. They told of Jesus the Nazarene, a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and they explained to him how the chief priests and rulers had delivered him up and crucified him. They explained that theirs was a double disappointment, in that not only had they lost a friend, but their hope that he was the Messiah, who would have redeemed Israel, had been crushed. They proceeded to tell him of the events of the very morning—that some of the women of their company had found the tomb empty and had seen angels, who said that he was alive, etc.

This gave Jesus the opportunity he sought—to explain to his disciples quietly, without any excitement, that the experiences they had had were part of the divine plan. He said to them, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!" He declared that it was necessary that he should thus suffer in order to enter into his glory —that without such suffering he never could be the King of Glory, with power to bless and restore humanity, by and bye. —Acts 3:19-21.

Then he began to point out from the writings of Moses and all the prophets what God had foretold respecting Messiah's experiences. He probably reminded them of how Isaac had been offered up by Abraham, explaining that Abraham typified the heavenly Father and Isaac typified himself; and that the offering, even though not fully carried out, represented the death of himself as it had taken place, the subsequent life of Isaac representing the resurrection of Jesus, to be with his Father again.

He doubtless told them about the smitten rock, from which gushed the waters—that that rock represented himself, who must be smitten in order to give the water of life to the dying world. He doubtless told them how Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, and explained that the serpent represented sin; and that he, in being crucified, was made to take the place of the sinner, that the sinner might, through faith, be made righteous in God's sight through the Redeemer's sacrifice.

He doubtless explained to them the sacrifice of the Atonement Day, in which the bullock, which died, represented himself in the flesh; and in which the high priest, who lived, and who entered into the Most Holy and sprinkled the blood for the forgiveness of the people, also represented himself, a spirit being, who after resurrection would go into heaven itself and eventually offer up full sin-atonement on behalf of the world, and would come forth again at his second advent to bless those for whom he had died.

"HE OPENED THE SCRIPTURES"

He doubtless explained to them respecting the passover-lamb—that it typified himself, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." We may assume that he proceeded to the Psalms, Isaiah and the other prophets, explaining all the prophetic passages relating to the sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow. No wonder those disciples afterward declared that their hearts had burned within them while he opened to them the Scriptures!

As the early disciples were refreshed by the message of God's grace and the fulfilment of his promises, so it is sure to be with all the followers of Jesus. The Lord prophetically declared, "My people perish for lack of knowledge." Evidently there can be only a dwarfed Christian life and experience except as the Word of God is understood and assimilated. Hence we have the frequent exhortations of Jesus and the apostles that the people of God should grow in grace and knowledge, should search the Scriptures, etc. Let those who are cold and indifferent unite with those who are dejected and despondent, in coming to the Master for the "meat in due season." Such surely will not be turned away empty by him who said, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." And in proportion as they find their hearts also burning within them, as they realize the fulfilment of God's promises in the past, so shall they develop faith in the fulfilment of those promises which relate to the future.

Jesus could have manifested himself to his disciples otherwise than he did. Instead of appearing as the gardener and as the traveler, etc., in different forms, and then vanishing after communicating with his disciples, he could have done just as he did with Saul of Tarsus, the last one to whom he appeared. As we read, "Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born before the time." (1 Corinthians 15:8) Those begotten of the holy Spirit now are to be born of the spirit in the resurrection. Then they will be spirit beings, like the Redeemer, see him as he is and share his glory. That will be the due time for all of his followers to see him as he is—not as he was.—1 John 3:2.

But Saul of Tarsus saw him thus as a spirit being, "shining above the brightness of the sun" at noonday—saw him before the time. The effect upon him was disastrous to his eyes, and required a miracle for his recovery of sight. And even then apparently a certain blemish was allowed to be a thorn in his flesh to his dying day, as a reminder of God's great mercy toward him, and to keep him humble in connection with his powerful ministry.—2 Corinthians 12:7.

"THEY KNEW HIM—HE VANISHED"

When the travelers arrived in Emmaus, Jesus, after being urged, accepted their hospitality. We have every reason to suppose that if they had not urged, he would not have stopped with them; for "he made as if he would have gone farther." And so it is still; he does not intrude upon his disciples. Rather, he encourages us to recognize our need of him and to ask, that we may receive, that our joy may be full. So it was with those brethren at Emmaus. They were appreciative of what they had learned. "Never man spake like this Man." If he had ministered to them so much spiritual joy, they would delight in showing him every courtesy in their power; and perhaps this might give further opportunities for conversation.

And so it was. When they sat down to supper, their guest

assumed something of the manner of Jesus; and the way in which he asked a blessing upon the food reminded them, evidently, of Jesus. Their eyes of understanding began to open. Immediately they realized that no one but their own Master could have given them the lessons just enjoyed on the journey. And thus having fulfilled the purpose of his materialization, he immediately vanished out of their sight—clothes and all—instantaneously.

Their joy was too great to permit them to sleep. They must hasten to carry the good tidings to the other disciples. So they journeyed back to Jerusalem, and there found the others rejoicing in the fact that the Lord had manifested himself to Simon Peter. Then the two told the story of their experiences; and faith, hope and joy began to grow in all their hearts.

Who cannot see that the Lord's way of manifesting himself after his resurrection was in every way the best! Had he appeared to many of them, or to all of them, as he appeared to Saul of Tarsus later, they would have been bewildered, shocked. They would not have been so well able to identify "the light shining above the sun at noonday" with their Master, Jesus. Even if a voice from heaven had declared the fact of his resurrection, Jesus would not have had the same opportunity of explaining to their minds the prophecies; and they, perturbed and excited, would not so well have been able to receive the instruction.

It should be remembered that out of fewer than ten appearances during the forty days between our Lord's resurrection and ascension, he only twice appeared in a form similar to that which they had seen, and bearing the marks of crucifixion; and that on both of these occasions he appeared while the doors were shut, and later vanished while the doors were still shut, in order that his followers might learn a double lesson:

(1) That he was no longer dead, but alive, resurrected;
(2) That he was no longer flesh, but spirit—"Now the Lord is that Spirit."

THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTAINING BALANCE OF MIND

"Let all your deeds be done in love."—1 Corinthians 16:14.—Diaglott.

God is the very personification of sympathy and love. As the Scriptures declare, "God is Love." And all who will be God's children, developed in his likeness, will be loving children. As St. John says, "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 John 4:16) In proportion as we develop strength of character as new creatures, this quality of love increases. In addition, we should find our judgment also becoming more accurate. Those who are developed in the spirit of the Lord have better judgment than they formerly had. As the days go by, they know better how to sympathize with the world; how to deal with mankind; they are getting more and more of the wisdom which cometh from above.

CAREFUL PREPARATION FOR KINGDOM NECESSARY

Before we became Christians at all, we may have been under-balanced, or over-balanced—we may not have known how to deal properly with our families or our friends. Out of kindness and sympathy we may have been inclined to give them money, or to yield to their wishes in a way that was injurious to them; or we may have been too severe and unyielding. But as we grow in the spirit of a sound mind, we learn better how to deal with others, so as to be in harmony with the divine will, the divine spirit.

When we shall have experienced our change and have become like our Redeemer, all of our powers will be perfect. Our love, our conception of justice, and also our conception of how to deal with others, will then be perfect. Every one who does not develop this character of love, mercy, justice, etc., will be unprepared for the kingdom work.

The next age is to be a time of purification, of purgation, to the world; and those of the Lord's people who do not now have character enough to give necessary stripes are not worthy of a position in which authority must be exercised. On the other hand, those who would give too many stripes would not be fit to deal with mankind. Therefore we all need this balance of mind in order to be ready for the work of the next age.

PROPER AND IMPROPER OCCASIONS FOR ANGER

As we come to see that the whole race of Adam is fallen—some more, some less—we develop a broad sympathy for mankind. We grow compassionate. We desire to lift them up out of their degradation. We would like to help them as much as opportunity affords. Hence we are far from wishing to render evil for evil. We wish to be peacemakers as far as possible. Therefore, unless it would be injustice to refrain from speaking sharply, we should be careful that our words are kind and loving. However, even though our words might not be angry, there are times when sharp utterances might be helpful, but even these should be tempered with love; tempered with the spirit of the Master.

"BE YE ANGRY AND SIN NOT"

There is a difference between anger that would be righteous indignation and anger that would be unloving, unkind, unjust. We know that God is angry with the wicked, for the Scriptures so tell us. (Psalm 7:11) This fact shows us that anger of itself does not necessarily imply a sinful condition; for God has no sin, and he judges himself by the same regulations under which he judges his creatures. Therefore anger in itself is not sin.

In God's case there is no danger that he will make a mistake and be angry with the right or approve the wrong, or that he will be lenient with the wrong and thus oppose the right. His knowledge is perfect; therefore his conduct is perfect. In our case, however, if we feel that anger is proper for us, we should use a great deal of discretion. As the Apostle Paul says: "Be ye angry and sin not."—Ephesians 4:26.

In a case where an innocent person is suffering wrong, and we have full knowledge of the matter, then it might be our duty to manifest anger, righteous indignation. It would be proper to manifest a certain degree of anger if we saw even a dumb brute mistreated. If we saw the principles of righteousness being outraged, it might become necessary to manifest some anger, some indignation.

But these cases would probably be very rare, for the circumstances would not often be a matter of our business. As St. Peter remarks, we are none of us to suffer as busybodies in other men's affairs.—1 Peter 4:15.

If we see a parent doing to his child something that is not right, we should not interfere unless the child's life is endangered. If it is merely a case of switching or a box on the ear, we must not interfere. It is not our business. Let us as the Lord's children, ambassadors of the King of heaven, seek more and more to exercise the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of love and reasonableness.

"NAUGHT THAT I HAVE MY OWN I CALL"

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."—Job 1:21.

All that we have should be regarded as a gift from God, whether it be much or little. God's gift to our first parents was a very munificent one—perfection of life. They were made in the image and likeness of God in the flesh—only "a little lower that the angels." Because of disobedience this perfection was forfeited. Obedience was the condition on which Adam would be permitted to remain in the Garden of Eden. If he was obedient he might live and enjoy it, might fill the earth with posterity and gradually bring the whole world to the blessed conditions which he himself found in the Garden.

It was when Adam sinned that God rejected him from being a son. After that time no man was ever called a son of God until Jesus came. And no man since Jesus has been called a son of God, except those who have come to God through Jesus, and have been accepted by him. Adam was cast out of his Eden home for the very purpose of bringing upon him the penalty of sin—death. The angel of the Lord drove Adam out. We remember God's expression on this: "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:17) The dying process began at once and continued until completed after 930 years.

Since the penalty of sin was death, it was of God's mercy that he allowed our first parents to live at all after their disobedience. While it was a curse he inflicted on our race when he drove Adam and Eve out of Eden, nevertheless there was a blessing connected with that curse. When God drove them out of the Garden, He said, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground whence thou wast taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Here was the curse. They were to die by gradual processes.

ALL OUR BLESSINGS OF GOD'S MERCY

Adam and Eve might do all in their power to prolong their lives, but it was not possible for them to live out the full thousand years, which constitute one of the Lord's Days. Adam

lived out nearly an entire Day, but he was gradually going down to the tomb all the while. His mental, moral and physical powers were waning. And so all of his race are a groaning creation.

It was not an unjust sentence, nor an unfair sentence. It is a favor from God that we have life at all. The privilege he gives us of living even a few years is a great boon. And so it is true of all of us, as described by the Prophet Job in relating his experience, that naked came we into the world. We have nothing that is really our own. It is of God's providence that we enjoy the privileges that we have.

It was true of Job that it was of God's permission and mercy that he had his flocks and herds and children. Then fire came down from heaven and burned up his sheep and the attending servants. Enemies killed his camels and oxen and asses, and still other servants. The hurricane came and killed his children. But Job said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" Job had no claim on everlasting life, although he had a hope of it. He realized that all he had possessed belonged to God; they were not his own.

Life and immortality were not brought to light until Jesus came. (2 Tim. 1:10) The great message of salvation which before was only hinted at was in due time clearly stated by Jesus. He came to give his life a ransom-price, to give a life that corresponded to the life that Adam lost. We see the beauty of the whole arrangement, that as by a man came death, by a man also should come the resurrection of the dead. Whereas "by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, even so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19)—made free from the death penalty—and ultimately shall have a resurrection.

Those who get the first benefit of this provision in Christ are the church. The Apostle says that we are risen with him to walk in newness of life. And we have faith that God is able to fully complete this resurrection as he has promised. We do not claim that we do not die, which is contrary to all the facts and to the Scriptures. We, on the contrary, admit that we die. But we believe that he who raised up Jesus from the dead will raise us up also by him. Jesus has effected an atonement for the sins of the whole world, upon the basis of which those who believe now may have reconciliation with God. And by and by the world will have the benefit of Christ's atoning work, and opportunity for reconciliation.

LIFE RIGHTS LOST TO MANKIND

The hope of the church is that she shall reign with Christ for a thousand years, bind Satan, uplift mankind from sin and pain and death, and, as the Scriptures declare, "wipe away the tears from off all faces." (Isaiah 25:8) And this is the work of God in that he planned, designed, the whole matter. It is the work of Christ in that he purchased the race and is the Father's Agent—who is "the beginning of the creation of God," "the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence," not pre-eminence over the Father, but above all others.—Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:18.

We can see more clearly than did Job, that all our blessings are of God, not of ourselves. We can see more clearly because we are spirit-begotten. We know that we have no rights whatever. All we can do is to call upon God's mercy. But all are not able as yet to hear the message of mercy. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not."—2 Corinthians 4:4.

And so only those whose eyes are especially anointed can see. As Jesus said in his day, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." (Matt. 13:16) And so St. Peter confirms the same thought of blindness, respecting those who crucified the Lord: "Brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."—Acts 3:17.

So then from our favored vantage ground we, still more than Job, can take in perfect submission whatever experiences God in his wisdom and love sees fit to allow to come upon us. If we are his children, we are bound to accept all our experiences as being of his providence and order and arrangement.

"Naught that I have my own I call,
I hold it for the Giver;
My heart, my strength, my life, my all
Are his and his forever."

THE SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN IN THE HOLY

Our ears and our tongue bring us many blessings and in general are grand servants. Nevertheless, sometimes they are difficult so to manage as not to be misleading. Fully half the difficulties everywhere are, apparently, the results of misunderstanding. God has been misunderstood, the Bible is misunderstood and preaching is misunderstood. We cannot wonder, then, that STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES and TABERNACLE SHADOWS and THE WATCH TOWER have been misunderstood. All that we can do is to restate matters afresh, hoping that our tongue or pen will serve us better, or that the eyes and the ears of our readers will serve them better.

BEGETTING THE TRANSFORMING POWER

Repeatedly we have endeavored to show that the begetting of the Holy Spirit, in the case of each individual Christian, is the transforming power by which he passes from the human nature to the new nature. This transfer is beautifully pictured in the Tabernacle types by the priest passing from the Court into the Holy. The Court represents, in the present time, the earthly condition of those who are approaching God, but have not yet made a full consecration of their lives to him and his service.

When the step of consecration is taken, Jesus, acting as our great High Priest, imputes his merit to cover our deficiencies of the flesh, and forthwith presents us to the Father. Our consecration of the earthly nature is thus made acceptable, and in the divine reckoning we are from that moment dead according to the flesh, but alive according to the spirit—begotten again, not with corruptible seed, but by the spirit of God. All thus begotten are in the Holy in their relationship to God—that is to say, they are children of God, heirs of God. Thereafter they have the enlightenment of the truth as represented by the golden lamp-stand with the seven burners; the spiritual food as represented in the table of shewbread, and the privileges of worship and prayer as represented in the incense altar.

This condition continues until the end of this age, when a judgment, or testing, or distinction, will be made as between the most faithful, the little flock, the royal priesthood class, and the less faithful class of the great company—the latter thereafter being typed by the tribe of Levi.

In the new order of things, after the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, this distinction between the church proper, joint-heirs with Christ, and the larger company of antitypical Levites, will be perpetual, and the services of the two will be different. The former will be a priesthood corresponding to that of Melchizedek—a priest upon his throne. The work of the latter will correspond more to that accomplished by the Levites; namely, teaching the people, etc., as servants of the priests, from whom they will receive their directions.

GOD'S USE OF THINGS IN OUR HAND

"And the Lord said unto Moses, What is that in thine hand?"—Exodus 4:2.

Moses had been called of the Lord to the great and honorable work of delivering his people from the bondage of Egypt. He was now eighty years of age. His long experience in the Egyptian court had given him an insight into the affairs of government. Stephen tells us (Acts 7:22) that "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in word and in deed." Tradition says that he was also an able general in the Egyptian army.

Yet he relinquished all these earthly advantages to cast in his lot with the despised people of God. (Heb. 11:24-26) "Moses . . refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward"—he preferred to share with God's chosen people, Israel, in their affliction, and to have part with them in the promise made to their fathers.

How appropriate it was that the man whom God called to be the leader of Israel out of bondage should be a learned man, and one well equipped to be at the head of such a people and under such circumstances! We cannot doubt that his wandering as a shepherd in the wilderness for forty years, tending the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law, made him thoroughly familiar with every road, every hill, every stream; and that this was subsequently of great advantage to him, when, under the Lord's direction, he became leader of Israel through this wilderness en route to Canaan.

MEEKNESS TAUGHT BY EXPERIENCE

But this forty years' experience in Midian had taught Moses another important lesson—the lesson of meekness. And his long isolation had made him reserved. Furthermore, soon

after severing his connection with the royal house of Egypt, he had made an attempt to deliver his people; but they had not wished his services, and had rather resented his interference. So now, when the Lord would send him to do this great work, he was distrustful of his ability to lead the people of Israel out of bondage into the land of Canaan, and was fearful and reluctant.

The Lord had appeared to Moses in the burning bush which was not consumed, had given him his commission, and had assured him that he, Jehovah, would certainly be with him. Moses, however, very properly felt the magnitude of the undertaking and his own insufficiency. He urged that he was incompetent, that it would require some one more powerful than he to influence the heart of the king of Egypt. He knew that it would be entirely contrary to the purpose and policy of the Egyptians to let the Israelites go from their service. He said to the Lord, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" But the Lord assured him that he would himself be responsible; that he would direct in the matter.

"WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND?"

Still Moses wanted some demonstration of God's approval and power. He asked, How shall I make Israel know that thou hast sent me? for they will not believe. Then the Lord asked, "What is that in thine hand?" Moses answered, "A rod." And the Lord said to him, "Cast it upon the ground." Moses did so, and the rod became a serpent, and Moses fled from it. If he had not particularly noticed what he had in his hand, he might have thought that possibly it had been a serpent before. But he had looked, and was sure that it was a staff which had been changed into a serpent. Then God told him to take up the serpent by the tail. He did so, and it again became a rod in his hand.

THE LESSONS FOR US

From this we would take the lesson that if the Lord sends us on any mission, we should not have the feeling that we could conquer the world, but should realize our own littleness and should properly feel wholly insufficient of ourselves. We should realize that without his assisting grace we could accomplish nothing. We should be very sure that he has commissioned us, and that our mission is not some foolish thought of our own. We should be very sure that the Lord is back of the whole arrangement. Then we should have full confidence in him.

We should feel like saying with Moses, "I cannot do anything." But if we wish to serve the Lord, we are to look to what we have in our hands, whether it be one talent or another. God is so wise that he can use our humblest talent to his praise. What he wants us to use may be right in our hands, and we may not have noticed it. No matter how ordinary our lives may be, God is able to use us, and to give us also the needed lessons in connection with our experiences.

Another lesson that we could draw from the Lord's dealings with Moses is that the things which we have in our hand, those things closest to us, might become injurious to us, if it were not that the power of God is able to make everything work together for our good. If we have the spirit of service, the Lord can and will use things right at our hand—not necessarily things afar from us; and the divine power over evil can make all things work out good to those who love him. More and more we are learning these lessons. If, then, we would serve, we should look to see what we have in our possession; what things we can make use of.

FAITHFUL IN LEAST—FAITHFUL IN MUCH

A great many people would like to serve the Lord with a thousand tongues. If they had a thousand tongues, they feel sure they would sing with them all. How do we know that we would use a thousand tongues, if we do not faithfully use the one we have? "He that is faithful in that which is least" will be faithful in the greater things.

There are plenty of people who like to address thousands. But if we cannot address thousands, it is all the more necessary to address one. Some say that if they had a million of dollars they would give it to the Lord. But the Lord is not likely to ever give them the chance of giving large sums if they do not manifest a disposition to give of the small amounts already in their possession. "To him that hath [through use of his talents] shall be given, . . . and from him that hath not [from neglect of his talent] shall be taken away even that which he hath."—Matthew 25:29.

So the lesson to us of Moses' experiences would seem to be—the use of things we have in our hands. The same lesson is taught in another way in the case of the poor widow who cried to the Prophet Elisha for help. She was in poverty, and her creditors were about to take her two sons for debt. "What hast thou in the house?" asked Elisha. The woman replied, "Not anything in the house save a pot of oil." Then the Prophet told her to go and borrow empty vessels from her neighbors—"not a few"—and to then begin to pour out the oil into the vessels. The woman obeyed, and all the vessels were filled with oil, and she had oil to sell and thus pay her debt. The Lord used what she had in her hand.

It was the same way with the Lord's miracle in feeding the thousands. He asked, What have you on hand? He did not say, How far is it to town? And he did not tell the Apostles to get wagons and go to town for bread and meat. But he said, Use what you have. And he blessed the five loaves of bread and the two small fishes, to the abundant feeding of the five thousand; they all ate "as much as they would," and of what remained the disciples gathered up twelve baskets full. (John 6:5-13) So we should use all our talents and opportunities. The Lord is looking for us to use what we have, and we shall receive blessing therefrom; and the more faithful we are in the performance of our privileges, the greater will be our blessings from him.

MOSES' EXPERIENCES TYPICAL

In addition to the lessons just noted, we believe there is a further significance in the experiences of Moses, and the deliverance of Israel. We are to see something representative of conditions in our day. Moses was acting under divine instruction. Many things connected with this mission of Moses to the Israelites seem typical of the deliverance of God's people from the power of evil. Pharaoh was typical of Satan. We are living in the corresponding time, when God purposes to deliver all from the power of Satan. Jesus and the church will be the agent of Jehovah—the deliverance will be the work of Messiah as God's Representative.

The rod represents authority. This was illustrated at the time when the Lord instructed that Aaron should represent him as the head of the tribe of Levi. There had been murmurings in Israel, and the principal men of the twelve tribes were instructed by the Lord through Moses to take each man his rod, write upon it his name and send it into the Tabernacle. (Num. 17:1-9) Aaron's rod was to go in with the others, because it was the rod of his father's family. And when they examined the rods in the morning, Aaron's rod had budded, blossomed and brought forth almonds.

This would give us to understand that a rod might generally be considered to represent authority. As the hand is power, so the rod is authority. Thus the rod would seem to be a special manifestation of divine power and rule. We may not speak too positively of the antitypical fulfilment of this experience of Moses. But we might think that in some way or other the power of God would appear to be evil—the serpent was evil. Evil has seemed to triumph for these six thousand years. When Moses and Aaron went into the presence of Pharaoh, Moses' rod became a serpent there also. Then the magicians cast down their rods, and they became serpents. But Moses' rod swallowed up all the rods of the magicians.

RESUMING THE ROD OF POWER

We would very much like to know just what these things signify—just how God will permit the world under the power of Satan to have an hour of triumph. There is to be permitted a great time of trouble, and it will be because of the casting down, for a time, of divine authority and rule.

We think this condition is present now. People are losing confidence in God. They are feeling, for the time, as though there were no God. The tendency of Higher Criticism and Evolution is to give humanity the impression that there is no God but nature. And as mankind get this idea of a nature-god that is ruthless, relentless, impersonal, it is very likely to efface all thought of a living God of justice and love. "There is no fear of God before their eyes," the Scriptures say. So we may expect a great time of trouble, when the power of God will seem to be a further manifestation of evil—as the power of evil. The taking up of the rod of power again, a little later, will be the resuming of divine authority.

The mountains may depart, the hills remove;
His kindness shall not leave thee, or his love
E'er fail: the covenant of his peace is sure.
"Thus saith the Lord," doth make our hope secure.

O height, and depth, and breadth of love divine!
O gift unspeakable! this hope be mine.
Then, though these works dissolve, yet in that day
I shall be found in him, safe, safe for aye.

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER APRIL TENTH

We will celebrate the Memorial Supper on the evening of Friday, April 10. We trust that all of the Lord's consecrated people everywhere will avail themselves of their privilege of memorializing the death of the Redeemer for our sins and—as the Apostle points out—our participation with the Redeemer in his sufferings and death to human conditions. As our Lord and the Apostles met and symbolized his death in advance of the event, so it is appropriate for us to meet on the anniversary to celebrate his sacrifice.

The doing of this annually, in harmony with the evident purpose of the Lord in establishing this Memorial instead of the Jewish Passover, makes the occasion a very impressive one, much more so than any celebration which ignores the anniversary feature and celebrates occasionally—monthly, weekly, quarterly, etc. Let us not find fault with others who do differently; but, as opportunity offers, let us inform them of our reasons for observing this great event on its anniversary.

As often as we do this (yearly) we do show forth the Lord's death until he come. While we believe that our Lord has been present for a number of years—during the harvest—this does not hinder us from continuing the blessed Memorial of his death. Our thought is that our Lord meant that we were to continue celebrating his death until, at his second coming, the full harvest work of the age shall be completed, and the entire body of Christ, the church, shall be received into glory. Then, as he declared, we shall drink of the new cup with him.

Whereas now we drink of his cup of suffering, shame, ignominy, reproach, the world's derision and opposition, his new cup will be a cup of joy, blessing, glory, honor, immortality—the divine nature. The Father, who poured for our Lord the cup of suffering, has already poured for him the cup of blessing and glory. As we are privileged to share with him in this cup of suffering, so with our resurrection "change" we shall be privileged to share with him the cup of glory and blessing. Yea, ours is a mingled cup now, a bitter-sweet; for by faith we already enjoy many of the things which he has in reservation for them that love him.

In the Lord's arrangement the moon symbolized the Jewish prospects, while the sun symbolized the prospects of the Gospel age. The Law Dispensation was a shadow, or reflection, of the things future, as the moon's light is the reflection of the rays of the sun. We are near the time of the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his beams, to flood the world with the light of the knowledge of God. Seeing this, we lift up our heads and rejoice, as the Master directed. Since all the overcoming members of the church are included in that Sun of Righteousness, according to our Lord's parable (Matthew 13:43), it follows that the elect church must all be gathered, and her glorification must be completed before the full light of the Millennial glory will shine forth upon the world.

In partaking of the Memorial we may look forward with the eye of faith to the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, in contrast with the conditions which prevailed at the time when the first Memorial was observed. Then, the Moon (the Law Covenant) was at its full; and immediately after the rejection of Jesus and his crucifixion the Jewish polity began to wane. It is worthy of note that the very day on which Jesus was crucified the moon was at its full, and the waning began at once. So this year, on April 11, the moon will be at its very full, and will then begin its wane. The 11th, therefore, corresponds to the day on which our Lord was crucified; and the evening of the 10th corresponds to the night of the first Memorial Supper.

EATING AND DRINKING IT WORTHILY

As from the intelligent appreciation of the fact symbolized by the Memorial Supper a great blessing comes, and a joy proportionate to the participator's faith and obedience, so also a condemnation attaches to an unworthy, improper participation in the Memorial. None are to participate except those who have come into relationship with the Lord by consecration of their hearts—their all—to him and his service.

None can come into this consecrated condition except as they have recognized themselves as sinners and the Savior as the Redeemer from sin, whose merit is sufficient to compensate for the defects of all those who would come unto the Father through him. All such should partake with a great deal of joy. Remembering the sufferings of the Master, they are to rejoice in those sufferings and in the blessings that these have brought to their hearts and lives. None are to drink of the fruit of the vine on such occasions except those who have appropriated the merit of the sacrifice of Christ and who fully realize that all their blessings are through him. None are to drink of the cup except those who have given up their all to the Lord, for this is what the cup signifies—it is the cup of suffering, the cup of death—a full submission to the will of God. "Thy will, O God, not mine, be done," was the prayer of the Master, and is to be the sentiment and petition of those who partake of the Memorial Supper.

For others to participate in this Memorial Supper would be a farce, would be wrong, and would bring more or less of condemnation, disapproval, from God and from their own consciences—and that in proportion as they realize the impropriety of their course.

But let none think that they should remain away from the Memorial because of imperfections of the flesh. This is a great stumbling-block to many. So long as we are in the flesh, imperfection of word, deed and thought are possible—yea, unavoidable. St. Paul says that we cannot do the things that we would. It is because we need divine grace to forgive our daily, unintentional, unwilling trespasses that all whose sins have been forgiven and who have been accepted into fellowship with Christ are encouraged to come to the throne of heavenly grace in prayer. The Apostle says, "Let us come with courage to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:16) It was because of our needs that God opened up the way and made this arrangement for us.

By God's provision for the forgiveness of our sins, of which we have repented, and for which we have asked forgiveness in Jesus' name, we may realize ourselves as no longer sinners under condemnation, but as clothed with the robe of Christ's righteousness. This is the thought behind St. Paul's expression, which applies to every day: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."—Romans 12:1.

All Christians should keep their accounts squared with the Lord. If they come short, they should lose no time in getting the account squared, in obtaining forgiveness through the merit of the Savior's sacrifice. Such accounts with the Lord should be settled promptly at the time of their occurrence, or not later than the day of their occurrence. They should not be allowed to accumulate; for they will rise as a wall between the soul and the heavenly Father. But whatever has been the condition in the past, the Memorial season, above all others, is the time for making sure that no cloud remains between the Lord and us, to hide us from his eyes.

Thus forgiven, thus cleansed of any defiling spot on our robe of Christ's righteousness, let us keep the feast—the Memorial of our Lord's death. In it let us afresh acknowledge and impress upon our minds the importance of the merit of his sacrifice and death, and how it represents the grace of God to us, as it will by and by represent the same grace extending through the Millennial kingdom to the whole world. Let us remember also our devotion of ourselves, our consecration to be dead with our Lord, to be broken as members of his body, parts of the one loaf, and to participate in the drinking of his cup of suffering and shame and death. "For if we suffer [with him], we shall also reign with him."—2 Timothy 2:12.

We trust that the celebration of the Memorial this year may be a very deeply impressive one, an occasion of rich blessing to all of the Lord's consecrated people everywhere. "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast."—1 Cor. 5:7, 8.

We trust that each little class, or group, of Bible students celebrating the Memorial together will appoint one of their number a secretary to write a post-card to THE WATCH TOWER office, stating briefly the interesting facts connected with the celebration, the number present, and the number participating, so far as can reasonably be estimated.

THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION

We are not yet prepared to offer the DRAMA in the smaller cities. Friends residing in cities of 50,000 and upward desiring to co-operate may appoint a committee which should write to the Watch Tower Society, care the DRAMA Dept., for instructions. The committee should be of good address and fluent of speech.

"ARE YE ABLE?"

"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?"—Matthew 20:22.

We recall the circumstances under which these words were uttered by our Savior: It was just a few days before his crucifixion. Jesus had promised his disciples that they should sit with him in his throne in his kingdom. So confident were they that this would be as the Lord had said that they were discussing the positions they might occupy. The mother of the two disciples, James and John, came to him and asked whether her two sons might sit, the one on his right hand and the other on his left, in the kingdom. And Jesus, turning to the two disciples, replied by asking them: "Are ye able to drink the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

We know that Jesus' baptism in water took place at the beginning of his ministry. In harmony with the divine plan, he was to die as the Savior of men. And he symbolized this death as soon as he was thirty years of age—as soon as was possible under the Law. During the three and a half years of his ministry, he was accomplishing this baptism, he was pouring out his soul unto death, and this death he finished at Calvary. Jesus said, "The baptism that I am [being] baptized with"—now—not a baptism which was either future or past.

But he spoke differently of the cup—"the cup that I shall drink of." He thus implied that the cup was future—not in the present nor in the past. He had told his disciples that he would go up to Jerusalem; and that there he would be crucified, and on the third day he would rise again. And he said on another occasion, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." What the Master said about his being crucified the disciples did not understand. But Jesus understood the situation, and he knew that this cup was about to be poured for him. And so he spoke of it again, saying of himself, "The cup that my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?"

OUR LORD'S SPECIAL TRIAL

We might think of the word cup as representing various experiences of life—that everybody has his cup of mingled joy and sorrow. But Jesus used the word in a different sense. When he was in the Garden of Gethsemane he prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." And again, the same night he prayed, saying, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done!" In the matter of his baptism into death, there was no hesitation on our Lord's part. On the contrary, from the very beginning he voluntarily participated in it. The ignominious death was the thing that he prayed might pass, if it were possible. But this was what he learned was the Father's will for him, and he was content to have it so.

There was nothing in the Law to indicate that our Lord should be executed as a blasphemer of the divine law. Yet blasphemy was the charge preferred against him. The Sanhedrin decided that he was a blasphemer in that he had said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it again," and also in claiming that he was the Son of God. Apparently, then, the thing which was specially weighing on his mind and from which he would have liked to be relieved was the ignominy and shame of being crucified as a criminal, as a blasphemer of the Father he loved so well.

Jesus knew that he had come into the world to die, and that he must suffer. But this part of his experience he had not fully understood. Evidently he knew that "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up"; for comparatively early in his ministry he had stated this in his conversation with Nicodemus. But as he came down nearer and nearer to the time of his humiliation, his degradation, and realized all that it meant, he felt a great shrinking from it and poured out his heart in the cry, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" But immediately—proving that his affirmation, at the time of his consecration, "Lo I come to do thy will, O God," was not empty words—he added, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt!"—Matthew 26:39.

ARE WE WILLING TO SHARE HIS IGNOMINY?

And so to his disciples our Savior said: Are ye able to lay down your lives completely, even though this shall mean to you injustice in the taking away of your lives? Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? There will be disgrace and ignominy connected with it all. Are ye willing to share with me in this, my cup? They answered: "We are able." They were willing.

This, we see, is the same cup represented in the Communion Service. The bread represents the body and the wine the blood of our Lord. The cup especially represented the shame and ignominy connected with his death; and the two disciples said that they were willing to share his cup—they had no hesitancy. At any cost they would be faithful. They would comply with any conditions he would make. They did not, of course, yet know the full import of the word baptism or of the word cup. These were things all his disciples were feeling after. When Pentecost should come, these things that Jesus had spoken to them would come to their remembrance, as he had foretold. (John 16:4; 13:19) But they were willing and anxious. And that is all that we can be. Jesus guaranteed that, being willing, they should have these experiences; that, continuing willing, continuing to suffer with him here, they should reign with him in his throne. But as to the particular place for each in the throne, that would not be for him to say, but for the Father.

The courage, the fortitude, of our dear Redeemer in walking the narrow way fills us with admiration. How strong and brave was his character! He had no thought of looking back; his whole being was intent upon accomplishing the will of his Father in heaven—upon sacrificing himself in the interest of the world. What a noble example was set before the apostles!—greatness in humility, victory through entire self-surrender!

DRINKING OF THE LORD'S CUP BY THE CHURCH

The drinking of the Lord's cup by the church, represents our participation in the sufferings of Christ in the present time. None shall be a member of the body of the great Mediator of the New Covenant unless he come in now under the proper terms. The drinking of the blood, then, is the sharing of the cup. For if we drink not of his cup, neither shall we share with him in his glory. He said, "Drink ye all of it." All must drink, and the entire cup must be drained during this age.

It is a very great privilege that we are permitted to have a share in the sufferings of Christ. "If we suffer [with him], we shall also reign with him." We shall participate in the inauguration of the new dispensation, and in dispensing its blessings. The antitype of Moses, who will do the sprinkling, is Christ the Head and the church his body, glorified, of whom we read in Acts 3:22: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me"—that is, Moses was his type, on a smaller scale. The body is now being raised up. Jesus was first raised up, then all the apostles; and following after, the remaining members of his body.

As Moses sprinkled all the people, so this antitypical Moses, when completed, will "sprinkle" the world of mankind; and this will mean the bringing of them into harmony with the divine law. It will require the thousand years to "sprinkle" mankind. So there is a great difference between the drinking of the cup and the sprinkling of the blood. The sprinkling with the blood represents justification, while the drinking of the cup by the church represents, not only justification, but sanctification.

OUR LORD'S RECOGNITION OF THE DIVINE PURPOSES

Our Lord, in his memorable words to St. Peter—"The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"—referred, evidently, to his dying experiences, which were severe in the extreme. He was dishonored of men and reckoned as an enemy of God—a blasphemer. His physical sufferings he knew would be intense, but to his perfect mind the shame and disesteem, the opprobrium, added greatly to the poignancy of his anguish. Yet this was the cup the Father had given him; it was the divine purpose respecting him.

Our Lord had all the experiences necessary for proving and testing his loyalty; for it was necessary that he manifest his loyalty before both angels and men. The whole matter had been divinely arranged from before the creation of man. He was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8) Everything pertaining to that slain Lamb was foreknown by the Father. Jesus was to drink the cup which belonged to the sinner, in order that he might redeem man and might thus be a faithful and merciful High Priest. This was the cup of suffering and death. It was necessary that Jesus should suffer the death of the cross, in order that he might redeem the Jew.

LOVE AND LOYALTY MANIFESTED BY SUBMISSION

All his sufferings were foretold in the Scriptures. The crucifixion was pictured by the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness. All of his experiences were foreknown, forearranged and necessary. When he came to earth to do the Father's will, he did not know of all that was to come. But he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, the things which were "written in the book." He submitted himself to all the Father's will, and thus he proved his loyalty. As he himself declared, "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of my Father which sent me!" As the hour of the consummation of his sacrifice drew near, in the lonely shades of Gethse-

mane, the Master prayed, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" We are not to suppose that he prayed for the cup of death to pass away; but he wondered whether or not the ignominious experiences of the crucifixion might pass. Yet we find that he did not murmur nor rebel, but said, "Not my will, but thine, be done!"

SPECIAL SUPERVISION OF OUR CUP

We see that our beloved Lord drank of the bitter cup to its dregs, and did so thankfully. And we are to remember that he gave the cup to us, that we should all drink of it—not that we should all have exactly the same experiences that he had, but that we must all drink of the cup of suffering and death in the Father's own way. Jesus was the perfect One, and the Father dealt with him in a very particular manner.

In our cases the experiences would be different; because of our imperfection we could not be dealt with from the standpoint of perfection. We are, therefore, not to think of our cup as a definite, fixed program as was the Master's, but rather that the Father permitted us to have a share in the cup of death with his Son. Our cup is supervised by our Savior, although it is the cup poured by the Father; for it is the Father's program.

In the Master's case the cup was necessary for the sins of the whole world. In our case it is not necessary, but it has pleased the Father to grant us a share in the sufferings and glory of our Lord. Jesus makes good our deficiencies and develops our characters, fashioning us into his own glorious image. Without this supervision of our cup by our Lord, we might be very poorly developed in many qualities; therefore our cup needs to be specially supervised. And so he assures us that, while the necessary experiences are coming to us, at the same time his grace will be sufficient, and his strength will be made perfect in our weakness, and all things will be made to work together for our good.

Let us never forget that unless we partake of his cup, unless we are immersed into death with him, we can have no share in his kingdom of glory, we can never sit with him in his throne. Let us then count all the things of this earth as loss and dross that we may attain this pearl of great price. As the experiences of suffering come to us, let us not be affrighted, nor "think it strange concerning the fiery trials that shall try us, as though some strange thing happened unto us"; for even "hereunto were we called," to suffer with our beloved Master now, and by and by be glorified together with him in the kingdom eternal!

"Are ye able to walk in the narrow, strait way,
With no friend by your side, and no arm for your stay?
Can ye bravely go on through the darkening night?
Can ye patiently wait till the Lord sends the light?

"Ah, if thus ye can drink of the cup he shall pour,
And if never the banner of truth ye shall lower,
His beloved ye are, and his crown ye shall wear,
In his throne ye shall sit, and his glory shall share!"

OUR REASONABLE SERVICE

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."—Romans 12:1.

This exhortation of St. Paul's is based upon the preceding statements of the eleventh chapter of this same epistle, as is shown by the connecting word therefore—because of those things recited in that chapter. The eleventh chapter tells of the mercies of God toward both natural Israel and spiritual Israel—not so much to the world. But the tenth chapter takes up in elaborate form the mercies of God toward all his creatures. In this epistle the Apostle is addressing those who had been Gentiles. In view of these mercies of God (his plan of salvation and the call of some of the Gentiles to take the places in the body of Christ, lost by natural Israel) St. Paul exhorts his hearers to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable.

The question naturally arises, Whom did the Apostle address? He evidently is using these words as an exhortation, not to the world, but to believers. The introduction to the epistle indicates that it was written to those already consecrated. But evidently some connected with the church at Rome had not yet made a consecration. Some who were believers, who had come to a knowledge of the Lord and had counted the cost of self-sacrifice, but who had not given themselves fully to the Lord, might yet become brethren in the truth in the full sense. The Apostle's words would apply equally to both classes —those who had presented their bodies living sacrifices, and those contemplating doing so. It would have been fully as proper to say, Brethren, you who have already given yourselves to the Lord, I beseech you that you fulfil your vow of consecration; for your bodies are holy and acceptable to God.

The heavenly Father never forces anybody; but he tells them that he is willing to accept sacrifices, and that now is the acceptable time to present them. He sets forth the fact that self-denial and sacrifice are the only terms upon which one can come into fellowship with him. But nowhere does he urge or command any one to make a consecration. To do so would be to change the matter from sacrifice to obligation; and the very thought of sacrifice is in opposition to requirement.

THE TERMS OF DISCIPLESHIP

Our best example of what we should do is shown by our Lord and the apostles, the chief members of God's royal family. Our Lord did not seek to entrap any into his service—as we see done today. On the contrary, he proceeded along high and noble lines. He said, "Come unto me, all ye that are oppressed and heavy-laden." This is an appeal to reason. If you have found that you are sin-sick, come unto me—I have the will and the way to help you to come to the Father.

When talking to the young ruler of the synagogue, our Lord set forth the terms of discipleship. He did not say, Never mind; do not make it too serious a matter. On the contrary, he stated just what are the terms of consecration. No man could be his disciple unless he would surrender all. To this rich young man our Lord showed that with all his morality there was inconsistency. He possessed wealth, and should use that wealth to the glory of the Lord. He must not be selfish, or he could not be Christ's disciple.

The young man might have said, I have some children for whom I must make provision. But the Lord said, Give all that you have to God. A parent can consecrate his children, so far as he is concerned. The Lord would not ask any one to do that which he was unable to do. But he said, "Take up your cross and follow me," if you would be my disciple.—Mark 10:21.

Again, our Lord said, "He that putteth his hand to the plow, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom." (Luke 9:62) We should make up our mind to use all of our powers, or else stand aside. The Lord's method should be our guide. We should not try to entrap any one or resort to hocus-pocus to convince any one. We should not plead what there is to be gained in a material way by becoming a Christian. We should tell people that there is no other way to come into Christ but by the way of the cross. We cannot reach him in any other way. It is the Lord's way or no way. We must bear the cross, as he bore it. We believe that we do the people more good by setting forth the message with no uncertain sound than by trying to entrap them. Nevertheless, in putting before them the trials and the cross, we should also put before them the glory to follow.

TEXT APPLIED TO THE CONSECRATED

To those who have already made a consecration the thought would be, You have entered into a covenant with God to follow Jesus. You have given up your own human will. Remember that this includes your mortal body. Continue the work of presenting your body—of dying daily. Keep before your mind this covenant of sacrifice; for it is not yet fulfilled. The mere promise to fulfil a covenant is not fulfilling it.

The Father begets us of the holy Spirit, and gives us the great privileges that belong to those who have become new creatures in Christ. Then it is for us to go forward, and day by day lay down our lives in his service. It would be appropriate, therefore, for the Apostle to say to such, Lay down your lives daily. Remember that it is your mortal bodies which you are to sacrifice in the Lord's service. It is yourselves as old creatures, human beings, and not as new creatures, that are being sacrificed. Yours is a living sacrifice in the sense that this body, reckonedly passed out of sin, is being continually sacrificed. It is not given you to preserve, or to be your everlasting possession; but it is your covenant and privilege to accomplish the sacrifice of your flesh. Therefore I beseech you to do this.

TEXT APPLIED TO THE TENTATIVELY JUSTIFIED

To those whose justification has not been vitalized, the text might mean, You are desirous of serving God. This is indicated in your attending the meetings of the church. The fact that you assemble with the saints of this congregation signifies that you love holy things—that you desire to know the will of

God. Now then, brethren, I beseech you to make a full consecration of yourselves to God. Consider your body as a living sacrifice—not that you are to commit suicide and destroy your body, but that you are to esteem your body a living sacrifice, day by day using your strength and your life in the Lord's service.

The exhortation, "Present your bodies," then, would seem to be applicable both to the consecrated and to those who are following on to know the Lord. The next statement should be understood to be in harmony—"holy and acceptable to God." If this statement be taken in relation to those who are already consecrated, then the Apostle is saying, This vitalization of your justification which the Lord has granted you has constituted you holy. And because the Lord counts you holy, and yourselves wholly acceptable to him, you should continue to do good works—complete the good work which you have begun. The sacrifice being esteemed of God holy and acceptable, the results will be grand and glorious.

This exhortation, viewed from the standpoint of one who has not completed his consecration, might be understood to mean, If you take this step of consecration, remember that then the merit of Christ will be imputed to you, and that through the arrangement which he has made in Christ God is willing to accept you.

CONSECRATION TO DEATH MOST REASONABLE

Every one who recognizes God's mercies and blessings finds it a "reasonable service" to sacrifice the earthly things for the precious privilege of serving him. If it was a reasonable service for Jesus to leave the heavenly glory, to become a man, and to sacrifice himself unto death, then surely ours is most reasonable. We, being imperfect, have very little to give; and when there is an opportunity for showing our appreciation of the heavenly Father, then we should make haste to use it.

The Father made a proposition to the Lord Jesus, and it is not to be supposed that he would suggest anything but a reasonable service. To have asked Jesus to sacrifice his life for humanity without any reward of a future life would have been a most unreasonable thing. The Father set before the Redeemer a great joy, to be the recompense of his obedience. And so with us. The Lord does not invite us to sacrifice ourselves at the present time without any reward from him. He tells us that if we do this he will make us joint-heirs with his Son, participators with him in all the joys of the kingdom.

CONSECRATION NOT THE END OF OUR WORK

The term brethren may be viewed from two different standpoints. On the one hand, we may apply it to those who are in the state of prospective justification, in a justified attitude of mind, and whose justification is growing by every step they take toward God. On the other hand, it would refer to those who have become brethren in the fullest sense—who have taken the step of consecration, and whose consecration has been accepted by the Father through the Lord Jesus. With these there is a continual, a daily presentation. This morning we presented ourselves before the Lord and asked his blessing on the day. It is a presentation day by day and hour by hour. It is a constant surrender of self-will, in this way and in that way—a daily waving of our offering before the Lord. So it was with our Lord Jesus. He not only made the full consecration at the beginning, but day by day he laid down his life, until the sacrifice was completed on Calvary.

For one to make a consecration of his time and his talents, and then to withhold his offerings, would insure his not gaining the great prize for which the Father invited him to run. The great company will be made up of those who have presented their bodies, but who neglected their opportunities for laying down their lives—their time, influence, money, all—in the Lord's service. This neglect will lose them their place in the throne, their privilege of being a part of the bride class. The bride will be made up of those who not only have presented their bodies in the beginning, but have faithfully continued that presentation unto death.

CONSTRAINED BY GOD'S MERCIES

The Apostle states the reason why we should make this presentation of ourselves as being the "mercies of God"—"I beseech you by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies." God's mercies are to a certain extent over all. He sends his sunshine and his rain upon the evil as well as upon the good. For many centuries God's special mercies were granted only to the Jews. But the arrangement of God's plan is such that Gentiles, as well as Jews, may now come into God's favor. God broke down the middle wall of partition through Christ, and thus gave all people an opportunity to come back into harmony with him and to have him as their Father, their Life-Giver, and through Christ to share his blessings.

As many as see and hear and have the eyes of their understanding opened, should consider this a reason for a full consecration, a full surrender, to the Lord. It is truly a most reasonable service, as the Apostle points out; and the prize which he attaches to the matter makes it unspeakably desirable and precious. It would be very unreasonable to accept God's marvelous favors and then neglect to live up to the conditions attached to them. If we really believe God, if we have a proper faith in his exceeding great and precious promises, we will joyfully and faithfully meet the requirements.

A lady said to us recently: You put more stress on godly living than we in our church have done. You say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." You put a special stress on believing. Yes, we replied, this word believe has a most important bearing on the entire matter. If we should say to you that if on your way home today you would stop at a certain house, of a certain number, you would find, in a particular corner under the steps, a little bag, and that it contained valuable treasure which should be yours—if you believed our words you would go and get that bag. If you said that you believed us, and then went another way altogether, we would be sure that you had not believed us. Your course would prove it.

Now the Lord has offered us the opportunity of being joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord in "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away." If we believe this fact, we will seek to know just what the conditions are. Whoever really believes will find that the conditions are very easy in comparison with the great reward. But if he fails to put forth his greatest effort to win this great prize, he will show that he has not believed the Message; for if he recognizes the offer and believes it, he will surely be eager to lay aside every weight and encumbrance and run patiently to the end to obtain the crown.—Hebrews 12:1, 2.

THE COMPLETENESS OF OUR OFFERING

It is, therefore, a reasonable service. The Apostle tells us the conditions. All who would have this great blessing must offer themselves living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God. It is ours to present our bodies. It is not the new creature who does the presenting; there is no new creature at the time the body is presented. Our natural mind discerned from the message of the Lord that there is a more excellent way—a way of harmony with the Lord—and we desired to come thus into harmony with him. And that new, or changed, will presents our earthly interests and all that we have in sacrifice. We are altogether human when we offer ourselves to the Lord. We are then begotten to a new mind, a new hope, and thus are new creatures.

While we present ourselves to God, we do not come to him directly with our presentation. We come through the great High Priest—as in the type, the offering of the Lord's goat was presented by the high priest. We come to the Father through the Redeemer. We do not offer a justified sacrifice, but come with all our sins, for cleansing in that fountain opened for us. The sentiment of our hearts is:

> "Just as I am, without one plea,
> But that thy blood was shed for me,
> And that thou bidst me come to thee—
> O Lamb of God, I come!"

But God could not accept a sacrifice in that imperfect condition; it is only as we come through the Priest that he recognizes us. If we were perfect, we might come in our own name; but we are not perfect, and so we come only through this High Priest, Jesus. The great High Priest then imputes his merit, and includes our sacrifice as a part of his own. The divine blessing then comes upon us—we are begotten of the holy Spirit. Thenceforth we are new creatures in Christ. We have been presented in God's way and have been accepted.

REFUSAL TO ACCEPT SHOWS LACK OF APPRECIATION

Now we are dead; and our life is hid with Christ in God. We presented our bodies, and they were made living sacrifices; they were then received by God and were slain with Christ and we arose to walk in newness of life. By the body is meant also all the earthly interests, both present, past and future—every interest that we ever had or might ever have. Such a one gives up all the hope or right he might otherwise have had in a future restitution. The covenant is a complete one. The sacrifice of such became holy and acceptable to God as soon as the merit of Jesus was imputed; and our offering continues to be acceptable to the end. And as day by day we lay down our lives in the Lord's service, it brings us more and more of the Lord's blessing, and we are more and more filled with his spirit.

To render all that we have in the service of the Lord is not only a most reasonable thing, but an offering far too small. It is far less than we would gladly render to him who has manifested toward us such wondrous compassion and grace. When God has offered us so great a reward and blessing in return for our poor lives, we should feel that a refusal to accept this offer would be an indication not only of a pitiful lack of appreciation of infinite goodness, but also a weakness of mind. It would show a puerility of judgment which is unable to weigh and compare the trifling and transitory pleasures of self-will for this brief life with an eternity of joy and blessing and glory on the divine plane, far above angels and principalities and powers and every name that is named, next to our glorious Lord and Head—a station so glorious, so exalted, that no human mind can grasp its infinitude. Let us be faithful—even unto death!

LET US GO ON "IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH"!

"Having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."—Hebrews 10:21, 22.

The Apostle Paul is here drawing to the attention of the church, and especially to those familiar with the Jewish arrangements of that day, the fact that the Aaronic priesthood was only a typical one, designed for a time to illustrate greater things; that God's real plan was not to be carried out by the Aaronic priesthood from the house of Levi, and that their sacrifices of bulls and goats could not take away sins; but that from year to year this arrangement merely shielded God's typical people—typically covered them—through their covenant. The Apostle points out that there is to be a greater priesthood, after the order of Melchizedek; that our Lord is the Head of this priesthood, and that the Gospel church are his members, the under-priesthood. He then asks, Why should a better priesthood be needed than the one that God provided in Aaron and his sons? The answer is that they were sinners, and could never really cancel sin; and the blood of those animals possessed no real merit. Those priests themselves never really got back into favor with God. They merely had access into a typical Holy and Most Holy.

But now we have Christ as the Head of this new order of priesthood; let us realize our position as underpriests of this order. Our High Priest has entered into the true Most Holy. The evidence of this came in the Pentecostal blessing showing that the Father was well pleased with the sacrifice made by our Lord, and that all things were then ready to permit us also to come near to God, sharing our Redeemer's experiences, that we might later go to him beyond the vail and share his glory. Seeing that God has thus made all these gracious provisions, and has accepted us as the house of God to take the place of the house of Aaron—and so much greater than his house—let us enter into the real Holy and Most Holy, "with a true heart, in full assurance of faith."

The under-priests were permitted to enter into the Holy, and after the Day of Atonement into the Most Holy. All, in this Gospel age, who have made consecration to God, and have been begotten of the spirit, are in the first Holy. Aaron and his sons were a type of the true priesthood; but we are not of the order of Aaron; we are not members of the Aaronic priesthood, but of the Melchizedek priesthood, under its great High Priest. "Ye are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter 2:9.

LET US COME WITH TRUE HEARTS

Seeing, then, that we have confidence that God has made this arrangement, confidence to take the proper steps, and have presented our bodies living sacrifices, have gone through the antitypical consecration, and received the begetting of the holy Spirit, let us begin at once the work of the new order of Priesthood. There are great things to be accomplished: let us fully enter in with him—let us become full participators in this work—in everything that God has for us to do. Let us come with true hearts, however, realizing how wonderful are our blessings, how precious is the provision of the covering of our Savior's merit. Let us be true and loyal to this covenant into which we have entered with God.

The Lord's call under this covenant is, "Gather my saints together unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5) This call, or invitation, has been going forth during the entire Gospel age. And all the holy ones, all who have entered into this covenant, are privileged to have a share in the sacrifice of Christ and to co-labor with him.

Let us come with full assurance of faith in the sense that we shall have no doubt whatever that God's promises are true and for us. The world sees no cause for sacrificing in the present life, and they count us fools all the day long, as the Apostle says. But nevertheless in full assurance of faith, let us go on! Let us loyally press forward unto the end of the way, until we shall be joined to our great High Priest, and enter into his rest!

ANOINTED IN HIM

The anointing of the high priest in the type represented the divine appointment to office. Aaron was thus anointed of God. The Apostle Paul says that "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron." Even Christ took not this honor upon himself. God appointed him, saying, "Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." (Hebrews 5:4-6) God's direct dealings were with the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the one acceptable to the Father. God gave his holy Spirit to our Lord in fullest degree. Jesus himself tells us that God gave not his Spirit by measure unto him, because he was able to receive the holy Spirit in full measure. Those who are counted as his members are not able to receive the spirit in full measure, because of their imperfection. The less fallen man can receive more of the spirit, and the more fallen man can receive less.

When Christ appeared in the presence of God for us, and applied his merit for those who would offer themselves to become members of his body, to be associated with him in the glorious kingdom work, he received divine approval and sanction, which was manifested by the begetting by the holy Spirit of those who had presented themselves in consecration, the holy Spirit being first given at Pentecost. The Apostle Peter says that God fulfilled his promise to Jesus by granting him the holy Spirit to shed forth upon his disciples. (Acts 2:33) It is of the Father, and by the Son.

It was not necessary that the heavenly Father should pour out his holy Spirit upon each individual member of the body. We understand that the picture given in the type is quite complete. The holy Spirit being poured out upon the Head of the great High Priest, and flowing down over the skirts of his garments, all his body is thus anointed. We each receive our share of the anointing when we come into the body, and under the robe.

FULL ASSURANCE BASED ON KNOWLEDGE

Speaking to those who are privileged to come to God in prayer, the Apostle says, "Let us draw near in full assurance of faith." He is speaking to the house of God class. Natural Israel were of the house of God, too, but they were servants. The servants belong to the house, of course, but not in the very special sense, as do the children. We have the suggestion given us that Moses was faithful as a servant over his house, but that the church of Christ are a house of sons, and that Christ is Head over this house. It is this house of Sons that may draw near to God. The assurance with which these may rightly approach is dependent upon certain conditions here indicated. They must have a true heart, and are not to be double-minded. Entire heart loyalty must be theirs; they must fully demonstrate that they meant what they said when they gave their lives to God. Then they may come to the Lord with holy boldness, in full assurance of faith. All the steps of God's true people are steps of faith, of realization of his care. But there is a full assurance of faith in contrast with a lesser faith. A faith that is only partial will bring us somewhat near to God. A faith that is strong will bring us nearer. But a full assurance of faith is that faith which, if retained, will bring us off "more than conquerors," and make us at last members in full of the royal priesthood—in glory.

This full assurance of faith cannot be attained in a day. It requires quite a degree of information. And God has provided this information by instructing us in his Word as to what Christ did for us, and what he is willing to do; why he died for us, etc. All this is furnished us as a basis for faith. Then to further strengthen our faith, we have all the exceeding great and precious promises, and his daily providences over us. Therefore this fully consecrated class may draw near, and have the full assurance that they may attain all the glorious things to which God has invited them—to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

FULL ASSURANCE NECESSARY TO GOD'S APPROVAL

The Apostle intimates that without this full assurance of faith the child of God cannot come close to him. Only those who trust the Father as a little child would trust its earthly parent, can expect to make good progress in the narrow way and have the courage and confidence which it is the privilege of all who are his to have, and without which we cannot have the perfect peace and rest of heart promised. "According to your faith be it unto you," is the promise. The desire to draw nearer and nearer to God must be in our heart; else we shall fail to go on and attain our privilege in Christ. Such a desire is a manifestation of our hunger and thirst after righteousness, which the Lord expects to see before he makes good to such his engagement that they shall be filled.

There are definite conditions specified in the Word as necessary to continued progress along this line. As we cannot draw close to the Lord except through this full assurance, neither can we have the assurance unless our hearts are kept "sprinkled from an evil conscience," or a consciousness of evil; for, as the Apostle also declares, "If our own heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." (1 John 3:20) We may be sure that if our course as new creatures in Christ is condemned by our own conscience it would also be condemned by God.

Therefore, if the child of God would draw very near, and would have the blessed realization of the Father's smile of approval continually, he must seek to have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men—a conscience which can truthfully say, I am striving to do that which would be pleasing to the Lord, that which is in full harmony with my covenant of sacrifice; and I am striving also to do that which would justly have the approval of righteous men. Nothing short of this is at all permissible in those who have consecrated themselves to be members of the royal priesthood, to sacrifice their lives in the Lord's service that they may reign with him.

CAUSE AND REMEDY FOR LACK OF FAITH

He who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. (Philippians 1:6) But how few children of God, comparatively, have this "full assurance of faith" which is our glorious privilege! How few can say, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever!" Surely, by God's grace I shall ultimately gain the heavenly kingdom and the glorious things which he has promised to those who love him. The few who can thus enter fully into sympathy with the Apostle Paul and the Prophet David in their expressions of confidence have therein a great joy, a great blessing, a great rest of heart which none others possess.

Let us therefore inquire why it is that the number who thus enter into the rest of faith is so small. What are the hindrances to others, and how can these hindrances be removed? How can each one of the children of God enjoy fully this, his blessed patrimony? Many say, or think if they do not say, Oh, that I could feel sure that God's goodness and mercy would continue with me to the end! Oh, that I could remove my doubts of gaining the kingdom, of being ultimately "more than conqueror"!

What is the difficulty with these? Why do they not have the "full assurance of faith" of their acceptance? We answer that their difficulty is a lack of trust in God; and such a lack is not pleasing to him, for "without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6) Moreover, this lack of faith is a constant hindrance to their overcoming; as it is written: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1 John 5:4) The Christian who has not the shield of faith, and a large one, is continually at a disadvantage before the adversary, and all the hosts of evil.

Then let each one who realizes a lack in this direction pray earnestly, as the apostles of old, "Lord, increase our faith!" And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, let such a one cultivate such faith in his or her own heart. (1) Let him refresh his memory continually with the precious promises of the Word, becoming very familiar with these. (2) Let him seek more and more to remember that, having made a covenant with the Lord, these promises are his; and in his heart and with his lips let him claim them as his before the throne of grace, with thanksgiving. Let him claim them in his thoughts, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren.

When trials or difficulties arise, he should call to mind these precious promises, remembering that they belong to him, because God has given these promises to such as love him and have made a covenant with him by sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5; Malachi 3:17) He should resolve that henceforth he will trust the Word of his heavenly Father implicitly. If some seeming accident befall him, let him call to mind the promise, "All things work together for good to them that love God, who are called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) Let him thus assure himself that the seeming accident could not have occurred had God not seen a way to make it the channel of a needed lesson or blessing to him.

Let us never forget that he who has begun this good work in us changes never, and that if we keep our hearts in harmony with him, if our faith is still firm and clear in the great atonement made for our sins, and we continually renew our consecration to him, keeping our all on the altar of sacrifice, letting the Lord consume it in his own way, seeking not our own will, our own way, but his will alone, we have every reason to have full confidence that this good work in us will be finished, that we shall enter with joy into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord, and shall hear his blessed words of approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

APRIL 19.—Luke 14:25-35.

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."—Matthew 16:25.

It was at the close of the great Teacher's ministry. Vast multitudes were following him, all, according to the requirements of the law, going up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of the Passover, at which Jesus foreknew that he would die as the antitypical Passover Lamb. Occasionally in the journey he would turn and address some of the multitude. Today's lesson gives us some of his teachings. It was the custom of teachers in those days to accept disciples, or pupils—those who considered them great teachers and desired to learn of them and profit by their instruction. To this day Christians claim to be the disciples, or followers, of Jesus, claim to be giving heed to his word and seeking the blessing which he promised to his faithful followers.

The terms of discipleship which Jesus set forth, it will be noted, are very different from those proclaimed by some who profess to be his mouthpieces, his ministers. They sometimes proclaim that it is a sufficient sign of discipleship for persons to arise in a congregation and declare that they desire the prayers of God's people. Such are counted converts. To get them to take even this step requires the holding out of inducements. Sometimes the inducements are of a commercial kind—greater business prosperity to the merchant, greater favor with the employer for the clerk, an entrance into society or a better prospect of political preferment.

If we contrast these methods with the words of Jesus in this lesson, we shall perceive that the vast number of nominal Christians have been, so to speak, inveigled into professing something that they never intended to profess. Many are entrapped into professing Christianity who never became Christians, according to the Master's conditions of discipleship, and who hearken not to his Word.

"If any man come unto me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Surely there is no excuse for us to misunderstand such plain terms and conditions. The Master did not say that only his disciples could ever gain everlasting life. His general teaching was that the whole world is lost, estranged from God and without the right to everlasting life. But he came to die, "the Just for the unjust," that all of the unjust might have the opportunity of returning to divine favor. He did not say that none but his followers would have such an opportunity of future life. Those who so declare are adding to the Word and helping thus, eventually, to confound themselves.

What Jesus did teach was that he would in due time be "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The world had already existed for 4,000 years before Jesus came, and no one will dispute that those who died previous to his coming had no opportunity of knowing him and being his disciples. Yet he died to bless them, as well as to bless all who have been born into the world since. This blessing of the world, he declared, is to be accomplished by his kingdom; and he told them plainly that his kingdom was not of this world, age, or epoch, but of a future period. For the time being he was merely inviting disciples, and not attempting to reach the world.

The disciples were invited to become joint-heirs with Jesus in his kingdom, that they might sit with him in his throne and participate with him in his great work of human uplift—Restitution of all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary. He told them plainly that only through much tribulation would they be able to enter the kingdom class; that the tribulations would prove their love of righteousness, their loyalty to God; and that God had purposely made the way so narrow that only the few, the very choicest of humanity in God's sight, could find it—a very few walking in that way to its further end of glory, honor and immortality.

With this view clearly before our mind's eye, there is a reasonableness in the hard terms of discipleship. Only those willing to comply with such terms, and thus to demonstrate their love and loyalty to God, could properly be entrusted with the great power, glory and honor which will be granted to the kingdom class, in association with the Redeemer, as soon as it shall have been completed. Let us examine these words carefully, meanwhile measuring ourselves—not our flesh, but our spirit, our intentions, our desires.

Well did Henry Ward Beecher say respecting this statement made by the Master: "Never was there before, and never has there been since, I apprehend, such a speech made to those that professed to be willing and desirous to follow another." And probably a parallel statement is found in Matthew's Gospel (10:37): "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." The word hate is apparently used in contrast with love. To be a disciple of Christ, then, means that we must love supremely the Lord and the principles for which he stands, so that love for others would comparatively be hatred.

This proposition in its very start signifies a cutting off—so far as the man is concerned, the will, the purpose—of every other love that would conflict with our love for the Lord and with our obedience to his will. Our earthly loves are to be counted as nothing in comparison. We are to be ready to sacrifice at the Lord's command every earthly hope, aim, object, and to lay down our lives willingly, gladly. Such as manifest a devotion of this kind can be trusted with anything. Of these the Lord speaks, saying prophetically, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I (come to) make up my jewels."—Malachi 3:17.

The fact that Jesus was of this character himself, and placed the Father's will above all other considerations, is an assurance that all amongst his joint-heirs in the kingdom will have the same mind, the same spirit. He assures us that the kingdom will not be a selfish one, but the very reverse. The kings and princes and judges of that kingdom will be not only irresistible in power, but incorruptible, unbribable. With them the divine standard will be first, in the absolute sense.

Such devotion to the Lord as is here described will necessarily at some time or other mean the severing of many earthly ties. It means that the followers of Jesus will be thought a peculiar people; and that many will think their course strange, unnatural, insane. Hence, as St. Paul said, we are counted fools all the day long for Christ's sake—because we preach the wisdom of God and the love of God in preference to the wisdom of humanity and the love of humanity. Of such St. John writes, saying, "As he was, so are we in this world"—ostracized, misunderstood, reproved, slandered. Only those who can stand such an experience can be winners of the crown to which Jesus referred, saying, To him that overcometh I will give a crown of life, and permit him to sit with me in my throne.

Who is sufficient for these things? asks the Apostle. And he furnishes the answer: "Our sufficiency is of God"; and in the promises—"my grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness"; and again, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

DEFINITION OF CROSS-BEARING

Adding to the severity of the terms, Jesus declared, "Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." It is not enough that we should start out with a courageous intention, a bold acknowledgment of Jesus, and a bold profession of discipleship. After we have been faithful in taking our stand on the Lord's side, we must be proven. Not merely those who have a little enthusiasm at the beginning, but those who shall demonstrate their worthiness by their faithfulness will be accounted worthy, and will be finally accepted by the Lord. Cross-bearing must be a daily matter. Our crosses are those oppositions of the world, the flesh and the devil which conflict with the divine will as laid down for us in the Lord's Word. The only proper sentiment is that which the Master expresses, saying, "Not my will, but thine."

As an admonition to all not to undertake discipleship without mature deliberation, our Lord gave a parable of a man who began to build a tower, laying the foundation, but who was not able to complete it, and thus wasted his effort and made himself ridiculous, foolish. Another illustration was that of going to war without adequate preparation—an undertaking which would result disastrously. All the followers of Christ set out to build character and to "fight a good fight." Whoever enlists under the banner of Jesus takes his stand against Satan and sin, and must expect to have a hard battle and not to receive the victor's crown, nor to hear the words, "Well done," except by faithful perseverance in well doing.

What a blessing it would be if all who espouse the cause of Christ would do so with a full, clear understanding of what they are doing and with the fixed determination to go onward in the good way, not even to look back! The cause of Christ would be much further advanced amongst men; and while their number would be much smaller, their influence and power in the world would undoubtedly be much greater.

"SALT IS GOOD, BUT—"

Salt has preservative qualities in connection with whatever it touches. It also serves to bring out the flavor of our food. In olden times it was used as a symbol of faithfulness, loyalty; and it is said that even yet some of the Arabs would be faithful to death to any person in whose home they had eaten salt. To them it seems to mean a pledge of loyalty.

Jesus used salt as a symbol, representing his own loyalty to God and the loyalty which all of his followers must have, and not only so, but which they must maintain. If salt lose its value for seasoning purposes, it is useless for anything else. It will not serve as a fertilizer, for it has an opposite effect. It is absolutely useless except for its intended purpose. So the Christian has a special purpose in the world—to be a preservative power, to have, as it were, antiseptic qualities, and to draw out all the good qualities of those with whom he is connected. This is the mission of the Christian in respect to the world. If he fail in this, he has failed in the purpose for which he was called, and is of no particular value in the Lord's service.

"He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear," said Jesus, in conclusion. All of his followers are to take heed to these words. Whoever neglects them despises the One who gave them, and will surely fail of a blessing that might otherwise have been secured. But as for the world, "ears they have, but they hear not; eyes have they, but they see not." We are not to measure the world by the same standards that we measure ourselves and all who profess to be the followers of Jesus. The world's highest standard is the Golden Rule. The Christian's highest standard is self-sacrifice, doing God's will at any cost.

HEAVENLY INTEREST IN SINNERS

APRIL 26.—Luke 15:1-10.

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."—Verse 10.

Bible students should always seek to view the jewels of the Lord's Word in the settings in which they have been placed. To neglect this is to lose a portion of the lesson intended. The scribes and the Pharisees held themselves aloof from the common people—the scribes, because the masses were illiterate; and the Pharisees, under the claim that the people were sinners, cut off from relationship to God, and therefore not proper to be recognized by the holy of humanity, which they claimed to be.

Jesus, however, received the common people, even the publicans, acknowledged sinners. His superior knowledge did not make him haughty, and his superior righteousness did not make him proud and unsympathetic. He has set his followers an example that they should walk in his steps. And the more closely they follow him, the more pleasing will they be to the Father, and the more ready for a share in the kingdom for which we pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Our lesson tells us how the Pharisees and the scribes murmured against Jesus, charging against him as a sin that he received sinners and ate with them. Whatever did not harmonize with their standards they could only contest. Their difficulty in part was that they had too high an opinion of themselves. Their spirit in this matter was an evil one, begotten of the adversary. Hence Jesus sometimes spoke of them as being children of the devil, because his works they did, and his spirit they had. But even this does not signify that the

Pharisees were beyond hope of salvation. Did not Jesus address St. Peter on one occasion, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan (adversary)"? He was an adversary, had the adverse spirit at the time; but, corrected in harmony with the Lord's spirit, everything was changed.

So it is with us. "His servants ye are to whom ye render service." "By their fruits shall ye know them," said the Master. Applying his words to many who profess to be his disciples, we are bound to suppose that either intentionally or ignorantly they are in opposition to the Master's Spirit and teachings—adversaries of his teachings.

Jesus, knowing the thoughts of the Pharisees, and perhaps noting their gestures and looks or hearing their words, answered them in a parable, saying, "What man of you, having a hundred sheep and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it?" And finding it, he lays it upon his shoulders rejoicing, and tells the fact to his neighbors exultantly. This course of the shepherd, Jesus declared, illustrates the attitude of God and all the holy angels associated with him. They have a special feeling of interest in those who have strayed, and especially rejoice in the recovery of such. There is more rejoicing over the repentant sinner than over ninety and nine just persons needing no repentance.

Oh, how encouraging it is to us to know that this is the sentiment of heaven, and that the fall of man and our imperfections do not stand as a perpetual bar to recognition by the Lord, if we return to him! He is merciful, and will abundantly pardon, and will remove our sins from us as far as the East is from the West. But this interest is in the repentant one or in the one who has not sinned beyond repentance. Any sheep, having been found by the Shepherd and then preferring the wolfish, would no longer be interesting to the heavenly ones.

Many apply this parable inconsistently. They seem to think of the whole world of mankind as representing the flock of a hundred sheep, and the one straying as representing the sinners of earth, comparatively few. Surely this cannot be the true interpretation! Rather, as the Prophet has declared, "All we like sheep have gone astray." "There is none righteous, no not one."

Let us rather interpret the parable on a broader scale, in comportment with the facts and the Scriptures. Let us understand the one stray sheep to represent Adam and his family; and the ninety and nine just persons needing no repentance as representing the holy angels. To this view every feature of the parable inclines. The Good Shepherd left the heavenly flock and came to earth to find, to redeem, to recover, mankind, the lost sheep; and there is more rejoicing in heaven over human recoveries from sin and alienation from God than over the holy ones themselves, than over each other, who have never been alienated, never needed redemption.

The lesson to the Pharisees is plain. They had a different spirit from that of the holy ones. Theirs was an earthly view, a selfish one, a proud and haughty one, out of accord with the divine spirit, and not pleasing to God. Jesus would have all of his disciples copy God. "Be ye like unto your Father which is in heaven." "He is kind to the unthankful." "His mercy endureth forever"—to a full completeness.

His mercy sent his Son, the Under Shepherd, to be our Redeemer, and to help us back into his favor. His mercy will pursue the lost sheep until every member of Adam's race shall have been brought to a knowledge of the truth and to a full opportunity of returning to the fold of God. To this end the Messianic kingdom is to be established. To this end also is the present call for the church, to be a royal priesthood, that under the guidance of the great Deliverer, they may be colaborers with him in carrying the message of God's grace to all the members of Adam's family.

Oh, how different this view of our loving Creator from the one which was handed down to us from the dark ages! How different from the one which represented the Almighty as angry in a vicious sense!—as having prepared in advance a place for the eternal torture of the human family, except a few who would have the hearing ears and happen to hear the message in the present life. On the contrary, we find that God's loving provision is only beginning to be manifested, in his favor toward Christ and the church; and that ultimately the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth, until every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God.

In proportion as we become Godlike we have an interest in sinners—especially in those who through heredity or evil environment are more deeply steeped in sin, ignorance and superstition. Having God's Spirit, we are glad to do anything in our power to reach these sinners. Nevertheless, we are not to be wise above what is written. We are not to expect to find all the sheep. Rather, we are to prepare as many as the Lord our God shall call and draw to be associated with the great Chief Shepherd in the work which he shortly will institute, the work of seeking the lost sheep and finding it and restoring it—all the willing and obedient.

"The Son of Man came to seek and to save (recover) that which was lost." The race was lost, not merely a few, the church; and their recovery is to include all that was lost. This does not signify universalism, but will be accomplished in bringing every member of Adam's race to a full knowledge of God and to full opportunity of recovery from sin and death.—1 Timothy 2:3, 4.

Jesus gave another parable of similar import, to illustrate the same great truth from another angle. It was the custom among Jewish women to wear on the forehead a fringe of coin bangles. These might be of gold or silver, and sometimes represented her dowry. The loss of one of these coins would represent more than its intrinsic value; for its absence marred the beauty of the bangles. The search for the coin would mean that, instead of its being abandoned as not worthy of consideration, it would be hunted for diligently until found. The female neighbors would learn of the loss, and also learn if it were found, and would rejoice with her greatly. This is another illustration of joy in the presence of the angels of God over one repentant sinner.

THE VALUE OF A MAN

Jesus said, "Are ye not of much more value than many sparrows?" And in the present lesson he intimates that a man is of much more value than many coins and of much more value than many sheep. We all agree that it would be difficult to estimate too highly, too fully, the value of a human life, especially if it were our own life or the life of some one dear to us. But to what extent do we manifest this in our daily lives?

Each should put the question to himself first, before applying it to his neighbors. How do I manifest the spirit of God toward my fellow-men, in placing as the first object of my interest a human life? What am I doing day by day that substantiates my professed interest in humanity in general? How am I showing my interest in my friends, my relatives, my children, my brothers and my sisters?

The manufacturer should take up this subject and ask himself, To what extent am I placing coin as of more value than humanity? To what extent am I allowing the accumulation of coin to interfere with the making and the giving of proper protection to my employees and all for whose welfare I have a care, a responsibility? Their fingers, their eyes, their limbs, their health, their lives, should be precious to every one who has the Spirit of God to the slightest degree.

Each Christian should ask himself, How much of God's Spirit have I? How much of my time am I giving to helping my fellow-men out of their difficulties and trials back to God? How much am I sacrificing of my time and strength in going after the lost sheep? Hearken to the Apostle, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked." "He that doeth righteousness is righteous"—and not merely he that professes to be a follower of Jesus.

Nevertheless, we are not to forget that God is the one chiefly interested in this great work, and that he has sent forth his Son for its accomplishment. We are not to forget that not only we have an interest, but that divine interest and love are greater than ours, and that divine wisdom is superior; and our course should be to give strict heed to "him that speaketh from heaven," to follow his course, his example.

This may mean that we shall to some extent be misunderstood by others. There are many theories for saving the world by social uplift, political uplift, moral uplift, vice-fighting, etc. Undoubtedly, the principle remains always true that there are but two great captains in the warfare between sin and righteousness; namely, Christ and Satan. It remains true also that whoever is fighting for the one is fighting against the other. It is for us to make sure, first of all, that we are on the Lord's side, on the side of righteousness, truth, purity and goodness. There is still a further step—to make sure that we are fighting as our Captain would wish us to fight; that we are laboring as he would wish us to labor; that we are spending ourselves as he would wish us to be spent.

"This is the will of God (concerning you), even your sanctification." Thus our personal salvation comes first, in God's order. Reconciled to God ourselves and consecrated to his service, we inquire, What is the next step? The answer comes, "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs." At first we might be disposed to demur, to say, Lord, should we not rather go after the straying, after the lost sheep? The answer is given by the Lord, through the Apostle, that we are to "do good unto

all men as we have opportunity, especially unto the household of faith." If, therefore, the household of faith demands all of our time when we have the opportunity, we may be doing nothing for the lost sheep, but only helping to perfect those whom the Lord has already found.

The circumstances of the Lord's providence alone can direct our course. When we see his purpose, his object, in this arrangement, all is clear. He is taking out of the world a peculiar people, to be joint-heirs with his Son in the kingdom; and they all need education along spiritual lines for their own development, and to fit and prepare them to be the royal priesthood—to be kings and priests unto God—who by and by are to judge, to chasten, to uplift, to bless, all the world, in proportion as they shall prove willing and obedient.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

FORGIVENESS VS. EXPIATION

Question.—In relation to sins partly wilful, are stripes given for the portion of wilfulness? And when the sin is expiated, is it then canceled?

Answer.—Our Lord died for the sin of Adam—for just the one original sin, and all sins which grew out of that original sin. This sin of Adam affected the body, mind and morals of all the race. Therefore we each have not only our own inherited imperfections to contend with, but also the imperfections of all those around us.

From the time that any one is begotten of the holy Spirit all things become new. The members of the little flock class have no record whatever of condemnation against them; all that condemnation is completely eliminated. The imputation of Christ's merit to their flesh made them perfect in God's sight, and they were brought forth as new creatures.

These new creatures have entered into a covenant with God to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. In the present time, as the Apostle says, we have this treasure of the new nature in an earthen vessel; that is, we have it under unfavorable conditions. We have also besetments from those around us and from the adversary to oppose us. All sins, then, that are the result of these adverse conditions, and to which our will does not consent, are coverable by the merit of Christ. If any of these new creatures unwittingly do that which is contrary to the divine will, they need not remain in a condemned condition. The Word instructs us that we should go immediately to the throne of heavenly grace and obtain mercy and forgiveness, and help for every time of need.

But suppose that the sin is not merely one of temptation—suppose there is a measure of wilfulness or a measure of slackness, so that the child of God is thus far responsible, what then? We answer that he may still go to the throne of heavenly grace, and the portion of his sin which was unwilling will be covered by the merit of Christ. Whatever portion of the sin is wilful is deserving of punishment, stripes; and these stripes he will surely get. The Father will not allow his children to wander away without help. The stripes complete the expiation of that sin; and it will be canceled from the record. Justice has no longer any charge against him.

But the Scriptures clearly tell us that if any consecrated child of God should sin with full wilfulness there would be no forgiveness whatever for that sin, and it could not be expiated by stripes. The penalty would be death—the second death. If he sins with no wilfulness, in full ignorance, entirely without intention, the sin is entirely forgivable, by application for the merit of the precious blood. If he sins with partial ignorance and partial wilfulness, there is a portion that would be forgiven and a portion that must be expiated.

The Apostle Paul declares that if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged of the Lord; but that when we are judged of the Lord we are chastened, that we may not be condemned with the world. (1 Corinthians 11:31, 32) And this chastening that comes upon us is the proper penalty for our degree of wilfulness. The object of the Lord in meeting out this chastisement is that we shall learn the needed lesson, and be more watchful.

CHILDREN OF THE FIRST, OR THE SECOND ADAM?

Question.—Whose children will the world be when they awake in the morning of the new dispensation—the children of Adam, or the children of Christ, the second Adam?

Answer.—We understand that they will still be the children of Adam. When we think of our Lord as the Life-giver of the world, we should remember that he is the Life-giver only to those who come unto the Father through him. When the masses of mankind awaken in the next age, they will not have undergone any change which would lift them out of Adam and condemnation to death, into Christ and justification of life.

The New Covenant which God will seal with the precious blood of Christ is to be a covenant primarily with Israel—to those Jews who are his people, to those who will accept Christ. The faithful Israelites who will accept the Lord and the covenant relationship through the Mediator which is thus inaugurated for their benefit, will, as soon as they do this, come under the blessings of this covenant. But mankind in general, who will not yet have come to a position of acceptance of the Mediator, will still be in the same attitude of today—aliens, strangers, foreigners. The work of the church during that time is described in Revelation 22:17, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." But none will begin to live until they partake of the Water of Life.

The world of mankind now go down into death as strangers, aliens from God, and it will be for them after their awakening to avail themselves of the privileges of that time. The Apostle John declares, "He that hath the Son hath life." Those who are awakened will not have this life, not having come into relationship with Christ. His relationship to them during the next age will evidently be that of a benevolent ruler, who is willing to enlighten them, to adopt them, if they will, as children, and who is willing to bring them up to the condition where they may have life everlasting. It will take the entire thousand years to fully perfect the race—to bring them up to perfection.

"Tell the whole world these blessed tidings;
Speak of the time of rest that nears;
Tell the oppressed of every nation,
'Jubilee lasts a thousand years!'"

The Lord Jesus will become the Father of all, just as soon as they comply with the required terms. He will give them, first, enlightenment and knowledge. Then if they use this knowledge, light and opportunity, and desire to come into harmony with him, he will receive them as his children, and grant them the blessings under the New Covenant.

We recall the Scripture which says that the law shall go forth from Mt. Zion and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths."

These people represent the world in general outside of those who have accepted the terms of the covenant. It represents them as learning a lesson and desiring to come into harmony with God. They say one to another, Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord's house, and let us walk in his paths Not until they do this will the Mediator recognize them in any sense of the word, nor will they be on probation for everlasting life. As soon as they are ready to walk in the way of holiness, they will be counted as his children.

FLEETING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE

Dear Brother Russell:—

My ever-increasing love for the truths now due, and my growing zeal for the scattering of the same among the masses of people who are beginning to hunger for something more satisfying than brilliant essays and talented choirs, prompts me to mention several opportunities for service which many might use if brought to their attention.

Many sisters have such splendid chances among their grocers, druggists, and others with whom they deal. The workers in Babylon are always begging these merchants for something for the church-fair, or asking them to buy tickets for the social. It has occurred to me, why not try to sell them the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES? Arrangements could be made to make purchases when no customers are likely to be present, and when the merchant would have spare time. A first volume might be carried, and after making purchases, inquire whether he has ever seen the book. He might be told how it has opened up the Bible to you and then he should be canvassed for a set. If he hesitates about taking a set, sell him a first volume. Say you will want to know how he likes it, as this will make him more likely to read. Try to make some of your purchases thereafter when he is not very busy, that opportunity may be had to water the seed sown.

Brethren employed where there are fellow-workmen have in many cases a grand opportunity to witness to them. These might be canvassed for the STUDIES at the noon hour. Try to eat your luncheon (if you take it with you) near a different man each day, and in the course of conversation tell him about

the blessing you have received from these Bible Helps, and arrange to sell or loan him one of them.

If the brother has some ability, he might do good by holding little question meetings while eating lunch. The answers should always be brief and to the point. To be helpful, such questions should be on the more simple features of the plan; deep questions would choke those who are spiritual babes.

For instance, the conversation might be turned to the subject of hell. The brother could insist that there is not a single passage in the Bible where the word means a place of endless misery, and the only places seemingly teaching so are very highly figurative passages. Then say, "I have a little book in which every passage in the Bible where the word hell occurs is explained. I will bring it here tomorrow and read you a couple of wonderful paragraphs in it." This will probably bring them together the next day; and by promising to consider further questions the third day, one might have a regular little lunch-time class. Of course, the majority will tire of it, but a few may stick.

In the larger towns and cities the truth-hungry might be advertised for. Some city-dailies will allow it among the miscellaneous religious advertisements; but in each case, judgment will have to be exercised as to where it should be placed, and how frequently inserted. The following is suggested as an advertisement:

"Those who want to believe the Bible but have never yet found in it anything as satisfying and reasonable as they would expect God to give, are invited to send their names and addresses to P. O. Box ——. This is no scheme, but simply an effort to bring real religious satisfaction to those who feel their faith is shaking."

Let some able, consecrated brother call upon those who respond, and either sell or loan them "The Divine Plan of the Ages." He might first tell them of the blessing he is getting from the Word of God now, in contrast to the former conditions. He might call again, from time to time, to see what progress they are making, if the interest warrants. Sisters should call on the ladies who reply.

I find that the brethren are not sufficiently alert to the opportunities among the foreigners in their town. If there be Greek confectioners in your town, send for a half dozen Greek tracts to give them. The same might apply to Chinese in the laundries, Italians at fruit-stands and in street gangs, etc.

"The Bible Students' Monthly," on "What is Baptism?" is specially good where Brother Russell has been misrepresented very much, because of the article by Prof. Ellis and letter by Rev. T. S. Thompson, endorsing him and his work. The Brethren sometimes forget that they are able to do more than merely circulate yearly Volunteer literature. Often a special tract will fit in very well with local conditions, if circulated at the psychological time.

Every day makes me more desirous for the time when our service will not be limited by the weak, imperfect body in which we now dwell. I am glad that day is so near.

I remain, with Christian love, on Jordan's Banks,

B. H. BARTON.

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JEHOVAH'S CHARACTER MANIFESTED IN HIS GREAT PLAN OF THE AGES

Why was Jesus Christ called upon to suffer and die? Could not the great God have accomplished the salvation of humanity in some other way, without the agony and death of his Son? These are questions which often present themselves to the thoughtful student of God's Word, and which can be answered very satisfactorily. God could have arranged the matter very differently; He is not an unresourceful God. He is an all-wise God, an all-powerful God. We can see, for instance, that God could have decreed that Adam should be excluded from the Garden of Eden for a time, and that after he had suffered somewhat for his disobedience, and had thereby learned a lesson, he should then be restored to favor. By that experience Adam would, no doubt, have been taught a very good lesson. So all of Adam's children might have undergone some penalty, some purging experiences, whereby they might have profited, and then have come back again into harmony with God.

But the wisdom of God is a mighty deep, and he has a great and wise plan! He had purposed that all of his intelligent creatures—angels, cherubim, seraphim, and humans—who would gain eternal life, must be absolutely loyal to him, and hence that they should all be tested in respect to their loyalty. They must all be tried and tested characters. It was his purpose, therefore, that all his intelligent creatures in heaven and on earth should be brought to perceive his goodness and worthiness of all praise, that they might be able to exclaim from the heart: "Blessing and honor and might be unto him that sitteth upon the throne . . . forever!"

Those who prove their loyalty to the Creator shall live everlastingly. Those who will not prove their loyalty shall die—go into absolute extinction. Up to the time man was created, God had not made known this feature of his plan. He then declared that death should be the penalty for sin, in order that all might know the law of his government—that only the righteous shall live, and that all sinners shall eventually be destroyed. Hence God arranged beforehand that man's sin, which he foreknew, should bring upon Adam and his posterity the extreme penalty of his law.

Many would not have chosen sin if they had known its sure results, and had been born with perfect ability to choose the right. But God purposed that Adam's posterity should come into the world under fallen conditions, as the result of his disobedience. He purposed to make manifest here on the planet Earth what is the natural tendency and certain outcome of sin. Sin's tendency is always downward; and not only so, but it aggregates itself, and leads to ruin and death.

God designed that this great lesson of the evil results of sin should be witnessed by the angels also, who before the creation and fall of man were surrounded by such conditions as presented no special temptation to sin.

TEMPTATION COMES TO THE ANGELS

God desires the worship of only such as worship him in spirit and in truth. Any who will not worship from this motive shall eventually be destroyed. We see that God allowed sin not only to enter the world through the machinations of Satan, but to be a source of temptation to the angels. We see how all the angels became exposed to a peculiar temptation in connection with fallen mankind. (Genesis 6:1-5; Jude 6) We believe that Satan instigated this temptation, as he did the temptation of Mother Eve. He himself was the first transgressor.

Some of the angelic host succumbed to this temptation, and some remained loyal to God. So we know that all the angels of heaven were subjected to a great test as to their obedience to their Creator. All those angels who are in harmony with God, according to the Bible, have stood their test. These, we understand the Scriptures to teach, have been granted the reward of everlasting life, because they proved faithful and obedient and demonstrated their loyalty. Those who fell were bound in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day—now present, we believe.

GOD'S ECONOMICAL PLAN

Man has for six thousand years borne the penalty, "Dying, thou shalt die"—the penalty which the Bible declares to be the wages of sin—death and all the weaknesses and depravities of mind and of body which are its accompaniments. But God purposes that all shall have a full opportunity of recovery from this condition of sin and death; and the provision for man's recovery has been made in Christ. This provision is the most economical one that could have been arranged. If a thousand perfect men had sinned, it would have required a thousand perfect men to redeem them—one redeemer for each sinner. "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," a man's life for a man's life, is the requirement of God's law.—Exodus 21:23-25; Deut. 19:21.

Before the creation of our first parents God had arranged that only one man should have the opportunity to fall and to be sentenced to death, that thus only one man would be required as a Redeemer. This divine arrangement was most economical because it will bring all the masses of humanity back to life at the cost of but one human life as the redemption-price. No fallen man could be a ransom, a corresponding price, for the perfect man Adam. Therefore God purposed from the very beginning that his only begotten Son, the firstborn of all creation, should become man's Redeemer and that in order to become the Redeemer he should become a man.

The death of an angel could not have redeemed man. Divine justice required that a perfect human life must be given for a perfect human life. And God, knowing all this, sent his Son to

carry out his great plan of human redemption and restitution. Neither was there anything unkind or unjust to his Son in this, although for the Almighty to have forced the matter upon his Son would have been an injustice; and God could not be guilty of injustice.

Thus the Scriptures inform us that the coming of the Logos into the world was a voluntary matter. He did this "for the joy that was set before him," by the Almighty. The Father set before the Son that if he would suffer the ignominy of the transference of his being from the higher plane to a lower, a human plane, in order that he might redeem the lost race of Adam, he should be highly exalted, next to Jehovah; he should be made a partaker of Jehovah's nature—the divine nature. All this was the inspiration of our Lord's course—the joy of doing the Father's will and of having his approval; the joy of restoring mankind and of being exalted to his Father's glorious nature. He who thus humbled himself to become a man and die the ignominious death of the cross, has indeed been highly exalted as promised, and has sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.—Hebrews 1:3.

INFINITE WISDOM OF GOD'S GREAT PURPOSE

Thus we see that the plan which God has adopted furnishes opportunity for the manifestation of the principles underlying his own glorious character, which neither angels nor men could so clearly have understood by any other means. When the great work of restoration is fully accomplished, angels and men will see the justice of God—a justice which permitted the penalty of death to be executed upon our race for six thousand years—a justice which provided a Redeemer to pay this penalty for Adam, that he and all his posterity might go free—a justice, too, which provided a great reward for the faithful Son who carried out, at such a cost to himself, the Father's purpose! This is the highest conception of justice of which men or angels could conceive!

By this means God will also manifest his sympathetic love, which otherwise neither angels nor men might ever have known. Had there been no sin, no death, no sorrow, no pain, they might never have known the depths of divine mercy. After sin had entered the world, the angels beheld the love of God, in that he "gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever [of mankind] believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life" for another! The Father's love was thus shown in his plan to send his Son to die for the world. This love will be manifested to all men in the incoming age, now very near at hand.

Through his plan God will manifest his power also; for while his power has been shown in the creation of the worlds, of men and of the various orders of angels, still this manifestation of energy is small in comparison to the power which he will yet exercise. This power will restore every individual of the race to his former condition; every soul of man will be awakened from the tomb. This will be a manifestation of power that is beyond the comprehension of humanity.

Then, too, God's wisdom will be wondrously manifested. When the grand outcome of the divine plan of the ages shall have been seen in its glory and majesty by all the created intelligences of God, all will hail him as the infinitely wise One—who fittingly ordained that every creature formed in his image should be tested as respects absolute loyalty, that only the loyal and obedient should have life, and that all others should be destroyed!

Thus we see that in his wonderful program for dealing with sinners, angelic and human, God chose the very best way, the one most profitable to angels and to men, the one which most redounds to his own ultimate glory and honor. "Who shall not reverence thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? . . . All the nations shall come and worship before thee, when thy judgments are made manifest!"—Revelation 15:4.

JUSTICE—RIGHTEOUSNESS—THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

"To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."—Proverbs 21:3; 1 Samuel 15:22.

These words were addressed to God's chosen people, the Jews. The nation of Israel had come into special relationship with God. At Mt. Sinai, they had entered into a covenant with him and had pledged themselves to do justice and judgment. This was a requirement of Jehovah. But there seemed to be a tendency to think of sacrifices as being especially pleasing to the Lord. Some seemed inclined to feel that no matter how unjust they had been, they could offer a sacrifice and make it all right. But Jehovah pointed out that this would not do. His law was a requirement, and must come before all else; whereas these special sacrifices of thanksgiving for victories, etc., were privileges, voluntary offerings. The law demanded full allegiance to God.

The relationship of Israel to God as his people was based upon the law. This law comprised justice and judgment. The Israelites were to do according to its commands—first Godward, then manward. They were not to steal, not to kill, not to covet, etc. The essence and substance of the Golden Rule was there embodied.

To do justice is to do that which is just, right, equitable; to do judgment would be to render righteous decisions in the mind, to decide justly. One might be very just in his business dealings with his fellows. He might be very careful not to cheat any one out of a cent; and yet in his mind he might have unkind, uncharitable views of others, and perhaps say things about them that would be very unrighteous. This counsel of the Wise Man seemed to guard not only against the doing of injustice, but against having wrong thoughts. The decisions of our minds, as well as our actions, should be in harmony with the principles of righteousness.

OUR INABILITY TO JUDGE OTHERS

We are not to judge, decide, in an unfavorable manner in the case of any with whom we have to do, without indubitable proof. If they claim to be trying to do right, we should give them credit for sincerity wherever possible. We are not to call them hypocrites, for we cannot judge their hearts. Our Lord called some hypocrites in his day; but he had a superior power of discerning the heart, and we have not that power. We are not to judge the motives of others. We are not to go beyond their declaration, for we are not competent to do so.

We may at times judge the outward action as wrong or improper, but we are not to attempt to judge the heart, where there is possibility of misjudgment. We have pledged ourselves to strive to observe the Golden Rule in our every action and word and thought, and we are to remember that God would be more pleased with us if we did not sacrifice and merely maintained our relationship to the Golden Rule, than that we should manifest ever so much zeal in sacrifice and yet violate the rule of justice. This rule requires love for our neighbor as for ourself. As the Apostle Paul reminds us in that matchless chapter on love—1 Cor. 13: "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

The proper course for us as disciples of Christ is that we observe the Golden Rule in our conduct, watching over our thoughts and our lips; and also that we present continually all that we have and are in sacrifice to the Lord. But obedience, justice, must come first, for this is demanded by the law of God. Before we can make much development in the cultivation of sacrificial love, we must learn to have a love of justice, righteousness. There is a trite and true proverb that a man must be just before he is generous. It behooves the children of God, as members of the new creation, to study with diligence this subject of strict justice toward all, and to put into practice day by day this quality of character which is absolutely essential if we would be acceptable to God; for it lies at the foundation of all Christian character.

We are not able while still in the fallen flesh, to keep perfectly this law of strict justice in act, word and thought. But it should be our prayerful endeavor to do so as far as possible. The merit of Christ will then make up for all unintentional and unavoidable deficiencies. Those only who have this foundation of character well laid can make proper progress. A love which is built on a foundation of injustice, or wrong ideas of righteousness, is delusive, and is not the love which the Lord's Word enjoins and which he will require as a test of true discipleship. Obedience to God demands that we strive to be just in deed and word and thought.

OBEDIENCE A TEST OF LOYALTY

The lesson taught in the Lord's rebuke to Saul at the mouth of the Prophet Samuel, given in our second text, applies with much force to spiritual Israel. How often today we see the need for this counsel amongst the professed followers of Christ! Many of these are Christian workers in the various denominations of Christendom, and many are their sacrifices of time, strength and money; but inasmuch as they are not obedient to the Lord they fail of the blessing they might have, and indeed cut themselves off from greater privileges and op-

portunities. Yea, many of them, we fear, are cutting themselves off from the kingdom—from glory and joint-heirship with the Master in that kingdom. We should learn from this lesson given us in the experience of Saul that our heavenly Father wishes us to be very attentive to his Word, and not to think for a moment that we can improve upon it, nor that any circumstance or condition will excuse us from obedience to him.

Had King Saul obeyed God, and the results had seemed to prove disastrous, he would have had a clear conscience. He would have been obedient, and could have left the results with the Lord. God would have been responsible for the results. How many of the Lord's people in Babylon would be blessed by following the instructions in this lesson!

Many have said to themselves again and again: I see that present arrangements and conditions in the churches are contrary to the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ and the practice of the early church. I see that much is practised and taught that is not sanctioned in the Scriptures. But what can I do? I am identified with this system and am engaged in sacrificing for its upbuilding. If I now withdraw myself, it will mean more or less disaster or loss to it as well as to myself. I wish I were free from human institutions and that I had my hands filled with the Lord's work along the lines of his Word, but I cannot let go; necessity seems laid upon me. This seems to be the most convenient place for me to work and to sacrifice.

The Lord is not pleased with such arguments. His message to us is that to obey is better than sacrifice, however active and busy we may be. He tells us plainly that no sacrifice we can offer will be acceptable to him unless we are first obedient to his Word. He calls now to all the followers of Christ who are still in Babylon: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."—Revelation 18:4, 5.

THE FRUITS OF DISOBEDIENCE

We remember that Saul's error was his failure to carry out the command of the Lord in every particular. He slew all the Amalekites, old and young, except the king, whom he kept alive, possibly thinking to exhibit him in some kind of triumphal display. As for the flocks and herds, he consented that his people spare all that were goodly and desirable, but everything that was vile and refuse he destroyed utterly.

As we study the narrative and note the indignation of Samuel, and the Lord's positive declaration of his displeasure and of the punishment to be meted out to Saul, we see clearly that the king had not misunderstood his instructions, but with considerable deliberation had violated them. Consequently we must understand his words of explanation to Samuel to have been to a considerable extent hypocritical. He first saluted the Prophet with blessings and assurances that he had performed the command of the Lord. But Samuel replied: "What means, then, this bleating of sheep and lowing of oxen which I hear?" He understood at once that the destruction had not been complete, that Saul had only partially obeyed the Lord.

Saul, noting the displeasure of the Prophet of the Lord, began hypocritically to assure him that these fine sheep and oxen had been preserved that they might be sacrificed to the Lord. Alas, how fallen human nature ever seeks to justify itself in its course of perversity and disobedience to the commands of God! How much wiser and better would it be to obey under all circumstances! Saul reaped the result of his disobedience in being rejected as king of Israel. How bitter are the fruits of following our own course, of compromising our conscience, of seeking to evade the responsibility which rests upon us as professed children of God! It is sure to bring trouble and spiritual disaster to the Lord's people, and the hiding of our Father's face.

Ordinarily considered, sacrifice is a step beyond mere obedience. Obedience is a duty toward God. We ought to obey God. To his creatures God's will is law. This is duty of the very highest type. But the privilege of sacrifice granted to the people of God goes beyond duty, beyond obligation. We may give unto the Lord what he has not required of us; but what we give in sacrifice is voluntary, not commanded.

The question now arises, How can we apply these texts to ourselves? In the first place, we find some who desire to be the Lord's people, who seem to grasp the thought that there is a privilege of sacrifice in the present time, but who fail to note that the Lord has given some direct commands which must be considered first. Such should come to perceive that obedience is a prime requisite. No one can perfectly keep the law of God, but he must exhibit the true spirit of obedience, the earnest endeavor to be in harmony with that law. Then consecration to sacrifice is in order. For all who have met these conditions full satisfaction has been made, and they are accepted in Christ. And "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things have passed away, and all things have become new." —2 Cor. 5:17.

St. Paul says of these, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:4) If we are not thus walking after the Spirit, we are not hearkening to the Lord; and while we are in that condition, he does not take pleasure in what we do. Even though we sacrifice some of our time for the colporteur work, the pilgrim work, etc., we shall not be pleasing to God if we do not keep his requirements of justice toward others.

If when one decides to make a consecration of himself to God he realizes that he has been unjust to another, restitution must be made. No one has a right to be generous with the money of another—to take another man's money and offer it in service to God. This is a form of injustice which must be very offensive to the Father—one which he would disdain altogether as a sacrifice. Yet we see that this is very largely practiced. There are a great many who have gotten money in a way not altogether right, and who, to quiet conscience, give some of it to religious work. This class are overlooking the weightier matters of the law of God. They have taken from others unjustly; then they desire to give to the Lord that which belongs to another. God's law demands justice, and it is no wonder that he is not pleased with this course of action.

Coming down to the ordinary affairs of life, we see that justice should be the very foundation of everything—between husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, teachers and pupils, employers and employees, etc. The lesson of our text is a very important one to us of the church. In Christian character justice, obedience to God's law, comes first; mercy and benevolence come afterwards. We do not know of a principle that the Lord's people need to learn more particularly than this one of justice.

Injustice seems to crop out in many ways in the fallen human nature. Little injustices are daily practised in respect to trifles. These are thought not worth considering. But whoever cultivates injustice in even a small way is building up a character which will be unfit for the kingdom. As justice is the foundation of God's throne and of God's character, so justice must be the foundation principle governing the lives of his people.

THE OBEDIENCE OF THE CHRIST

The lesson of obedience is one which should be deeply engraved upon the hearts of all the sanctified in Christ Jesus. It is necessary, too, that we have the spirit of obedience and not obey merely the letter. Whoever has the true spirit of obedience will not only obey the expressed commands of the Lord, given in his Word, but will seek to know the divine will in everything. He will seek to note the providences of his life, that he may be guided in the way the Lord would have him go. It is such faithful, obedient children of God who exclaim in the language of the Prophet: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart!" (Jeremiah 15:16) These can say with our dear Master: "Lo I come! I delight to do thy will, O my God!" Let all, then, who would be wholly acceptable to our Father in heaven be very diligent to build character in harmony with his law, having justice in thought, in word and in deed at the foundation, justice in our relationship to God, to the brethren and to all, and then building thereupon all the various qualities of love, that thus we may grow up into Christ our living Head in all things, and be able to render up our account at last with joy and not with grief.

PEACE WITH GOD AND THE PEACE OF GOD

"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee."—Isaiah 26:3.

To have come into a condition of Peace with God means that one has become reconciled to God. This implies a former condition of alienation, of "enmity through wicked works." Peace with God, then, means that this estrangement from God is a thing of the past, and that the estranged one is now in harmony with God—that he has turned his back upon sin and is seeking to walk in the path of righteousness. This is a step of faith, and is accompanied by reformation of life. We rejoice with all who have come thus far; we are glad that they have this position of advantage over the masses of mankind

whom the god of this world has so blinded that they cannot see the beauty of the Lord nor the desirableness of peace with him, and who have not learned the bitterness of the fruits of sin.

But in our second text above, the Prophet is referring to a class who have gone further than the condition of peace with God. He is speaking of a class who have come into possession of "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," as the Apostle Paul declares. This peace can come only to those who have given themselves unreservedly to God—their time, their talents, their influence, their life, their all. These have a peace that none others can know. This peace of God rules the heart even amid turmoil and trouble; it is an inward tranquility and rest which is the direct result of a close, personal relationship of the soul with God. It is the peace of God because it is a peace that God only can give, a peace which only his very own can fully know.

What a precious legacy our dear Lord left with his disciples when he went away from them! He said: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27) This was truly a legacy of priceless value, and it is the inheritance of the entire church throughout the age, even unto its close. To the world it may seem that the course of the Christian is far from peaceful, for the Lord's saints often have a stormy voyage. But if our hearts continue to be stayed on Christ by faith, and we do not let go our anchor, we shall be kept through all the tempests of life, however severely we may be tossed, however fiercely the storms may rage.

Faith can exclaim with the Prophet Isaiah, "For the Lord will help me, therefore I shall not be confounded; therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." (Isaiah 50:7) On the assurances of the Lord we may rest, because our anchor holds fast to the throne of God. The language of our Master's heart was, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee." He had been with the Father from the beginning and he knew his love and goodness; he had seen the manifestations of his power; he had marked his loving-kindness. So we who have come into similar relationship to God have come to thus know and trust his love and faithfulness.

PEACE IN THE LORD

The Lord does not bless his people with peace in an outward sense. The Master's special associates, the Apostles, were buffeted, and so all his followers have been. The adversary does everything in his power to make their lives anything but peaceful and happy. This is true of all who walk in Jesus' footsteps. We have fightings without and fightings within, rather than peace without and peace within. We have fightings with our own flesh; and it is part of our victory that we "fight a good fight," a conquering fight. We are to put forth our best efforts in fighting against the world and the adversary, against all the things that Satan would put into our minds and hearts, and we are to get the better of these things. The Lord blesses his people with strength to surmount these difficulties.

We are not to be at peace with the flesh, but always at warfare with it. Yet there is a peace in the Lord that is born of faith in him and in his promises. He has promised us grace sufficient; he has promised that we shall not be overcome through having trials and difficulties that are too great for us. We are assured that we shall have the victory if we trust in his strength. This gives us a rest and peace in all our experiences.

"Through all the tumult and the strife
I hear the music ringing!
It finds an echo in my soul;
How can I keep from singing?"

We are resting in the Lord's promises—we are resting in his strength and in his ability to make good his promises; for we know that he who has called us is able to fulfil all his good Word. This peace, or rest, is the special blessing of the holy Spirit. Only in proportion as we receive the holy Spirit, the holy mind of God, the holy disposition, can we have this peace fulfilled in us. It is a matter of simple ratio. As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord, in the knowledge of the truth, we shall have this to comfort and strengthen us; and we shall thus have more of the peace of God every day, and be able to abide in his love.

It has been written for our instruction and comfort—"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." This faith is built upon the testimony of God's Word—a sure foundation. It is only through strong and unwavering faith that the peace of God will abide with his children. God has made us his sons and heirs, joint-heirs with our Lord. "No good thing will he withhold" from these; "All things shall work together for their good"; "He shall bear them up in his hands, lest they dash their foot against a stone"; "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry." Then let us be strong!

PEACE FOUNDED UPON FAITH

This peace of God is not dependent upon the smile of fortune, nor upon physical health, nor upon a host of friends. But it is a peace which abides even when health fails, or poverty comes in, or death steals from us the treasures of our hearts. It is a peace which none of the changes and vicissitudes of this life can take from us and which enemies are powerless to touch. What gift so rich could our Father give to his children!

How poor would be our inheritance today if we were without our anchorage in Christ! But with it we can endure all things which the Father's loving providence shall permit. Then let us face the coming days with calmness and courage. He who was with his dear disciples upon the stormy Sea of Galilee, and whose word of power quelled the mighty storm and stilled the raging of the sea, has the same care over his disciples today. When they cried out in fear, he quieted their hearts, saying, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" Nothing can in any wise hurt us if our hearts are stayed on him.

In order to enjoy this perfect peace we must have unswerving trust in our Father's love and abiding faithfulness. As we look out into the starry heavens we see a manifestation of God's mighty power and majesty, but our hearts and minds would not be stayed and sustained by this; we might receive gifts from him, but without knowledge of his abiding faithfulness we would not know whether these might be only traps for our injury from the adversary. But if we have this proper foundation for faith, if we learn to know our Father through his Word (the only way we can know him), we come to have confidence in him.

If we trusted to our own reasoning, we would be in a very unsatisfactory condition. All would be uncertain; we would have no sure basis for faith or assurance. But when we see that the testimony of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, reveals to us a God of justice, wisdom, love and power, our minds and hearts have something reasonable and convincing to lay hold upon, and we say: We can trust such a God, because he is trustworthy. This conviction deepens into joy as we step out upon his promises and prove them for ourselves, thus learning their reality and realizing their fulfilment. We rejoice that this loving God has called us to redemption through his Son. We rejoice that he has offered us eternal life, and has called us even to a glorious joint-heirship with this Son.—Romans 8:17.

PEACE DEPENDENT UPON FULL OBEDIENCE

We rejoice, further, to know of the wondrous provision for the whole world in the future. All these things form a firm basis for peace and joy and confidence in the Lord. But our peace is proportionate to our constancy—our staying qualities. No one can retain this peace of God whose mind is not "stayed," fixed, on God. It is not a peace of recklessness nor of sloth, but a peace begotten of God himself, through his promises, which we have made our own. It is dependent also upon our full obedience to the Lord. It is the peace of Christ —"my peace." This peace and the faith which inspires it, can look up through its tears with joyful expectancy for the glorious fruition of our hopes, which God has promised and of which our present peace and joy are but the foretaste.

"Peace, perfect peace? our future all unknown?
Jesus we know, and he is on the throne!

"Peace, perfect peace? death shadowing us and ours?
Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers!

"Peace, perfect peace? 'mid suffering's keenest throes?
The sympathy of Jesus brings repose.

"It is enough! Earth's struggles soon shall cease,
And Jesus call us to heaven's perfect peace!"

There is an eye that never sleeps beneath the wing of night;
There is an ear that never shuts when sink the beams of light.
There is an arm that never tires when human strength gives way;
There is a love that never fails when earthly loves decay.

O weary soul with cares oppressed, trust in his loving might
Whose eye is over all thy ways through all thy weary night!
Draw near to him in prayer and praise, rely on his sure Word,
Acknowledge him in all thy ways, thy faithful, loving Lord.

FAITH THE BASIS OF TRUE REST

"We which have believed do enter into rest."—Hebrews 4:3.

In our text St. Paul refers to the fact that the law provided for the Jew a physical rest for the seventh day of the week, for the seventh year and for the forty-ninth and fiftieth years; and that these Sabbaths were typical of a better rest. He points out that all who believe in Christ enter into rest, and thus keep a continual Sabbath. As new creatures we rest all the time, if so be we abide in the Lord and in his promises.

The Apostle says that faith is necessary to rest. He tells us what to do in order to avail ourselves of that which God has already provided for us. He shows us that God made promises to Abraham, and these were reiterated to Isaac and to Jacob. God declared his purpose to have a special, holy nation, and promised Abraham that the blessing of the world should come through his Seed, who would constitute this chosen nation. The promises were great and precious.

Abraham believed the message and was glad. He rested. He did not know the way by which God would bring about the blessing, but he had the promise of God, confirmed by his oath. He did not need to know then about the Lord Jesus or the plan of salvation. He had full rest in fully believing God; and so did as many of his posterity as exercised the same faith as Abraham. Isaac and Jacob and many of the prophets, including the Prophet David, thus trusted God. Their writings show that they were fully in harmony with God. They realized that he had made a gracious provision for the future, and that this provision was for the world in general; yet they knew that they were to have a "better resurrection" than that of the world. They had a rest of faith in these things that God had not yet accomplished.

Our Lord Jesus declared that Abraham saw his day and was glad. He did not see it with his natural eye, but with the eye of faith. He saw the day in which Christ, who has died for all men, will uplift the human family, raising the world up out of sin and death—first exalting his bride, and finally causing the blessing of God to extend to every creature. This is just what God promised to Abraham—"In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Abraham was glad, and everybody else is glad who sees it. Abraham was content to see that there was to be a great blessing for his posterity, and through them for the world. He did not see God's plan clearly, as we see it, but he saw enough to make him rejoice.—John 8:56.

INCREASING LIGHT AND GREATER TESTS

Coming down to our own age, we see that a greater light, a greater privilege, has brought greater tests of faith in many respects. Abraham was tested in that he was told to offer his son Isaac in sacrifice. He knew that the promises were to be fulfilled through this son, but he said, It is for me to be obedient; God can raise my son from the dead. This shall not hinder my faith in the outworking of God's plan.

We of the Gospel age have not heard God's voice speaking to us audibly, as did Abraham; but we live in the time of a further development of the great plan of God. He has sent his Son into the world, who was made flesh and dwelt among us, and who died, "the just for the unjust."

Unbelief would assert that if Jesus had been the Son of God he would not have died; but there was a mortgage held on the human race by justice, and their case was hopeless unless a Redeemer should be provided. So the eye of faith today is able to grasp God's purposes in a fuller way than did Abraham. Yet we do not know that our faith is any greater than his; for even if we have more trials and difficulties, we have also greater opportunities and greater light. Abraham had full faith, full confidence in God, and no one could have more than this.

The Lord's people of the present time believe that mankind are to be rescued from sin and death. Some have more knowledge than others, and more testing; some who have less capacity cannot endure so severe testing, nor can they enjoy so fully. But all can have the same rest that Abraham had—the rest of faith in God. God has promised to his saints a resurrection to glory and honor and blessing. But these are not actual as yet. We have now only the earnest of this inheritance. It is for faith to triumph and to realize that God can bring us to that glorious condition which he has promised; and he will, if we are faithful. Each in proportion to his knowledge and faith will have rest. The most learned and the most ignorant can have this rest, if only they believe God.

REST PROPORTIONATE TO FAITH

The rest we have entered into is not our ultimate rest. If we have the faith today, we may have the rest today; if we lose the faith, we also lose the rest. But a perfect permanent rest awaits us. God has promised us certain great and precious things. He is our Creator and our Father, and will do for us the things he has promised. And according to our faith it will be unto us—much faith, much rest; little faith, little rest. Those who are in harmony with God believe his testimony.

This does not imply that all who have been of God's children have believed all of the divine plan; for we see that this would not be possible. Some have had greater opportunity for believing; and some have had less. We who live today have much more advantage than those who lived prior to our day. Our test, then, does not come so much from lack of knowledge; but it is a test of faith in God, and obedience to the light now given us. Having this great flood of light now granted at the close of this age, our faith should be very strong, and we should seek to increase it more and more by gaining all the knowledge now due. We should grow in faith, grow in grace, grow in knowledge and grow in love. We enter into a deeper and more intelligent rest if we avail ourselves of the helps which the Lord has provided for us. If we truly believe, we will manifest our belief by works in harmony therewith.

In Scriptural usage the word believe implies much more than merely to acknowledge a fact or a truth. The great truth before us all is what the Bible calls the Gospel, the good tidings. The belief referred to in our text is belief in this Gospel: We who believe the Gospel do enter into rest. What is the Gospel that we believe? It includes all the features of God's love and mercy to us as a fallen race—his proposition for eternal life through Christ, with all the blessings this involves. To the church the Gospel—the good tidings—includes also the offer to us of joint-heirship with Christ in the kingdom.

One might have an intellectual belief in these promised blessings without entering into the rest mentioned in our text. But this form of belief is evidently not in the Apostle's thought. To the extent that the individual recognizes those facts, accepts them and acts upon them, to that extent he enters into rest. If he believes partially, he rests in that proportion; if he believes more, he rests more; if he believes perfectly, he has perfect rest, and will show his faith by his works. The Gospel message is so wonderful that any one who believes it will desire to avail himself of its blessings. If the opportunity is presented of becoming a joint-heir with Jesus to the divine nature, and the mind can grasp the proposition, one would really be a fool if he did not accept such an offer. So any one who does not accept does not believe, in the sense the word is used in our text. All who truly believe will accept such an offer and will enter into rest by faith.

HEART CONFIDENCE ESSENTIAL

The expression of the text, "We who have believed," implies that the belief has reached the heart, and will thus affect our course in life. And the second part of the statement, "do enter into rest," implies that the rest is gradually coming to him because he has believed. He has first believed; and the fulness of rest is a condition to be attained gradually as his faith grows stronger, and as he learns to appreciate more fully what he has accepted.

"With the heart man believeth," and not merely with the head. It is not a mere intellectual belief. When we accept the Gospel as a fact, and enter fully into it, we begin at once to have a measure of this rest; and as we learn by our experiences how true the Lord is to all his promises to us, the rest becomes more deep and abiding. The belief was at first a full belief in the message of God; but as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of God, the more firm and established does our faith become, and our rest is proportionate.

THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION

The people of New York, Boston, Cleveland, Toledo, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, Chattanooga, Nashville and some smaller places will all have been introduced to the "Photo-Drama of Creation" before this announcement reaches your eye.

The amount of money at our disposal being limited, we are moving very cautiously, and going merely where the Lord seems to open the door by giving us especially low rates on auditoriums. We seek to hire theaters of good class not doing prosperous business, whose business managers are glad, therefore, to let us have their buildings at a price little or no more than the cost of the light, heat and janitorage, hoping for some other compensation through the publicity it will bring to their house by advertising. Gradually the Lord's providence is guiding to the exhibiting of the Drama in other cities than those mentioned. After getting the matter well started in this country, we will see what can be done in Great Britain. Then a little later we will look to the interest of the friends in

Scandinavia and Germany, not forgetting Australia. The Drama has been well received everywhere. There has been scarcely a criticism.

The Editor's personality has been permitted to come before the people in connection with the Drama, because newspaper people assure us that without the personality the Drama would fall flat, and be taken for some ordinary church entertainment. The personality necessary for advertising the Drama and the Sermon is quite distasteful to us, but is submitted to in the interest of the cause.

Our friends need have no hesitation in recommending the Drama to their friends and neighbors. All who see it admit that nothing like it has ever been produced before. It is certainly beautiful and very instructive. A gentleman who recently visited the Cincinnati Exhibition remarked to the Brother in charge: "I am a U. B. minister, and I want to say to you that I have learned more about the Bible and about God in my visit to this Drama than I learned in my entire three-years' course in the Theological Seminary." A Catholic priest remarked when leaving, "I will write up this Drama in our Catholic paper, and I assure you the report will not be unfavorable."

A Christian Science lady remarked, after seeing the Drama: "From a child I have been feeling after God. I thought I had gotten on the right tracks when I was healed by Christian Science, and was given the power of healing others. Some money that came to me I gave freely (one hundred and fifty thousand dollars) to the building of a church in Boston, and a hundred thousand dollars to the building of a church in New York City, so that now I have practically nothing except my income as a healer. But all the time something was lacking. My heart found no fellowship with the Lord. Instead, I saw lights, heard voices that others did not hear, and saw spiritual forms. After seeing the Drama I said to myself, 'The person who wrote this Drama knew God. I am now on the right way.'"

The lady and her father inquired for the address of Brother Russell and visited him, expressing great joy at having found the truth. She admitted, however, that with the acceptance of the clearer light of the divine Word she became again afflicted with the same malady from which she suffered before she was healed by Christian Science. We told her not to be surprised at this, and related to her a somewhat similar case, as follows: A lady in Canada became more or less identified with Spiritism. The spirits promised that if she would follow their direction they would make of her one of the most eminent vocalists in the world. She followed their advice, and her voice became remarkable. About that time she came in contact with present truth and accepted it, and, of course, learned what Spiritism is. She also learned that the marvelous power sometimes used by the spirit mediums is from the fallen angels, who personate the dead. She renounced Spiritism. Incidentally, her fine voice failed her absolutely.

Priests and nuns frequently visited the Drama in Cincinnati, and they evinced great delight. Many Sunday School teachers attended and brought their classes.

Not only have we lectures that are interesting and profitable, but they are delivered by a Talking Machine combination peculiarly our own, which is, we believe, superior to anything which has ever before been produced. The horn talks with the volume and tone of an orator, and no one recognizes that the words come from a machine.

The pictures are simply beautiful—some of them slides, others films, panoramas, etc. Many of our Moving Picture films are far superior to those ordinarily seen, in that they are hand-colored, dignified, graceful.

At the introduction, intermission and conclusion of each lecture we have choice vocal selections beautifully rendered by the horn, and delicate instrumental music is produced during the showing of the films.

THE COLOR LINE FOUND NECESSARY

We might have anticipated that many colored people would be deeply interested in this Drama. But it did not impress itself upon us until gradually their numbers increased to about twenty-five per cent. of the whole audience. Of course, we were glad to see them, glad that they were interested in the Drama. We had the same feeling respecting them as others; but it was quickly discerned that it was not a case of feeling, but that, whereas the colored people of New York City are about five per cent. of the population, in our audiences they are about twenty-five per cent. and the number increasing. What shall we do? As the attendance of the colored people would increase, proportionately the number of the whites would decrease; for explain it how we will, a majority of whites prefer not to intermingle closely with other races.

Recognizing that it meant either the success or the failure of the enterprise of the Drama as respects the whites, we have been compelled to assign the colored friends to the gallery, which, however, is just as good for seeing and hearing as any other part of The Temple. Some were offended at this arrangement.

We have received numerous letters from the colored friends, some claiming that it is not right to make a difference, others indignantly and bitterly denouncing us as enemies of the colored people. Some, confident that Brother Russell had never sanctioned such a discrimination, told that they believe it would be duty to stand up for equal rights and always to help the oppressed, etc. We were obliged to explain the facts, assuring all of our loving interest in the colored people, and of our desire to do them good, and not injury. We again suggested that if a suitable place could be found in which the Drama could be presented for the benefit of the colored people alone, we would be glad to make such arrangements, or to co-operate with any others in doing so.

Our explanations were apparently entirely satisfactory to all of the fully consecrated. To these we explained that it is a question of putting either the interests of God's cause first, or else the interests of the race first. We believed it our duty to put God first and the truth first—at any cost to others or to ourself! We explained that we thought that all the colored brethren should know our attitude toward them—they should know that we love to serve them in any way possible and to give them the very best we have to give of the Gospel message; and that it is only a question of whether our giving to them in one way would entirely deprive us of giving the truth to others.

Some who were still tenacious and quarrelsome we merely reminded of our Lord's declaration that in inviting visitors into the house it is the place of the host to say where they shall sit, and then we showed them the parable of the man who chose the chief seat of honor and was given a lower one.

In answer to the query as to how our course of conduct squared with the Golden Rule, we replied that it squares exactly. We would wish others to put God first. If our personal interests are or ever have been in conflict with the real and apparently best interests of the Lord's cause, it is a part of our consecration vow to ignore our interests in favor of the interests of the Lord's cause. This is what we mean by the declaration that we are dead to self and alive to our God as new creatures.

We reminded one dear sister that the Lord enjoins humility, and assures us that unless we humble ourselves we shall not be exalted. If nature favors the colored brethren and sisters in the exercise of humility it is that much to their advantage, if they are rightly exercised by it. A little while, and our humility will work out for our good. A little while, and those who shall have been faithful to their Covenant of Sacrifice will be granted new bodies, spiritual, beyond the veil, where color and sex distinctions will be no more. A little while, and the Millennial kingdom will be inaugurated, which will bring restitution to all mankind—restitution to the perfection of mind and body, feature and color, to the grand original standard, which God declared "very good," and which was lost for a time through sin, but which is soon to be restored by the powerful kingdom of Messiah.

THE PRODIGAL SON

MAY 3.—Luke 15:11-32.

"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight."—V. 18.

Respecting the parable of the Prodigal Son the following comments have been made: "One of the masterpieces of the Great Teacher."—David Gregg, D.D. "This has been fitly called the crown and pearl of all the parables—the Gospel within the Gospel!"—D. S. Clark, D.D. "Its beauty and its pathos are unequaled in the realm of fiction."—R. H. McKim, D.D. "It is more like a complete allegory than any other of our Lord's parables."—*New Century Bible.* "No other parable has touched so many hearts."—W. E. Burton, D.D.

The setting of the parable shows the Master's object in giving it. He was seeking in this parable, as in those considered a year ago last fall, to show the Pharisees that their

position respecting the publicans and sinners was wrong. He here pointed out that their wrong attitude toward the common people was likely to cost them their own share in the kingdom.

In the parable the father who had two sons evidently represents Jehovah God. The two sons here represented the two general classes into which the Jewish nation divided itself. The elder son represented those who sat in Moses' seat, and who remained loyal to God in their outward profession, at least, and in their endeavors outwardly to keep his law. The younger son represented the common people, not so religiously strict as to their ideals. This class, the younger son, misused their privileges and opportunities as members of the nation of Israel, as beneficiaries of the divine promises. They wasted their opportunities in self-gratification. They were known to others, and acknowledged by themselves, as publicans and sinners—not attempting to live godly lives.

This younger-son class of publicans and sinners felt their degradation, just as described in the parable. They were spiritually hungry. They were ragged. They felt a longing to be back in the Father's house, yet they hesitated to go back. It was just such characters that Jesus especially encouraged, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest." Jesus represented the Father's house, and prompted the younger-son class of the Jews to have confidence that the Father would receive them when they had come to him penitently.

The parable tells us that some of this class, repentant, came back to God and were abundantly pardoned. And not only were they pardoned, but because of their penitence they were granted special manifestations of God's favor. Recurring to the parable, all this was illustrated by the prodigal's feeling his hunger and wretchedness and saying, I will return to my father's house. And while he was yet a great way off, the father saw him, ran to him, embraced him, had compassion on him and kissed him. And the prodigal said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it. Let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE

How grandly this illustrates to us the love of God—its lengths and breadths and heights and depths! The best robe and the other attentions given to the repentant one well illustrate the provision God has made for all who return to him from the ways of sin. The robe and all the blessings are provided through Christ—covering for all the imperfections of the fallen nature. The fatted calf well represents the "feast of fat things" which God has provided for the penitent class.—Isaiah 25:6-8.

Making a particular application of the parable, we might say that the time when the Father accepted the prodigal, kissed him and put upon him the robe of Christ's righteousness, provided in his sacrifice and freely granted to all who during this age come unto the Father through him, was at Pentecost. The feast and merry-making may well represent the blessed promises of God, which become applicable to those who are covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness and accepted into God's family by the begetting of the holy Spirit.

This is the marriage feast represented in another of our Lord's parables. (Matthew 22:2-14) The elder brother of our lesson was indeed bidden, but refused. He would not go in. He was jealous that the father should receive the young spendthrift. This jealous spirit on the part of the Pharisees apparently kept many of them from appreciating the gift of God in Christ. Just as shown in the parables, they refused to enter in.

The parable represents the father as entreating the elder son to come in and join in the feast, rejoicing in the reclamation of his brother; but he was angry and declined. Likewise the elder-brother class of Jews did not show the right spirit for those for whom the kingly privileges were intended, all of whom must be meek, loving, copies of God's dear Son in their generous good will toward all who desire to come to the Father.

The refusal of the elder brother to participate in the festivities reminds us of another of the Lord's parables respecting the marriage feast. (Luke 14:15-24) Those who were originally bidden appreciated not; one went to his farm and another to his merchandise. They dishonored the host who had invited them to his banquet. Then the servants were sent out into the streets and lanes to gather any who desired to come, and afterward they were sent to invite all everywhere who desired to share the feast; and finally the full number foreordained to be of this class was found.

THE PRINCIPLES APPLY BROADLY

While the parable of our lesson illustrated the two classes of Jews, the principles set forth in it are more generally applicable. For instance, there are noble characters in the world who love to do right—people who are well-born, and well-environed after birth, and who apparently should be the very first ones who would be chosen of God to be the joint-heirs with his Son in the great kingdom that is to bless mankind in general. Nevertheless, the Scriptures make clear that not many of this kind may be expected to be of the kingdom class—not that God is unwilling to have them because of their education, wealth and good morals, but that these very qualities make them less ready to accept the terms.

All are sinners, whether they know it or not. All should be honest enough to confess the fact; and God requires this very honesty, this very confession of our need, before the merit of Christ can be imputed to us as covering our blemishes. This better class, represented in the elder brother, seem to feel that in contrast with the lower strata of society they are perfection itself, and that God would be sure to desire them. His declaration, however, is that not many great, not many noble, not many learned, not many wise, are being chosen, but chiefly the mean things of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the kingdom.

God evidently wishes to have a class honest enough to acknowledge their own imperfections and their own unworthiness of his favors. So doing, he will bless them with a knowledge of themselves and of his righteousness; whereas others, self-satisfied and unwilling to accept the grace of God in Christ or to confess their need of any covering for their blemishes, are not humble enough to be of the class that the Lord desires for the great work of glory by and by.

Thus it comes about that the majority who accept God's favor and become his children are from the younger-brother class—that described by the apostles—not many rich, not many noble, not many learned, and not many wise, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith. These have the ear to hear the invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest." These have the hearts to respond to this invitation. They realize their wretched condition and their need of help, while frequently the others who have lived more open lives do not recognize their need of forgiveness and help.

Perhaps no other parable has been so helpful to the poor and needy, the sinful and the weak who have a desire to return from the ways of sin and to be received back into the family of God. They see their own picture in this parable, and are encouraged by its representing the Father as willing to receive them. It is quite contrary to the thought generally entertained by sinners. The heavenly Father's character has been so misrepresented to them by the creeds of the dark ages that they fear him and expect no kind reception from him. As the proper thought of God's character reaches the poor and the depraved, they receive a suggestion of hope from this parable and other Scriptures. This hope leads and assists many of them to a full return and a full surrender to the God of all grace.

The prodigal is represented as coming to himself, as awakening to a realization of his dire necessities, as coming to a knowledge of the fact that his father has an abundance, and probably will be willing to let him have a share of the blessing which he no longer merits. His expression, "I will arise and go to my father," represents what should be the attitude of all repentant ones—the attitude which all Christian people should help them to attain—reliance upon the love and mercy of the heavenly Father and the provision which he has made in Christ Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins and for their reception again to his love and care.

DIVINE PARADOXES

"Because thy loving kindness [favor] is better than life, my lips shall praise thee."—Psalm 63:3.

There are two ways in which this text may be viewed, both of which are very proper. One way is to consider it merely from the viewpoint of the Psalmist and what he meant. The other is to consider it from the standpoint of prophecy. We understand the Prophet David to mean that to have God's favor is more desirable than life; that is to say, he would

rather die than to live without divine favor. The other way, of viewing it prophetically, is to suppose that here, as in many other places, the Psalmist represented The Christ, Jesus the Head and the church his members.

Our consecration is unto death. God has invited us to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto him, and he has given us exceeding great and precious promises for the life to come. Therefore, because of our love for him and for the principles of righteousness for which he stands, we are not merely willing to lay down our lives, but glad to lay them down. We are glad to lay down our human lives in doing the things that are pleasing to God.

Another of David's Psalms gives us the thought that in God's favor is everlasting life. (Psalm 30:5) These paradoxical statements are in harmony with the other Divine paradox, that "he that loseth his life shall find it." He that surrenders his earthly life shall gain glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature. We are glad that we can appreciate these glorious things represented in the divine favor extended to the church; and we gladly lay down our lives. We have chosen the better part.

"Therefore my lips shall praise thee." The Scriptures declare "that with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10) We may say that to live righteously is one of the best ways of proving our obedience to the Lord. Yet there are some who try hard to live pleasing to the Lord, who might be restrained from making a confession of him. There are reasons for the blessing which we receive by confession. One reason is that it is a witness to the world—showing forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness; and a second reason is that this witnessing has a good effect on ourselves. We enlist our natural forces to support this witness, and thus bring into unison all the powers of our nature.

The preaching of the Gospel brings opposition. If our Lord had gone about casting out demons, healing the sick, etc., and had not told anything about the divine plan, he would probably have been looked upon as a fine character—as a man going about doing good. But because he preached differently from the scribes and Pharisees, and his preaching of the truth infringed upon the teachings of those about him, it roused their ire.

So it is today. All the persecution comes about from the making known of the truth. In no time that we know of has this not been so. In the dark ages and throughout the Gospel age, the preaching of the truth has brought upon those telling the good tidings persecutions from those whose minds have been benighted by the prince of darkness. In proportion as we open our lips and tell of the Gospel of the Lord, we are opposed by Satan and those who are blinded by him. With the lips one might praise God, and with the lips he might injure men. The lips of this class consecrated to God—those who are laying down their present life in his service—should be devoted to his praise, to showing forth the glorious character and loving kindness of our God, to telling forth the wonders of the divine plan, which is marvelous in our eyes.

THE UNJUST STEWARD

MAY 10.—Luke 16:1-13.

"He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous in much."—V. 10.

Because the Pharisees were the leading exponents of the law, Jesus pointed many of his parables against them, while he comparatively ignored the irreligious Jews—the Sadducees, who made no profession of faith. Today's lesson is in line with this. This parable was spoken as a rebuke to the spirit of the Pharisees, who bound heavy burdens upon others, but shirked them themselves, while pretending hearty obedience to the law.

In olden times, more than now, it was the custom for rich men to appoint stewards. Such a steward had as absolute control of his master's goods as had the master himself; he had, as it were, the power of attorney. Some stewards were faithful; others extravagant. The one mentioned in our Lord's parable was extravagant, unsatisfactory. His master had concluded to dispense with his services, and had asked him to render up his accounts.

On his books were the accounts of certain debtors who apparently were left with no chance of being able to meet their obligations. The steward concluded that he would scale off these debts, so that the debtors probably could pay before he turned over his office to his successor. He did so. One owing a hundred bath of oil was told that he might scale off the debt to fifty. Another owing a hundred measures of wheat (500 to 1,400 bushels) was told that he might scale it down twenty per cent. And so he went down the list. Such a use of his authority made him friends amongst those whom he had favored; and his lord complimented him upon the wisdom he had displayed.

Applying this parable, Jesus proportionately condemned the Pharisees for taking an opposite course. He had declared that the scribes and the Pharisees sat in Moses' seat as interpreters of the Mosaic law, and that, had they followed the course of this steward, they would have made friends of the poor publicans and sinners by trying to minimize their shortcomings, and to encourage them to do the best they could to comply with the demands of the law. Instead, they bound heavy burdens upon the people and discouraged them.

All this on their part was hypocrisy; for they could not help knowing that they themselves were unable to comply with the requirements of the law, which is the full measure of a perfect man's ability. Their proper attitude would have been to confess their own shortcomings, to strive to do their best, to appeal to God for mercy and to teach the common people to do similarly. So doing, they would have been better prepared to be received into the Gospel favor in the end of their age. As it was, by their hypocrisies they were hindering themselves from becoming disciples of Jesus and from seeking grace and forgiveness of sins. They were also hindering others from becoming disciples by claiming that it was possible to have God's favor through keeping the law.

APPLYING THE PARABLE

Jesus then said to his disciples, Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail—at the end of your stewardship, at death—the results of your benevolence may cause that ye be received, in the resurrection, into the everlasting habitations.—Verse 9, paraphrase.

There is room for dispute in respect to the teachings of this parable, but to us it seems clear that Jesus meant that the wisdom of the unjust steward should be exercised by his disciples in their dealing with the mammon, the riches, of the present life. From the moment God's people give themselves to him, they give also their earthly rights and interests, and become merely stewards of their time, talent, influence, wealth, etc. "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God." Use all that you have energetically in the divine service.

These stewards of the mercies of God have his approval in the use of all of earthly things to the forwarding of their spiritual interests; they will not be counted unjust squanderers, as they use their earthly opportunities for advancing their heavenly interests. On the contrary, this will be reckoned to them for wise stewardship; and being found faithful in the use of earthly things in God's service, they can safely be entrusted with the greater things of the future. They will be received into the everlasting habitations and be granted a share with Messiah in his glorious kingdom. They will be entrusted with all of God's favors to be bestowed upon mankind. Their unselfishness in the present time, their willingness to sacrifice, will be the basis of the divine approval and glory to follow.

Unfaithfulness in the present time respecting things of trifling value in comparison would mean unfaithfulness in the future great things. Whoever therefore selfishly appropriates to himself the things of which he is steward will not be trusted with the future great things; and whoever is sacrificing will thus demonstrate his faithfulness, his loyalty to God, and to such the greater things will be entrusted. Would God entrust the riches of the future life and glory and honor to any who now prove themselves unfaithful, selfish, covetous, using present blessings merely for self-gratification? Surely not!

Jesus asks, "If ye have not been faithful in that which is another's, who shall give you that which is your own?" With the followers of Jesus all things of the present time are God's—the things of the present life belong to God, because we have consecrated or devoted them. The things of the future life belong to us, because God has promised them to us. But there are conditions; namely, our faithfulness, our loyalty.

If we are not faithful in handling the things which we have devoted to God, he will not give to us by and by those things which he has promised shall be ours conditionally. If, then, we should misappropriate the things consecrated to God—if we should abuse our stewardship and use those opportunities selfishly, could we expect God to give us the things which he has promised to give only to the faithful?

SERVING TWO MASTERS

There are two great impelling powers; one evil, the other good. These are known by different names and are in every way opposite. God is the Good Master; Satan is the evil master; but each has representatives and various interests. Thus God, his Spirit and his teachings, are represented by the word love; while Satan and his course are represented by selfishness, covetousness, mammon. Through the fall of man the whole world has lost the Spirit of God, and has been under the domination of Satan for centuries. All have become more or less evil. The spirit of selfishness, covetousness, leading on to unrighteousness in general, has gotten hold upon our race, so that even after we see the wrong course it is with great difficulty that its power over us can be broken. "We cannot do the things which we would."

But here comes in the proposition of the Gospel: God desires some faithful souls to be associated with Jesus in dispensing his blessings. He offers this great prize of the kingdom to those who will demonstrate that they have the right spirit. This prize is a pearl of great value. No other consideration can compare with it. Whoever intelligently accepts the Gospel call turns his back upon sin, selfishness and all the works of the flesh and the devil related thereto, and sets his face Godward, loveward, rightward.

But it is not sufficient that he shall enter into a covenant to give up the world and walk in the footsteps of Jesus. It is not sufficient that God accepts that covenant and begets such a one of his holy Spirit. More than this is needed. He must demonstrate not only that he prefers right to wrong on equal terms, but that he is willing to suffer the loss of all things that he may be on the side of right, on God's side.

Then comes in the trial and testing. He seeks to serve God and to gain the reward of glory, honor and immortality in the kingdom with Jesus; but he finds a tendency in his flesh to look after and appreciate the rewards of mammon, selfishness. This brings about the great battle. One or the other must conquer. In addition to growing in grace, in knowledge and in love, the new creature in Christ must feed upon the divine encouragements and promises of the Bible. Otherwise he will be discouraged and utterly give up the fight against the world, the flesh and the devil.

The Lord has promised grace sufficient in every time of need, to the faithful. He tells us that he knoweth that we are dust; He remembereth our frame, that we cannot do what we would like to do. But at the same time he requires that we do all that we are able to do, assuring us that for all such his grace will be sufficient; that is to say, to all such he will make up the deficiency.

In our lesson Jesus forewarns us that the choice we make must be a permanent one, that the supposition that we can serve God and mammon at the same time is a mistake. In proportion as we are faithful to one, we are unfaithful to the other. It is therefore for us to choose the service of God, counting it the greatest of our privileges, and its rewards the greatest of all rewards, and these for eternity.

After all, much will depend upon the degree of our faith. If we have faith in God, in his promise of great reward, if we have faith in the promise of the Savior to give us his grace and assistance in every time of need, it will be quite possible for us to fight the good fight and to gain the crown which the Lord hath in reservation for all those who love him supremely.

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES THE KINGDOM OF BLESSING

"And His [Jehovah's] feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south."—Zechariah 14:4.

This text refers to the closing of the day of trouble and the manifestation of God's power in connection with that trouble. The literal Mount of Olives may have, and probably will have, somewhat to do with the matter. It is referred to here as experiencing a great earthquake. No doubt the Israelites will be gathered at Jerusalem at this time, and no doubt the Lord's favor will be manifested to them there. This will be at the close of "Jacob's trouble," from which the Lord will be present to deliver them. Our thought is that this will be after the church shall have passed into glory. The execution of what is here described seems to be a part of the work of the glorified church.

We understand that the ancient worthies will then appear, and that God's favor will have returned to the Jews, and that Israel's temporal blessings will there begin. This would imply that the Jews will then be under the New Covenant arrangement, and hence that the church must have been completed.

Symbolically, a mountain represents a kingdom. The Scriptures elsewhere declare that Jehovah will make the place of his feet glorious. The word olive always associates itself in the minds of the people of the Orient with the thought of light and nourishment. The olive oil they use regularly instead of butter. As the olive furnishes both light and food, the Mount of Olives would represent the kingdom of God. Olive oil was poured upon the head of the Jewish kings and priests, and symbolized thus the holy Spirit. God's kingdom will be for the blessing of mankind. It will be of two phases—the heavenly and the earthly—and all people may eventually come under its blessed condition.

See STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. 4, pp. 649-656.

"UNDER HIS WINGS"

"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust."—Psalm 91:4.

The 91st Psalm very clearly applies to the church, and would seem to be especially applicable to the church in the end of this age. But since it is addressed in a personal way, as though to one person, it may be The Christ as a whole that is referred to, from the Head to the last member of the body. Our Lord Jesus had trials and difficulties, and needed protection and care. He went to the heavenly Father and sought the necessary aid. And so with all the Lord's people continually.

But the Psalmist seems especially to refer to our day: "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee." Of course, there have been times in the past when thousands have fallen through persecution, etc., but the falling away mentioned here seems to be the falling away from God's people. Many will be turned aside, injured, wounded, if not killed, in the great battle pictured.

This battle, we understand, is at the conclusion of this Gospel age. The powers of darkness are now specially arraying themselves against the consecrated people of God, and all associated with them. There never was a time when God's people, as a whole, had so large opportunities or so great success as Christendom has had in the past century. Under the attacks of Satan that have been in progress for the last fifty, sixty or seventy years, many have fallen into unbelief, Higher Criticism, infidelity, the various features of which are represented as a great pestilence. We see that there is a pestilential infidelity abroad in the land. Its votaries are misled by the adversary—quite probably without any such intention on their part.

Very probably in the future, as they see the truth, many of these will acknowledge their error; but for the time being there is a great drouth in Christendom. Church attendance is falling away. Many of the ministers are preaching what they themselves doubt. They have fallen from grace, fallen from divine favor, fallen from an appreciation of the Word of God.

THE FEET OF THE CHRIST

This Scripture points out, too, the "feet" of this Christ class living in our day. "He shall give his angels charge over thee, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." All the members have a relationship to the Head and to one another. These "angels" we understand to represent divine promises and helpful assistances of the saints. These "angels" are represented as bearing up the feet, that they may not stumble over the stone of stumbling at this time. (Isa. 8:14) Instead of stumbling over this stone, they will be lifted up by it to greater appreciation and higher conditions. The feet shall not be moved.

In the figure of our text, these who are to be covered represent all who are of this one class. As a hen gathereth her

brood under her wings, so God will be as a mother-hen to his people, and will gladly gather them close to himself and give them the necessary protection—under his wings. They may fully trust that all things shall work together for their good, because they are his, abiding "under the shadow of the Almighty."

The Almighty here represents himself as a mother-bird. The patience of the mother-bird with her young is remarkable, and she would sacrifice her own life for her little nestlings. So the Lord represents that he is ready to do anything for the protection of his own, who are under his care. Jesus would have received the Jews thus under his protecting care; but the people as a nation did not appreciate their need, and hence were overthrown in a great time of trouble. Jesus said to them, with weeping, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

OUR FATHER'S "WINGS" AND "FEATHERS"

We might exercise a particularity of inspection of our text, and say that the word feathers might carry a little further thought than the word wings. "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust." The soft, downy feathers under the mother-hen's wings serve to keep the little chicks warm and to shield and hide them from enemies that would attack them. Not only the strong sheltering wings, but also the feathers of the hen-mother's breast are used to protect her young. We have seen alarm on the part of a mother-hen at the approach of danger, and heard her cluck to her little ones. Then they would run to her, nestle under her wings, and seem perfectly satisfied and free from fear in their place of safety. Presently you would see the little heads or eyes peeping out; but the chicks felt perfectly secure.

And so with us. Our heavenly Father's love and care and protection are his wings and his feathers, shielding us from all harm, keeping us warm and safe. He is able to make every experience in life work out for our good. We are, however, to remember that the promise that God will make all things work together for our good is a promise to the new creature, not to the old creature. Oftentimes the interests of the new creature and of the old creature are diverse. God has an interest in all that concerns us, but he overrules our temporal affairs for our best spiritual interests. If we were too prosperous, it might not be of advantage to us as new creatures.

Our temporal affairs may be permitted to go awry. We are not wise enough to know what is for our own best interests as new creatures, and what would help us the most in our fight against the world, the flesh and the devil. We are, therefore, to flee to the Lord and accept whatever experiences may come, as those which will be best for us; and we are to seek to get the designed lessons of faith and obedience from them.

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WHO COMMITS THE SIN UNTO DEATH?—PART I

"Whosoever is begotten of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God."—1 John 3:9.

PRIVILEGES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND DANGERS OF THE NEW CREATURE

There is a certain amount of complexity attaching itself to questions relative to the church's change of nature from human to spiritual. In order clearly to understand the initiatory process of that change, the begettal of the Spirit, we should have a proper understanding of what constitutes the human will; for it is that will which is changed.

We cannot think of anything better as an illustration of the subject than a legislative body, such as Congress or Parliament. In these assemblies, a large number of members sit in session; but they are divided into groups known as parties. Some members belong to one party, others to another. But the dominating party is in control.

So it is in the human brain. There we have numerous organs, representing variously religious sentiments, intellectuality, morality, the affections, etc. Then there are some that represent energy; others, acquisitiveness; others, combativeness. These different faculties, when called to consider a question, divide themselves into groups, the strongest of which is very apt to sway the others.

When, for instance, any matter involving the interests of self comes up for consideration, acquisitiveness being strong, may lead combativeness to fight for possession of the thing desired. It may also lead destructiveness to help in the fight. And it may to some extent drown the voice of justice, or conscience, and offset the quality of love; for acquisitiveness may have schemes which would interfere with the operation of love.

On the whole, the organs which dominate the world are the organs of self-protection, self-gratification, etc.—all the organs whose names begin with the word self. Even if the religious organs—veneration, hope, benevolence, spirituality, etc.—are strong, the selfish propensities generally overpower them, so that they co-operate with selfishness. For example, benevolence overpowered by the selfish propensities, will say, I will give some money to this project, in order that it may show a large return; but I will not give it unless it show such return. Thus the quality of acquisitiveness and others pertaining to self will go into agreement with benevolence, by bending it to the service of self.

It is the usual thing to see such combinations in worldly people today. There are generous men with naturally noble impulses which they like to gratify. But in all that they do, self has become the preponderating factor. Self gets in somewhere—self-esteem, self-interest, etc. This combination makes the selfish man; and though he may have considerable benevolence, veneration, etc., yet these noble qualities are under control of the selfish propensities.

To this selfish man the Gospel comes, and offers a proposition which is unique, peculiar. It appeals to him through a new set of organs. It shows him that he should put God first, not self; that he should begin to see that the highest and noblest organs of the brain are those which recognize the Creator and man's responsibility as his creature. It shows him that he is thinking of self-aggrandisement, self-honor, self-everything!

Such a person, hearing the Gospel proposition, may be influenced to decide the matter either one way or the other. He may say, I do not like that thought. Selfishness may suggest that if he accepts the Gospel offer he must stop his questionable business methods. Then he concludes that he does not care to take such a step; for it would demand more than he is willing to give, and he might have trouble with his conscience. Later on, perhaps, something in the nature of adversity or calamity will awaken him to take a different view of matters, and he will see the subject in a different light and be glad to do God's will. Then he may say, I realize that my life must be different. I am God's creature. Therefore it is right that I should consecrate my all to him. But I see that consecration will work a great transformation in my life. I shall be obliged to change my course. I must drop certain habits.

This is the first step of true conversion. This is a turning from sin toward righteousness. It does not follow, however, that the person who takes this step will come up to the divine requirements of a disciple of Christ. The rich young ruler who asked Jesus what he should do to gain eternal life was told to keep God's commandments. He replied that he had done this all his life. And Jesus loved him! The young man was trying to do right in every way. Was he not all right then? No! Jesus said to him: "One thing thou lackest. Go and sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the poor, and then thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

The young ruler thought this strange advice; for he had all along been living a most exemplary life. He was correct in his estimate of himself; but he was merely doing his duty in so living. No one has a right to live a bad life; no one has a right to do wrong. That he was merely doing his duty—no more—was practically what Jesus told the young man.

Continuing, the Master said: I have only one offer to make, but it is a very high one—joint-heirship with Me in the Messianic kingdom. The life into which you may enter by becoming my disciple is a life of glory, honor and immortality—the divine nature. If you desire this high position, you must do more than merely avoid sin. God is now calling for sacrificers. If you do not sacrifice yourself, you cannot become my disciple; for those only who thus sacrifice are received of the Father and begotten of the holy Spirit, and can share my glory. Those only will be granted a part in the first resurrection. And the young ruler "went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions." Alas; how many are likeminded!

To turn away from sin is but a step toward conversion. That moment is an antitypical going toward the Tabernacle. "Draw nigh unto me, and I will draw night unto you," is the Father's proposition. The Word of God points out to the seeker that only through Christ who gave himself as our ransom, can any come to the Father.

He is also instructed that if he would retain God's favor he must become a disciple of Christ, by laying down his life in the service of the Lord and the brethren, doing good unto all men as he has opportunity. In this way he may become a member of Christ's body. Then, after a while, if faithful unto death, he will have a share in the glory and honor which the Father has given our Lord he will become a joint-heir with Jesus in the kingdom.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A NEW CREATURE?

So this one becomes a new creature when he has accepted the divine will in this sacrificial sense; or, as the Scriptures present it, when he has made a full consecration unto death. "Gather my saints together unto me," saith the Lord, "those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5) Those accepting this call to enter into sacrifice are received of the Father; then they are begotten of the holy Spirit. Thenceforth they are new creatures: To them "old things are passed away, and all things are become new."—2 Cor. 5:17.

The question may arise: What part of the individual becomes the new creature? It is the will that becomes new. The will is the determination, or decision, of the majority of those organs of the brain which form the mentality. The will considers the matter: Shall I continue to sin? No; I will abandon sin. Shall I go further and make a full consecration of myself to God? Yes; I will make this consecration.

When he does so, God accepts him and begets him of the holy Spirit, thus making him a new creature. He makes up his mind—he determines the matter. He changes the direction of his will. At one time his will was inclined to sin. That was wrong. Then his will turned toward righteousness. This was right, so far as it went; but it did not make him a new creature. Then he came to the place where he said, Lord, I consecrate my life to thee—myself, with all my aims, hopes and ambitions. Thenceforth he is counted as dead to the world, and reckoned alive toward God, as a spirit being. This new will, this new mind, then, with its heavenly hopes and aspirations, constitutes the new creature.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NEW CREATURE

To be begotten of one signifies to be a son of that father. The only begotten of the heavenly Father—the only one directly so begotten—was our Lord Jesus—God's Son. And all the church are also recognized as being sons of God; "and if sons, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ." The first one of the spirit-begotten class was our Lord Jesus. When the holy Spirit was given him at Jordan, in this begetting sense, he was no longer counted of God as the Man Jesus. But he had this treasure of the new nature in an earthly body, an earthen vessel, until he finished his sacrifice at Calvary. Then, in the resurrection, God gave him a perfect spirit body of the divine nature.

So it is with all of Jesus' disciples: They are invited to surrender themselves to God, consecrating their earthly interests to become followers of the Master. Jesus states the conditions: First, faith in him as the Messiah, the Redeemer; and second, denial of self and the taking up of the cross and following him. These new creatures are all sons of God, though the world does not understand that they are in any way different from others in their relationship to God. "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him [the Master] not." (1 John 3:1) This new mind must increase. This new creature must grow in knowledge and capacity.

All of this makes the individual now very different from what he was as the old creature. If by nature he was depraved, and had violent passions prevailing in his flesh, he will now, having a better mind, be guided in the way of the Lord, and gradually become a copy of God's dear Son. This copy is primarily a heart-copy, though the change by degrees affects his life, bringing his body more and more into conformity to the new mind.

THE NEW CREATURE ON TRIAL

Since this new mind, the new will, the spirit-begotten new creature, has its present residence in the old body, and since this body, the new creature's only instrument of operation, has still its old tendencies toward sin—its weaknesses, its depravities—therefore there is a continual struggle between the new creature and the old. It is a daily warfare, and either one or the other must perish. If the new creature be not alert, thoroughly active, thoroughly loyal to God, the weaknesses of the flesh will gradually assert themselves, and the new creature will be in danger of death.

If, on the contrary, the new creature remain loyal to God, the old creature will perish. The one or the other must die before the conflict is over. It is a fight to the finish. And this conflict is a test of the new creature—not of the old creature. The new creature has been called to glory, honor and immortality. In order to attain this state, it must prove unquestionably its loyalty to God. In proportion as the new mind controls, and we love righteousness and hate iniquity, in that same proportion shall we have strength in battling with the forces outside, with the conditions of the present time; and the greater success shall we have in battling with our own flesh.

In this warfare there may be sometimes more and sometimes less success. But not until the victory is won will the Lord grant the reward. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." The thing to be demonstrated is loyalty to God, loyalty to the principles of righteousness, and to our covenant. Those who are most loyal and most devoted to God will come off "more than conquerors" and will gain the highest reward, will sit with Jesus in his throne.

Some will come off overcomers, but not on so high a plane, needing the special tribulations to assist them. But even though they fail to come to the highest standard, they will, nevertheless, come off overcomers; else they would never get any share in the heavenly reward, nor life at all. These will form the great company, who come up out of the great tribulation and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Revelation 7:14) They will be greatly favored in that they will be the honored servants of the glorified bride class, who are to constitute the "more than conquerors."

FALLING INTO TEMPTATION NOT SIN

During this time of battling between the new creature and the imperfections of the body in which the new creature resides, the new mind should be developing and growing gradually stronger. The will of the body was reckoned entirely dead before the individual could be counted a new creature. But the body has the old brain, which has the same tendencies as formerly. The work of the new mind is to bring this body into full subjection to the will of Christ. The child of God may, however, be attracted by business or pleasure, which may lead him as a new creature into more or less of stupor. In such stupid condition of the new creature, the flesh, wide awake, might get the advantage, not because the child of God has wilfully sinned, or because he has been intentionally negligent, but because he has yielded more or less to temptation. But it is one thing to yield thus under temptation, and another thing to go deliberately into sin. Whoever sins wilfully is counted a child of Satan, because he has Satan's spirit instead of God's spirit.

If any of those who were once begotten of God should get into that attitude where they would wilfully desire to commit sin, it would indicate that they had ceased to be sons of God and had become sons of Belial. It would signify that the spark of the new life to which they had been begotten had become extinguished. "He that is begotten of God sinneth not." If he sin—deliberately, wilfully—he ceases that moment to be a son of God. Sons of God do not love sin. Any one, therefore, who would thus intentionally go into sin would give evidence that his new mind had entirely passed away, and that he had become dead to God, even as previously in consecration he had become dead to the flesh.

We believe that not very many have ever taken this step of bold opposition to God, wilfully and intelligently; and we hope that there will not be a great many to go into the second death. However, it is for God's people to keep as far away as possible from this disastrous condition. This condition is reached by a gradual process, step by step. When we come to God we first repudiate sin. Later we come to the point of presenting our bodies living sacrifices, and are accepted. So, contrariwise, those who repudiate righteousness usually go back gradually. Step by step of indulgence in sin gradually leads away from God, until the new creature ceases to exist.

NEW CREATURE HANDICAPPED BY FLESH

When the Apostle John, in our text, says that those who are begotten of God sin not, he means that the sin is not wilful. Is there, then, any other way to sin than to sin wilfully? We answer, Yes. It is wilful sin that is unto death. The Scriptures tell us that "all have come short of the glory of God"—there is none perfect, "none righteous, no, not one." The righteousness which is imputed to the members of the church, is imputed to their flesh. The new creature itself is perfect. But as a new creature the disciple of Christ desires to put off from its flesh all the former things of sin and death and to be fully conformed to the image and likeness of God. Yet he is more or less handicapped, not only by the imperfections of his own fleshly body, but also by the imperfections of others. He has to contend with the evil tendencies in his fallen nature, and also with those around him.

The same Apostle declares that if any shall say he has no sin, the truth is not in him, and he is making God a liar. (1 John 1:8-10) And these two statements of the same writer are in harmony. The statement of our text applies to the new creature itself, and the other applies to his fleshly body. He cannot fully avoid sin in his flesh, on account of its weakness, and the deceptiveness and unfavorable conditions surrounding him.

These new creatures, however, can maintain themselves in the love of God and as sons of God. "We have an Advocate with God, Jesus Christ, the Righteous." (1 John 2:1) God knows our weaknesses, and has made this very provision for us. The Apostle says we may keep ourselves in the love of God by keeping ourselves clean. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) Our daily trespasses are to be acknowledged to the Lord, and forgiveness sought and obtained. Thus we pray daily, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

STRIPES FOR PARTIALLY WILFUL SINS

If these trespasses are merely weaknesses of the flesh, or of ignorance or stupidity, they are sins which will be fully forgiven of the Lord on application. If they be sins in which the new mind has been slack, in which it has been more or less culpable, through lack of sufficient positiveness, then to that extent the new creature must be held responsible. And for all such trespasses, for which the new creature is in any way at fault, there will be stripes, or punishments. It is for this partially wilful portion of the sin that the new creature is responsible. This does not come under the head of original sin and its resulting imperfections.

A Christian might have a natural tendency to anger, and it might be impossible for him fully to control this tendency. Before he as a new creature would be able to realize the situation, his natural tendency to lose his temper would involve him in trouble. The new creature in such case should do everything possible to overcome this, through prayer and persistent effort, and if necessary, by imposing upon himself a penalty for every failure in this direction—some self-denial, perhaps. But if the new creature should say, Well, that is my flesh; I cannot help it, he might receive stripes, and an earthborn cloud might arise between him and the Lord; and that one would be spiritually sick until he should return to the Father and make proper amends and be re-instated. If this attitude continued, it would seem to make against his ever becoming a member of the little flock. He would have to decide positively for or against the right.

So, then, there are sins that are not forgivable, but punishable. If the transgression should come to the degree of full, wilful sin, it would be a sin unto death. This means that the new creature had ceased to be; for the Spirit of God, operating in the sons of God, always makes for righteousness and hates sin. Whoso loveth God "keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not."—1 John 5:18.

THE PURPOSE SERVED BY TRIALS

But, as the Apostle states, we have this treasure of a new mind in an earthen vessel. We are a combination of the heavenly and the earthly—a heavenly will and an earthly body. Sometimes the body will put the new creature to the test, urging it to give up this matter of consecration. So he has trouble; for the earthly body is merely reckoned dead. But God, in harmony with his promises, ignores the old nature—the earthly—and recognizes only the heavenly, so long as the will is loyal; and he has promised grace sufficient for every time of need.

As before stated, there may come a time when the new will temporarily becomes drowsy, dormant. This is a cause for serious concern; for then the new creature is in grave danger. There must be a determined will, a positive will for God, which will keenly regret any temporary deflection; otherwise there is no new creature. As the battling goes on between the new will and the old body, the new will becomes stronger and stronger, if it is properly awake to the situation. Yet God may permit the flesh to have more and more severe temptations. He allows the world and the adversary to bring pressure to bear upon the flesh, so that he may test, prove, the loyalty of the new creature. It was because our Lord was found faithful "unto death, even the death of the cross," that he was counted worthy of the divine nature. So it is to be with his footstep followers. The Father knows just how much we can stand, and will never suffer us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear, but with every temptation will provide a way of escape.—1 Corinthians 10:13.

WHY SOME FAIL TO OVERCOME

So the experiences of the way go on. As the Apostle suggests we are risen to walk in newness of life—our resurrection is already begun. (Rom. 6:4; Col. 3:1) And this new walk will become more and more courageous, more and more successful, in proportion as we respond to the Lord's touch—the disciplinary experiences. And if we allow him to mould us as he wills, we shall finally finish our course and be brought forth in full resurrection from earthly, human nature to heavenly, divine nature. Then the new will that has all along been progressing in an earthly body will thereafter make progress in a spiritual home; it will have a body like unto that of the risen and glorified Jesus.—1 John 3:1, 2.

In the case of those not overcoming fully, we find this condition; they yield more or less to the besetments of the adversary, and strive to avoid being too peculiar, to avoid giving any offense to their friends. Thus they become more or less overcharged with the cares of this life, or with the deceitfulness of riches, pleasures, etc. The Apostle urges that these lay aside all such weights, and run with patience the race set before them. Such a class never for a moment think of giving up the race; but in due time they will be put through fiery tribulations, which will destroy their flesh. Nevertheless, they will fail of the reward of the high calling, which the more faithful will receive.

(To be concluded in our next issue.)

"HIS LOVING-KINDNESS, O HOW GREAT!"

"Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee."—Psalm 63:3.

God has a kindness of nature and disposition, a loving-kindness, that is general, that goes out, in one sense of the word, to all of his creatures—not only the intelligent, but the unintelligent creatures of his hand. He bestows his kindness, his favors, upon the just and the unjust. He sends his sunshine and his rain upon the good and the evil. But there is a special loving-kindness, a special love which he reserves for those who have lovable qualities of heart—those who have such traits of character as permit him thus to love them—just as every good person loves every other person who is good and noble-hearted.

God has such a love for the holy angels. He had such a love for Adam before he sinned. And since the sin, he has a sentiment of loving-kindness toward those of Adam's race who, realizing their sin, desire to turn back to him and to do his will. His loving-kindness has led him to make a wonderful provision for these. He has provided that some shall be of the earthly nature, to receive the blessing of life everlasting here upon earth, after it has been brought to Edenic perfection. He has provided for others to be of the spiritual nature. Truly,

> "There's a wideness in God's mercy
> Like the wideness of the sea!"

But God does not love the wilful sinner. This is in harmony with righteousness. We may love the ignorant, who violate the law of God because of a lack of knowledge, of proper information; but we could not rightly love one who is wicked, whose intention of heart, of will, is to do wrong. God has no love for the incorrigibly wicked. "All the wicked will he destroy." He has arranged that only those who shall come into accord with his righteousness may enjoy the blessing of eternal life. These shall have an eternity of happiness; they shall be the recipients of his loving favor everlastingly.

The Psalmist had a taste of the loving-kindness of God in his own experiences. When he was anointed to be king of Israel, he knew that he had found favor in God's sight. And later, when he did things that were wrong, God chastised him, punished him in love, because David was a man after the Lord's own heart—had a desire to do right—to do God's will. As the needle of a compass may under certain circumstances be detracted from its normal condition of pointing toward the pole, just so some attraction at times influenced David and led him into a wrong course. But as soon as the besetment was past, or he was led of the Lord to see his sin, his heart returned fully to Jehovah, as the needle of the compass returns and again points to the pole. Therefore King David declared that life without God's loving-kindness would be worth nothing to him; he would not appreciate his life if cut off from the favor of the Lord. This being the case, his lips would always confess the Lord—tell forth his loving-kindness, show forth his praises.

OUR ANOINTING FAR SUPERIOR

And this is still more true of us who are now the Lord's truly consecrated children, who are daily striving to serve him and to follow the Master. We who by the grace of God have come into covenant relationship with him since the Atonement for sin has been made have become sons of God, and have been begotten of the holy Spirit. We have come thus into the anointed body of Christ. We have not been anointed to an earthly throne, as was David, but our anointing does more: it anoints us to a heavenly throne, to share in the rulership of the entire earth.

No king or emperor on any earthly throne can hope to reign for more than a few brief years. But those who shall be accounted worthy to reign with Messiah, to share his throne, shall reign for a thousand years. And this is only the beginning of their glory. Our Father in heaven, who is now training and preparing us for this glorious exaltation through his only begotten Son, with whom we are to reign, gives us the assurance that he will be with us to guide our way; that all things shall work together for good to us, because we love him and are called according to his purpose.

So we, above all other people in the world's history, have the loving-kindness of God manifested toward us. We have his exceeding great and precious promises. We are the recipients of his special love. And the more we appreciate this love and these glorious promises and the bountiful provisions of his grace, the more our hearts respond in gratitude, the more his loving-kindness becomes a reality to us, and the more are we ready to lay down our lives in his service.

It was thus with Jesus. He preferred the Father's favor above all else. And he, through the Father's arrangement, opened up this new and living way for us, that we, by becoming his disciples, may share with him God's special loving-kindness and matchless promises, granted only to those "who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." Surely our lips shall praise our God! And not only so, but our pocketbooks, our bank accounts, and our influence shall praise him! All that we have shall praise the Lord; and all that we ever hope to have!

"I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY!"

We who have come to realize our Father's unspeakable favor to us as better than this present life with all it could have to give, we who have joyfully laid upon his altar every earthly good thing, every hope and ambition, every power of our being, rejoice to tell the good tidings of salvation to others. We rejoice to sound forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. The message is too good to keep! If we could not proclaim it, it would be as a burning fire shut up in our bones; so we must tell it. And we are willing that the telling of it shall cost us trouble, cost us money, cost us the misunderstanding and persecution of former friends, and possibly the breaking of home ties. We are willing that it shall cost us the frown of the world and of organized churchianity.

TEXT APPLICABLE ONLY TO SAINTS

The Prophet David in our text spoke prophetically of the church of Christ. These words could apply to none other than saints of God. None but those who walk and talk with God would esteem his favor more precious and desirable than their earthly life. If we ask the average nominal Christian to weigh this matter, and tell us if he would exchange this life for the favor of the Lord—putting in one side of the balance all the good things, hopes, ambitions, family ties, social position, churchianity, esteem of men, and putting in the other side of the scale God's favor—he will hesitate, and will eventually decide in favor of the things of this life.

The reason for this is that such do not highly appreciate divine favor. They have heard and believed certain things about the Almighty, some of them true and some false; but the misrepresentation of God's character and plan, together with the worldly influences surrounding them, have largely neutralized and offset and made noneffective the truths which they have learned, and they lack confidence in the things unseen. Hence worldly interests outweigh their appreciation of divine favor—ten to one.

Those who have, through the plan of the ages, come to see the loving-kindness and mercy of the Lord are, if they are children of God at all, being put to the test. If they are merely glad to find out that there is no place of eternal torture, and that God's loving plan includes the whole human race, their hearts are not touched to responsiveness by this manifestation of his great love. They will go on their way, rejoicing that they have been delivered from the bondage of error, but will be like the nine lepers who were healed by the Master, yet did not return to give him the glory, nor to offer themselves in service to him. And these, alas, are the majority! We are now in the great day of proving. Who will be able to stand the test in this evil time?

GOD THE SUN OF OUR SOUL

This loving favor of God, which is so appreciated by the true saints, is not a favor respecting future prospects and hopes merely, but it is the blessed possession also of the present life. Gradually these come to prize the communion and fellowship of the Lord to such a degree that any interruption of this communion produces misery of soul. It brings an aching void that nothing else can fill. This sentiment is beautifully expressed in the hymn we often sing:

> "Sun of my soul, my Father dear,
> I know no night when thou art near;
> O, may no earth-born cloud arise
> To hide thee from thy servant's eyes!"

The true child of God will walk so closely with him that nothing, however sweet or precious to the natural man, will be permitted to shut from him his Father's face. This would be esteemed a calamity with which nothing else could compare. He would rather cut off anything as dear as a right hand, or pluck out of his life anything as precious as an eye, than that it should come between himself and his heavenly Friend, whom he has come to love above all else beside. God is truly to these the Sun of their soul, without whom life would become the blackness of night.

"THE DARKNESS HATETH THE LIGHT"

Some professed disciples of Christ may say that a Christian life will not cost earthly friendships; that such an idea is an exaggeration; that it is an extreme view of what is required of a Christian; that a course which produces such a result is an unreasonable one. But no! Our Master's words are as true today as when they were spoken: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore the would hateth you." (John 15:19) The declaration of the Apostle still holds good: "Yea, and all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12.

Why did the Master suffer the loss of social position and of favor with the churchianity of his day? Why did the Doctors of Divinity and the notables among the religionists hide their faces from him? Why did they finally become so embittered against him that they crucified him? Was it because of evil-doing on his part? Nay; for he went about doing good. It was because he told the truth. He declared truths which they themselves recognized as such, but with which they had so mixed the "traditions of the elders" that they were too stupefied, drunken and blinded to take anything but a perverted view of our Lord's work and teachings. Their hearts were not in the right attitude before God. "The darkness hateth the light."

The Master's persecutions came not from the outside world, but from the professed holy people of his time. So has it ever been since, and so is it today. Those who now oppose the truth are not worldly people outside of the churches, with but few exceptions; but they are zealous sectarians, whom Satan has blinded with his false doctrines and misrepresentations. We are not to be surprised, therefore, that wherever the truth goes it will be a sword to separate, as our Lord declared. These conditions prove a test to the followers of Jesus. Are we willing to bear the hatred, the scorn, the contumely, which loyalty to the truth brings? Is our Father's loving favor more, far more, to us than the favor and smiles of the whole world—even more, far more to us than life itself?

THE GLORIOUS HARP OF THE AGES

If so, we can go forth in his name, rejoicing as we go, praising him with our lips, singing the new song which he hath put into our mouths, "even the loving kindness of our God." It costs something to sing this song. Only those who have learned to play upon the harp of God, who have all its strings attuned to perfect harmony, can properly render this "Song of Moses and the Lamb." Never until today has it been possible to produce such melody from this wonderful harp; for never before have all its chords been properly placed and attuned. Now its music is entrancing! Then let us take this wonderful harp of the ages, and as we sweep its chords, let us sing with the spirit and with the understanding this wondrous, glad new song.

THE GREAT DAY OF JUDGMENT—ITS NATURE AND OBJECT

"Behold, the Lord cometh with myriads of his saints, to execute judgment upon all and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed." "Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills be joyful together before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with his truth."—Jude 14, 15; Psalm 98:7-9.

The above texts relate to the great day of judgment, which is to end the Gospel age and inaugurate the Millennium. We should notice first of all what these texts do not say. They do not say that our Lord Jesus will come to destroy the earth, to burn up the world. They do not say that there will be a partial judgment at death, and that later all will be brought out of heaven and purgatory and a hell of torment, which are their proper places, only to be sent back to these same places again. Not so. But this is supposed to be stated in the Scriptures, and is what we have thought. Our prejudices and misunderstandings have attached to the words of Holy Writ a wrong meaning. It is the love of God which brings judgment to the world.

The first judgment, or sentence for sin, was a sentence of death. Under that sentence the whole world was to perish, to be cut off from life, because of Adam's sin. But God had mercy, compassion on humanity, and has provided that mankind shall have another trial, with experiences granted to enable them to realize the nature and results of sin. The first trial was a trial of Adam and Eve alone. Every member of the human family, however, will be given an individual trial for life everlasting, to demonstrate whether he will under favorable conditions come into harmony with God.

CHARACTER THE BASIS OF JUDGMENT

All hopes of eternal life for the race, therefore, hinge upon the results of that future trial. Men and women are in this life forming character—they are either improving or degrading themselves. Whoever is trying to do his best under present unfavorable conditions will enter upon that individual trial, or judgment, in a very much better condition than otherwise, and will progress more rapidly to perfection in that day.

The church of Christ is an exception to this arrangement for the world. They will not have a part in that trial, because the church is a special, called-out class, and will receive their trial in advance of the world. They are now on trial for life or death everlasting. But their trial is for life on the divine plane. Those who are now being dealt with by the Lord will, if faithful, be with the Lord the judges of the world in the next age; as we read: "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Corinthians 6:2) It will be a time when punishments and rewards shall be meted out.

Every evil-doer shall then be dealt with and receive punishment for his evil intent, and stripes for his correction. Every well-doer shall receive a reward. The work of that thousand-year judgment day will show men to what extent they are out of harmony with God, and will show them how to come into harmony with him. By the conclusion of the Millennial age none will be in ignorance. As it is written: "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11:9) Furthermore, the Scriptures tell us that the judgments will be graded according to the light previously had and sinned against. The wilful sinner, after a hundred years' trial, will be cut off in the second death.

All who shall make use of the opportunities of that time, making progress in character, will gradually go up the highway of holiness. They will be blessed more and more until they shall attain the full perfection of the earthly image and likeness of God which was lost in Adam. This will be the glorious outcome of the redeeming work of Christ. Then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God. All who continue to prefer sin shall eventually be utterly destroyed in the second death. Then God will have a clean universe.

GREAT DAY OF THE LORD NOW PRESENT

We are now in the beginning of this great day of the Lord. All the forces which are to play a part in this mighty upheaval which is to introduce the reign of Messiah are rapidly gathering. The nations of earth and all the various elements which form society as at present organized—political institutions, financial institutions, ecclesiastical systems, etc.—are now before the bar of judgment, and are being found wanting. All Christendom is trembling before the mighty forces that are coming in today. Morals are at a low ebb. As the glorious Messenger of the Covenant is now present to sit as the great Judge, we may well ask the question propounded by God's Prophet of old: "Who may abide the day [now present] of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver."—Malachi 3:1-6.

Ah, the world is longing for the blessing! Men are realizing more and more every day their great need of a strong arm to deliver them as they face the grave crisis which they feel is drawing very near; but they see not to what extent the inbred sin of man is incompatible with a reign of righteousness which is desired and so sorely needed. Before the help and the blessing can be realized the day of wrath must come; the "fire of God's jealousy" must burn fiercely, and consume all the giant evils so entrenched in the world and in the hearts and minds of men. It is not to be a fire merely of destruction, but, thank God, also of purification! It will not be a literal fire, but a symbolic fire, following which the Lord will turn unto the people a pure language, a pure Message, and a clear declaration of the divine will and plan of salvation.

SONS OF LEVI JUDGED FIRST

The earlier part of the judgment upon Christendom will be especially upon the antitypical sons of Levi, the silver class. These made a consecration of themselves to the Lord, as did the gold class, the faithful overcomers, "more than conquerors." This silver class we understand to be the great company, who are to "come up" out of the great tribulation, and to "wash their robes [which have become spotted and soiled] and make them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Revelation 7:9-17) These will be dealt with by the great Messenger of the Covenant, not with a view to their destruction or injury as individuals, but with a view to the destruction of their flesh, which they have failed to sacrifice in harmony with their covenant—"that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

The fire of this great day shall "try every man's work, of what sort it is." It will prove who of the professed disciples of Christ have built upon him as their foundation with the gold, silver, and precious stones of divine truth, and thus have constructed a true, strong, worthy character, unswervingly loyal to the Lord; and it will prove who have built with wood, hay and stubble. It will likewise discover who have built upon a foundation of sand.—1 Corinthians 3:11-15.

FLESHLY ISRAEL'S SHARE IN THE JUDGMENT

A part of the prophecy of Malachi 3 seems to have an application to fleshly Israel. The Lord reproves them, showing that his course toward them as a people had been in conformity to his covenant with them at Mt. Sinai. But they had been unfaithful to their part of the covenant. At the appearing of this great Messenger of the New Covenant, which is to supersede the old Covenant, he will purge God's ancient people. The time is now due for favor to begin to be restored to them; but before their full restoration they must experience further chastisement for their purification and preparation for the great Messiah.

In the "time of Jacob's trouble," now near at hand, Israel will come to see and recognize their King, whom they refused when he offered himself to them at his first advent. "They shall look upon him [with the eye of faith] whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son." (Zechariah 12:10) He will then receive them back to favor, under the terms of the New Law Covenant. "Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years." (Malachi 3:4) They shall then be used of Messiah as a channel of blessing to all the world.

BLINDED TO THE REAL DIFFICULTY

In this great time of trouble, the Lord will be a swift witness against every evil thing and will rebuke it, and thus all men will be taught of him in the ways of righteousness. But as yet the poor, blinded world, bound by the shackles of Satan, do not know themselves. They do not yet see that selfishness is the basis of their every move and ambition; that the number who are not thus moved and controlled are so insignificantly small as to be without weight and influence.

It is not our thought to deride any efforts toward righteousness, even though inspired by selfishness. We merely point out that the true, Christian view of matters is a much different one. It is the Bible view. It recognizes God, the divine will, purpose, plan, revelation, as having to do with all this world's affairs. It sees in the present upheaval of politics, the present uncovering of financial and social scandals, etc., another force

making ready for the great trouble time, the great "earthquake" predicted in prophecy, the great cataclysm, now about to be precipitated upon the whole world. The Scriptures indicate that this time of trouble will be upon us in 1915, and will be gradually approaching in the meantime.

In the providence of God the gross superstition and ignorance of the dark ages has been gradually dissipated to a considerable extent, that the minds of the people might be set free, not only from religious superstition, but also from superstition respecting the divine right of certain families to inherit the kingdoms, the dominions of the world, and to live on a higher plane of social privilege than others. All these matters are now coming in review before the world, and Socialism is rapidly coming to the fore as the world's savior, their deliverer from priestcraft and superstition, and from political and financial autocracy. The world is being invited to look, not to him who redeemed us with his precious blood, and who promised to come again and establish his kingdom in righteousness, but it is being called to look to itself, to its own affairs and selfish interests, as the only hope, thus ignoring God and his overruling providences, and ignoring divine Revelation respecting the future outcome of present conditions, in the glorious Millennial kingdom for the blessing of all the world.

CHURCH FEDERATION NOW FORMING

From our standpoint, the present gathering of the churches into a great Federation is the fulfilment of Scriptural prediction; and the Lord's intelligent, faithful, consecrated people are warned against having any part in any such Church Federation. The Word of the Lord regarding the matter is, "Say ye not, A Confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A Confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and let him be your fear."—Isaiah 8:11-16.

Dread to displease him, but fear not men. It is the tares which have all along associated themselves with the wheat that are to be bundled, to be gathered together for a great trouble time. This is in the mighty revolution of society shortly to set fire to all the social, religious, and financial institutions and arrangements of this present time, eventuating in anarchy, which, through God's overruling providence, will overthrow all things incompatible with righteousness and prepare for the kingdom of God, which will be manifested in power and great glory, for the deliverance and blessing of all the human family.

We remember that as the Jewish age drew near its close, John the Baptist, the forerunner of Messiah, declared to the Jews: "One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the holy Spirit and with fire." (Luke 3:16) We remember the fulfilment of this. The "Israelites indeed" were gathered into the garner of the Christian church, and baptized with the holy Spirit at Pentecost. The remainder of the Jewish nation, who "knew not the time of their visitation," were burned as "chaff," in a great time of trouble, which overthrew their nation. This great trouble is shown in Scripture to be a picture on a small scale of the conditions which will prevail in the closing days of this Gospel age.

In that trouble time which came to the Jews, though various steps were taken to hinder the destruction of the nation of Israel, all efforts failed. Even the Roman Emperor was desirous of preserving the nation and of establishing order; and the Roman army was sent, not to destroy them, but to establish peace in their midst. But the Lord had declared that the fire of trouble which he enkindled should not be quenched by any power, that it should do its work to the full; and it did.

Likewise it will be with the great fire of trouble with which this present age will end, and into which the "tare" class of Christendom will be cast. It will not be an utter destruction of life (although many lives will be lost in the awful trouble of this day of wrath), but it will completely consume all earthly governments and institutions and will overthrow churchianity. These will be consumed in the fire of anarchy. Nothing shall be permitted to quench that fire, or hinder the utter destruction of present systems. But, praise God, when the fire shall have devoured the stubble and the falsities and deceptions of the present order, it will but have prepared the way for the great blessing which God has designed and provided, in his coming kingdom. "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26:9) It will be a terrible chastisement, but it will be the necessary work of the skilful surgeon, who wounds but to heal.

"REFUGE OF LIES" SWEPT AWAY

In our Lord's parable of building a house upon the rock or upon the sand, he gives a forceful picture particularly of the tests to come upon Christendom at the close of this age. Here his figure is that of a fierce storm, a flood, with mighty winds beating upon the faith structure of his professed followers, overthrowing the faith of those not built upon Christ, the Rock, but built upon the sand. And so we see it today. A mighty downpour of truth is now in progress throughout Christendom. The great storm is now raging. The denominations of churchianity are trembling under the shock. Their foundations of human tradition, man-made theories, ignorance, "doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4:1), are realized to be unsatisfactory. They are unable to stand before the great searchlight of truth now being turned upon them. Ere long the storm of truth will wash out the quicksand foundation upon which nominal Christianity is built, and her utter wreck will follow. Only the true people of God will be able to stand the test of this great day—now upon us!

This is the same storm and flood mentioned by the Lord through the Prophet Isaiah: "The hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding places. When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then shall ye [false teachers] be trodden down by it. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you; for morning by morning shall it pass through, by day and by night; and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report [the message, the truth]."—Isaiah 28:17-19.

This overwhelming trouble will soon reach the entire world. Indeed, it has already begun among all nations to some extent. All men must be awakened by the judgments of the Lord and brought to a realization of their need of the Arm of Jehovah, to deliver them and to uplift and save. The whole world is to be judged by the Messiah. All will witness that this judgment, trial, could not come before the great Judge takes his seat and authority: hence none of all those who died before our Lord's first advent could have been judged by him. All should likewise be aware of the fact that the world in general has not been on trial since our Redeemer was appointed the Judge, that the world has not been on trial previous to the present time. Indeed, the great mass of mankind neither know the Judge nor understand his law, nor have they any conception of the conditions and requirements necessary to life everlasting. This is in harmony with the presentations of Scripture on this subject.

JUDGMENT DAY A TIME OF BLESSING

The Apostle Paul declares (Acts 17:31), that God "hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained [The Christ, Head and body]; where he hath given assurance unto all, in that he hath raised him from the dead." That appointed day was future in the Apostle's time, and is still future, though now about to dawn. The Gospel of Christ, good tidings, is to the effect that he who bought the world with his own precious blood is to become the Judge of all men, the living and the dead. "All in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth," "and they that hear shall live."—John 5:28, 29, 25.

A new trial is to be granted to Adam and all his race. It will be an individual trial, under the enlightenment and uplifting influence of the great Messianic kingdom. Truly, this is "good tidings of great joy" to the world, the "groaning creation." Even though the great adversary has succeeded in deceiving the vast majority, even of Christians, into thinking to the contrary, this trial day, the day of judgment, is to come to all the sons and daughters of Adam for their deliverance and blessing, if they will. This great day, which will be "the desire of all nations," is forcefully depicted by the Prophet David. (Psalms 96-98) The saints of the Lord, the faithful followers of Christ, those who "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," shall be associated with their great Head as assistant judges, in his glorious work of human uplift and restitution to all that was lost in Adam.

How glad we are that our eyes have been anointed to see all these wonderful arrangements of our God! How glad we are that we can understand the significance of the dark clouds now hovering over the world and soon to break! How we rejoice that we can discern the silver lining to these clouds of trouble, and know that the end will be glorious—that beyond the yawning chasm just before us, beyond the blood and tears of the coming whirlwind and tempest, the blessed Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing and blessing in his wings, and mankind, broken and helpless and despairing, shall be led into the light and glory of the kingdom of God's dear Son!

RICH TO HELL—POOR TO HEAVEN

MAY 17.—Luke 16:19-31.

"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard."—Proverbs 21:13.

Did our Lord mean that all rich men and all rich women are to spend eternity in misery because of faring sumptuously every day, and wearing purple and fine linen? Can it be true that in order to get to heaven we must be poor beggars, covered with sores, and have them licked by dogs, and must eat crumbs from a rich man's table? Has character nothing to do with future rewards and punishments? Again, will it be so that for all eternity the rich, tormented in fire, will see the poor in bliss, and the honored poor see the rich in eternal misery? Can this be the arrangement of an all-wise, all-loving Creator—one who knew the end from the beginning?

For many years this parable has caused distress of mind to the more saintly of God's people; both heart and head have rebelled. We remembered that Abraham was very rich, likewise Isaac, Jacob, King David, King Solomon, etc. We remembered that God himself is very rich. Then we looked up the subject in the Hebrew and the Greek, and found that Abraham did not go to Gehenna, the hopeless condition, the second death, but to sheol, hades, the tomb, the grave, the state of death, where there is no fire.

Our greater knowledge increased the mystery; for the Scriptures declare that sheol, hades, the tomb, is to be destroyed, that all are to be brought forth from it in the resurrection. No other Scripture seemed to agree with this parable. It stands in a class by itself, except as we might use for its support one text in Revelation which speaks of a symbolic beast and a symbolic false prophet in torment. Thus have the thinking people of the church been stumbled and perplexed by the story of this lesson.

NOW ALL IS CLEAR, PLAIN

Now we see that our lesson is a parable. It is not to be taken literally, any more than are the other parables and dark sayings of our Savior; such as, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you"; or again, "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out . . . ; if thine hand offend thee, cut it off." Indeed, we find that Jesus spoke to the people only with parables (Matthew 13:34) None were ready for the depth of his teaching until after the holy Spirit at Pentecost began to give qualification.

How simple it all seems now! how beautiful! Many of God's people are rejoicing that in the light of the present understanding of the Bible the divine character is shining forth, beautiful in its justice, wisdom, love and power.

It is not difficult for us to understand that our lesson is a parable. To take it literally, as we have seen, would involve the absurdity of supposing that all beggars go to heaven, and that all wealthy go to hell; for the parable says nothing about character—either that the poor man was good or that the rich man was bad. Viewed as a parable, we see that the thing said is not the thing meant. Thus in other parables wheat and sheep represent children of God; tares and goats represent those dominated by the adversary, the god of this world.

THE RICH MAN OF THE PARABLE

In the parable under consideration, the rich man represents a class, and the poor man, Lazarus, another class. Let us see: The rich man was the Jewish nation, which had been in God's favor for more than sixteen centuries. To the Jew had been given the promises, the prophets, the blessings and privileges of the Law Covenant. These symbolically were their purple, fine linen and sumptuous table. The fine linen symbolized their typical justification through typical sacrifices. Their purple raiment symbolized royalty; for they were the typical kingdom. Their sumptuous fare represented the divine promises, as St. Paul's words imply.—Romans 11:9.

In Jesus' day Jewish favor began to wane. They were completely cut off in A. D. 70, as all Jews will admit. During the interim of forty years the rich man, the Jewish nation, sickened, died and was buried. Nationally, they went to hades, to the tomb; and their resurrection has not yet been accomplished, although Zionism is the beginning of it.

But although nationally dead and buried, the Jews individually have been very much alive during the last nineteen centuries. They have had anguish of soul, as they have received persecutions—sometimes, alas! from those who profess the name of Jesus, but who deny him in their practises. For all these centuries the Jews have cried out to God, who in the parable is represented as Abraham, the father of the faithful. The only answer that they have had is that there is a gulf of separation between them and God. Thank God, this cannot much longer be the case! The new dispensation dawns, in which the rich man will return from hades. Israel will be nationally rehabilitated, and God's favor will again come to those of them who shall learn needed lessons.

THE POOR MAN OF THE PARABLE

The poor man of the parable represents an outcast class. It included publicans and sinners, who had alienated themselves from God's favor. It also included Gentiles, to whom divine favor had never been extended—"aliens and strangers from the commonwealth of Israel." (Ephesians 2:12) These had no fine linen of typical justification, and no purple, representing a share in God's favor as part of his kingdom. None of the promises belonged to them. All that they could have would be merely such crumbs as would fall from the rich man's table.

The Scriptures illustrate two such crumbs given to this class by Jesus. When he healed the Roman centurion's servant, it was a concession at the request of the Jews, who declared that this man was a friend and had done them good, by building a synagogue, etc. The healing of this servant was a crumb. Similarly, the Syro-Phoenician woman got a crumb when she came to Jesus entreating the recovery of her daughter, who was possessed of a demon. The Master answered, "It is not proper to take the children's bread and give it unto dogs." He here used the customary Jewish phraseology respecting Gentiles—Gentile dogs. The Syro-Phoenician woman was not a Jewess and had no claim on God's favor, but she replied: "Yea, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the children's table." Jesus noted her faith and gave her the crumb which she desired.

As the Jews died to their favor, so the outcast publicans, sinners and Gentiles died to their disfavor; such of them as desired the favors of God, hungering and thirsting for his Word of promise, were received by him. The early church was made up of this Lazarus class, rejected by the Pharisees as publicans, sinners and Gentiles. Instead of being any longer alienated from God, these became the children of God and heirs of his promises. In the parable they are represented as children of Abraham—in his arms. In the type, Isaac was the beloved son of promise to the literal Abraham. In the antitype, Jesus and his followers are the spiritual seed of Abraham, received to God's bosom and favor. Thus St. Paul writes, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise"—made to Abraham.—Galatians 3:29.

"A GREAT GULF FIXED"

The great gulf between Judaism and Christianity has been fixed for more than eighteen centuries. During all this period no Jew has been permitted to come near to God, and no Gentile permitted to take the former position of the Jew, or in any manner to claim favor aside from Christ. In the divine plan the gulf was fixed unalterably. "There is none other name given under heaven amongst men whereby we must be saved"—whereby we may come into heart relationship with God. This gulf dates from the time that Christ came and offered himself to Israel, and was repected and crucified.

Thank God, his Word points us to another change of dispensation at the second coming of Christ! Then the Lazarus class, now children of God by faith, will be made actually and gloriously his children beyond the veil. In association with Jesus their Lord, they will take control of the world; for they will be his bride and joint-heir in the kingdom. What will happen to the rich man then? Oh, he is to have a resurrection from hades!

While God's kingdom will be represented on the spiritual plane by the Lazarus class, it will be represented on the earthly plane by another class, which will be Jewish. The Jews who crucified Jesus will not be made princes in the earth in association with Messiah's spiritual empire, but some of their brethren will be—a class whom they have been accustomed to call fathers will be made princes. These Scripturally are known as "Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets," and all who during the Jewish epoch proved themselves loyal to God and faithful, described by St. Paul in Hebrews 11:32-40.

St. Paul refers to this recovery of the Jews to divine favor in Romans 11:25-33. He there points out that as we who are now the people of God were not always so, but were received to divine favor when Israel was broken off from God's favor, so in due time those Israelites cut off from the favor of God will receive favor through our favor. That is to say, when the church shall have attained the prize of glory, honor and immortality, as spiritual Israel, then the gulf separating natural Israel from God's favor will have been passed. Then favor will return to natural Israel. Coming to them through

the glorified spiritual Israel, it will extend through them to all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues of humanity, during the Millennial age.

This is the divine promise, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The spiritual seed of Abraham, the church, gets the first share in this promise, and the natural seed of Abraham gets the second part; but both together will be used by the Lord in rolling away the curse and pouring out, instead, favors and blessings upon humanity, upon whosoever will accept them.

DIVES' FIVE BRETHREN

The parable represents Dives as praying for a drop of water to cool his parched tongue. Symbolically, parabolically, this represents the Jewish people in great distress, asking God to allow Christians to give them some help from their troubles. Have the Jews ever appealed to God for help? Have they prayed for relief from the persecutions which have come to them in the past and which to some extent still continue in Russia? Surely they have! Moreover, they have appealed to representatives of the Lazarus class—representatives of Christianity—desiring that their release and relief should come through them.

An illustration of this prayer for relief in our own day was afforded in the appeal of the Jews to President Roosevelt that he would use his influence with the government of Russia for the amelioration of Jewish persecutions. Did they get this drop of water? Nay! Mr. Roosevelt replied that the comity of nations would not permit such a communication from a friendly nation.

The parable goes further and develops the fact that the rich man had five brethren in danger of joining him in the trouble that was upon him. Who were his five brethren? We reply that the Jews of Palestine in Jesus' day represented chiefly the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, while the majority of the other ten tribes were scattered abroad in various lands. The question raised is, Did this trying experience affect merely the Jews of Palestine, who had enjoyed most of God's favors, or did it include also the Jews scattered abroad? The answer is given in the parable, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." This proves that Jews only were referred to; for no Gentile had Moses and the prophets. The number five is in full accord, also. Whereas two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, were represented by the one rich man, so proportionately the other ten tribes would be represented by five brethren.

And so it was. The message of the Gospel, which began with the Jews in Palestine, was extended to every land; and the Apostle Paul, in going to any cities amongst the Gentiles, preached first to the Jews, saying, It is expedient that the Gospel should be preached first to you; but seeing you reject the grace of God, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. (Acts 13:46, 47) In other words, the test upon all Israelites was the same.

Thus we are finding a depth of wisdom in Jesus' teachings beyond anything we could even have dreamed. We are finding, too, that the horrible nightmare doctrines of the dark ages poisoned our judgments, crossed our spiritual eyesight, and hindered us from seeing the beauty of the Lord's Word. Thank God for the new day and the light that it is shedding upon the Bible!

WE ARE UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS

MAY 24.—Luke 17:1-10.

"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."—1 Corinthians 1:31.

Today's lesson is in four sections, each apparently distinct and separate. Even the connection in which these words were uttered is not given. Nevertheless, they manifest the wisdom from above. We shall consider them in their order.

"It is impossible but that offenses will come." The word offenses more particularly signifies stumblings, or still more literally, ensnarement. The consecrated followers of Jesus are called little ones, because they are new creatures who have only started in the new way of full consecration to God's will. "Babes in Christ," St. Paul styles these. (1 Corinthians 3:1) "Little children," writes St. John. This infantile condition, however, should not continue. There should be growth in grace, knowledge, love. Strength of character should be attained, which would not only be wise, strong and difficult to ensnare, but able also to assist others less developed.

Thus in the church the more developed ones are styled elders—literally, elder brothers. Such more particularly represent the Lord amongst the brethren; and heavenly comfort and advice, reproofs, etc., may at times be sent through these to their younger fellows. The dangers of ensnarement exist because Satan is the prince of this age, and because he has the majority of mankind more or less under his influence—blinded by error, superstition, sin, etc. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all those who believe not." (2 Corinthians 4:4) That Jesus did not refer to infants is manifest from the words, "one of these little ones which believe in me."

We may not suppose that Jesus would unjustly condemn or punish anybody for ignorantly or unintentionally offending his followers, his little ones. We must suppose that he meant to caution those who would deliberately attempt to deceive and ensnare, entrap, discourage, his followers, his little ones. We all have heard of instances of deliberate, intelligent plotting against the followers of the Lord; and to whatever extent this may prevail, it has indicated the Satanic spirit.

Sometimes true people of God have been thus ensnared into the service of Satan, as intimated by the words, "his servants ye are to whom ye render service." Saul of Tarus was thus ensnared and used for a time by the adversary; and he explains that God had mercy upon him because he did this ignorantly. Had he done it with wilful intelligence, we may assume that God would not have had mercy upon him to the extent of rescuing him by a miracle, but that he would have continued in his intelligently wicked way and that it would have been better for him that a millstone had been hung around his neck and he had been drowned in the sea.

This would be because a person thus drowned in the sea would lose merely the present life, and not the future life during the Millennium, after he had been awakened from the sleep of death. He would then have full opportunity for enlightenment through obedience and for recovery from sin and death. But those who intelligently persecute the followers of Jesus and seek to turn them aside from the way of righteousness, pervert their own conscience and so degrade themselves that it will be much more difficult for them to come into accord with the conditions of the new dispensation beyond the grave. In a word, whoever sins against light and knowledge is endangering his own opportunities for everlasting life.

A FORGIVING SPIRIT NECESSARY

Verses 3 and 4 are apparently a part of the same discourse recorded in Matthew 18:15-22. The lesson is addressed to the followers of Jesus, not to the world. It relates primarily to their duty toward the brethren of the household of faith, but secondarily it has a broader application. It may at times be given this broader application; but the injunction in Matthew 18, that the counsel of brethren be brought in and that ultimately, if necessary, the matter come before the church, proves to us that it is in reality not intended for any but the church.

The lesson is mercy—boundless mercy. The basis of the argument is that all need mercy, divine mercy, because all are imperfect; and in order to assist us in the cultivation of this grace, the Lord has arranged that his blessings to us, his favor, shall be dependent upon our endeavor to exercise this Godlike quality. "Be ye like unto your Father; for he is kind to the unthankful."

It seems strange that our forefathers and ourselves were so deceived by the false doctrines which St. Paul styles "doctrines of devils." (1 Timothy 4:1) Once we thought of the heavenly Father as absolutely unforgiving—full of hate for his human creatures, because they had sinned—instead of forgiving their sin. We insisted that the wage, or penalty, of sin must be torment, and that to all eternity. How little we understood the real character of the God of all grace, the Father of mercies!

Some of us, perhaps, endeavored to justify our error by assuming that God himself was all goodness, kindness and love, but had behind him an inexorable law demanding the torture of his creatures—a law from which he could not escape, and which bound him to the doing of things which his own law condemned in humanity.

Others of us deluded ourselves into thinking that all mankind enjoyed at some time between birth and death a full opportunity for turning from sin to righteousness and of becoming saints. Only of late years are Bible students becoming aware of how absurd is this position. Now we are realizing that, for four thousand years, only the one little nation of the Jews had any knowledge of God, or any promise of eternal life held out to them, or any instruction respecting sin and its penalty. And even the Jews, to whom the law was given, Jesus and his apostles declared were blinded by Satan. Jesus, ad-

dressing his apostles, said, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." The great nation of the Jews neither saw nor heard. The same is true of nine-tenths of the population of Christendom, not to mention heathendom.

Without the least warrant of Scripture, but in contradiction of it, many of us uphold the terrible theory that all who do not hear of Christ in the present lifetime and also all those who do not become saintly followers in his steps will be eternally tortured at the hands of devils. We now see that the Bible teaches that only a comparatively small class, who now have the hearing ear and the seeing eye and who enter into covenant relationship with God through Christ, can walk in Jesus' steps. For these only does the present life end all opportunity of attaining eternal life. For the remainder of mankind God purposes a future life by a resurrection of judgment.

The resurrection is not merely for the church class—the first, or chief resurrection—but it is for "the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:15) The church class will come forth to glory, honor and immortality. The unjust will come forth from the tomb to judgments, disciplines, rewards and punishments. It is in order to give them these judgments and opportunities to obtain everlasting life that Messiah's kingdom will be inaugurated; and it is in order that he may appoint proper judges to assist the people and to reward and punish justly that he is now calling out the church in the flesh. "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?"—1 Corinthians 6:2.

FAITH POWER—CREDULITY POWER

A great deal passes for faith which is merely credulity. If some one were to swear to us that the moon is made of green cheese, it would be credulity to believe him—not faith. We should inquire, "Who is it that says this thing, and what does he know on the subject more than we may know?" The faith commended in the Bible is that which relates to things which God has promised. We are encouraged to be full of such faith in God—nothing doubting—not questioning that he is able to accomplish all his good promises.

Our forefathers had too much confidence in men. What they thought was faith was mere credulity. They swallowed the creeds of the dark ages; and the more absurd the proposition, the more faith they thought they had. On the contrary, they should have said, "Where is the proof? Where has God declared such things?" Those who defended the creeds cried out incredulously against sober faith, branded it heresy, and many times burned the truly faithful at the stake. The lesson is that we should accept by faith only that of which the Lord has assured us in his Word; and this means that we should be particularly careful that we have the pure Word of God, sifting out mistranslations and interpolations.

In our lesson, the disciples of Jesus were evidently impressed with the grandeur of his teachings, and the difficulties that must lie in the way of the accomplishment of all the wonderful things recorded in the law and the prophets, and told by Jesus—respecting his Messianic kingdom, etc. They therefore asked the Lord to increase their faith. Jesus replied in words that are greatly misunderstood in our day. He said, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say to this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you." On two other occasions Jesus made similar remarks respecting mountains, saying that the word of faith would have been sufficient to remove them to the midst of the sea.

WHAT DID HE MEAN?

Evidently the Master did not mean to encourage the Jews to attempt to command the mountain to be carried into the sea; but rather he wished them to realize that if they had proper faith in the power of God, and should receive a command from God to move the mountain into the sea, and should give the command with faith, the results would follow. But God gave no such command in respect to the mountains nor in respect to the tree. Hence faith would have no basis for operation in such cases.

The colored brother had the proper thought. When asked what he would do if God told him to jump through a stone wall, he replied, "I would jump at it." In a word, we are to have absolute confidence in the Word of God, not merely to make sure that we have heard and understood his message. Then we may go forward with mountain-moving faith to accomplish his commands. But God does not command foolish or unnecessary changes. He leaves it for human ingenuity to uproot the trees and to tunnel the mountains, and never gives commands of this kind. And if some human being told us something of the kind, we would be credulous if we believed him. God is not working that way.

NOT PROFITABLE TO OUR MASTER

Some amongst the followers of Christ, naturally progressive, are sometimes too aggressive, self-conceited. Becoming his disciples does not change these traits instantly. The old things pass away gradually, and the new take their place. A lesson for all of his disciples to remember, but especially forceful to the classes mentioned, is taught in this Study. They must remember that the work of God's grace, of which they are subjects, is his favor toward them; and that their obedience to his commands is primarily for their correction and development, and a future life of blessing. They should remember that even their service for the Lord is a privilege—that God is not profited by their services.

We are all unprofitable servants in the sense that God could just as easily do without us, indeed, could more easily do his work otherwise than through us. He could use as his messengers the angels or the various providences of life. None of us is indispensable to his work and to his glory. Quite to the contrary, the opportunity for entering into the Lord's vineyard and laboring therein is chiefly for our own advantage. The service brings us certain joys which we could not otherwise have. It brings us certain experiences necessary to our own development and qualification for higher services beyond the veil.

As the Apostle declares, "By grace [divine favor] are ye saved through faith." To some extent the faith is a matter of our own development. However, the Apostle hastens to add that the faith is not of ourselves, that even it is the gift of God—we have not the opportunity of glorying even in our faith. What have we that we have not received of the Lord? The elemental faith was based upon certain knowledge that God's providences brought to us, and possibly we were prepared for even that by a favorable parentage.

CHRISTLIKENESS THE EVIDENCE OF SONSHIP

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk even as he walked."—1 John 2:6.

To abide in Christ implies that one has first come into him. This gives us the thought of a body. The Scriptures everywhere represent the church as being this body, with Jesus as the Head. "God gave him to be Head over the church, which is his body." During the Gospel age an invitation has been given to certain persons to be of this body of Christ. There is only one door by which these may come into the body. It is the door of sacrifice, baptism into Christ's death. We are accepted only by giving up our own will, and taking instead the will of God. We pledge ourselves to walk in Jesus' steps, to become his followers, his disciples. We are buried with him and rise to walk in newness of life.—Romans 6:4.

But it is not sufficient that we take these steps, not sufficient that we have received the holy Spirit, and have been accepted of the Father. We should be sure that we continue to abide in Christ. Let us ask ourselves, Are we having the experiences common to all who are associated with Jesus? One of the ways to be sure that we are abiding in him is to realize that we still love him. Another is to know that we are still in harmony with God's Word. A third way is that we have no will but the Lord's will. Still another is to have his peace in our hearts and lives as the ruling and controlling influence.

PROFESSION ALONE INSUFFICIENT

Many have made a profession of being members of the body of Christ who do not give evidence of being his. Our text says that any one who professes to be in Christ ought so to walk even as the Master walked. And how did the Master walk? He lived daily in harmony with the will of the heavenly Father. He was fully submissive to the Father's will. And this meant sacrifice unto death—the cruel death of the cross.

Whoever has our Lord's spirit, and is controlled by the same will, is a member of the body of Christ, and will seek to walk after this fashion, to do the will of God in all things. This will mean a walk of holiness, of full devotion to God, and of opposition to sin. Whoever is consecrated to God is opposed to every sinful thing; for God and sin are in antagonism. God stands for his own righteousness, and sin is a violation of that righteousness. (1 John 3:4) Whoever walks as Jesus walked is in harmony with the divine Word and will. We are not to trust to our impressions, our own conceptions of what is right and advantageous, as many others do; but the Word of the Lord is to abide in us, and to govern our lives. Jesus said, "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me"—"everything written in the Book." And so it is to be with

us. We must abide in him, walk in him, and be willing to do "everything written in the Book"—not merely forcing ourselves to it, saying, I will take this course; but saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is written in my heart."—Psa. 40:7, 8.

PROOFS OF SONSHIP

All who have accepted Christ claim, in a general way at least, to be sons of God, that Christ is their Elder Brother, and that they belong to this great family that God is selecting from the sons of men. They consider themselves heirs with Christ to the great kingdom to come. But not all who claim to be sons of God are such. A great many are making this claim. Statistics tell us that there are four hundred millions of professed Christians; but we cannot think that many of these four hundred millions are sons of God. The Apostle Paul calls our attention to the fact that since we cannot read the hearts we must go by the professions which others make by mouth and by conduct. But professions of the mouth are not to be taken as final. We know that those who are sons of God will be led by his Spirit. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

But what is the Spirit of God? Primarily it is the spirit of Truth, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of justice, the spirit of love. And as many as are God's children, begotten of his holy Spirit, will make some manifestation of their harmony with this general Spirit of God. If they are, therefore, walking in unrighteousness, making no endeavor to stem the tendencies of sin in themselves, if they prefer error rather than truth, their fruits condemn them; for God stands for truth, and was exemplified in our Lord Jesus.

Whoever, therefore, has the Spirit of God, is willing to sacrifice himself that he may serve the truth. He loves the truth, and will manifest this fact by the spirit of love and zeal. Satan is the personification of sin, envy, hatred, malice, strife. Righteousness, love, joy, peace, are fruits of the holy Spirit. Wherever we see the works of the devil manifested we have reason to question that such a one is a child of God. The spirit of envy, the spirit of hatred, the spirit of malice, the spirit of opposition to the truth, the spirit of unrighteousness —these are to be repudiated and overcome by all who would be sons of God.

Yet despite one's best efforts, he might still find in his flesh tendencies to sin which would give him a great deal of trouble. He may take courage from the assurances of the Scriptures that the Lord looketh on the heart. Likewise in regard to others, we should judge according to the endeavor, the intention. Wherever the Spirit of God is, there is the spirit of love. And this spirit will make one wish to make reparation, if he has done wrong or been in error. To do so shows that it was not his spirit, his will to do wrong, but that he was merely entrapped for a time. But one who continues to do according to his natural tendencies, with no evidence of going in the right direction and of serving the truth, has reason to doubt that he is a child of God.

HOW WE CAN WALK AS HE WALKED

The Apostle's thought seems to be that those who profess to be the Lord's followers, profess to be Christians, should see to it that their walk in life is in harmony with their profession. The word disciple signifies one who follows—as a pupil follows his teacher. We recognize Christ as our Redeemer and also as our Pattern, our Instructor, in the glorious things which the Father has invited us to share with our Savior. If, therefore, we say that we are in him, this profession should be borne out by our walk in life. We should walk as he walked.

But we are not perfect—how can this be done? The answer is that we "are not in the flesh, but in the spirit." God does not look upon our imperfect flesh. As New Creatures we are not fleshly beings, but spiritual. The Apostle is in our text speaking of that walk that the Master had after he made consecration. He walked in this way three and a half years. It was a walk, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. And so with us. We are walking, not according to the flesh, but according to the new creature. We reckon ourselves dead according to the flesh, and the Lord so reckons us. If, then, we are dead to the flesh, we are not to walk according to the desires of the flesh.

We are to walk as our Lord walked, in our general deportment. We are to love everything that is good and to avoid everything that is evil. We are to walk as nearly as possible in the footsteps of our Lord and Exemplar. We cannot in an imperfect body walk up to all the perfection of Jesus, who was perfect in his flesh as well as in his spirit. But we are to walk as he walked—in the same path, in the same direction, toward the same glorious goal toward which he walked. And so doing, faithful day by day, we shall by his grace attain the same exceeding great reward.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

ORDAINED A MINISTER OF CHRIST

Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society,

Dear Brethren:—

In view of the fact that on every hand our enemies are opposing us on the ground that our public speakers are not ordained, and that more opposition may be aroused along this line in the future, might it not be well for the Society to give some formal recognition of the Lord's ordination of the brothers who speak in public?

The majority of our pilgrims, when asked, "When were you ordained?" do not have a ready answer. They may give the date of their consecration, but while we understand the matter to our own satisfaction, this is not satisfactory to the inquirer, who usually entertains the thought that since we have not been regularly (?) ordained, we are not safe teachers for them to listen to.

We realize that here at Bethel, we have by far the strongest Theological School, with daily studies and recitations, in the whole world. I read only today in the *Christian Herald*, a challenging query as to how many of us were regularly ordained, where we got our education, how many of us had any understanding of Greek or Latin, etc. Now, all of us understand Greek better than most orthodox (?) ministers; and if we could have some formal recognition of our ordination, perhaps referring it to the date of our individual consecration, I believe it would serve to stop the mouths of many, and would give the truth much impetus in the public opinion, which would well serve the purpose in gathering the Lord's wheat. Even in our newspaper advertising it would be a telling point to state the time when our more prominent speakers were ordained. It seems to be a question which the public mind is always asking, and will never be satisfied till answered. In my colporteur work I sold the books twice as easily when known to be a minister. Others have had the same experience.

I submit this merely as a suggestion, dear friends, and shall know that your decision, whether pro or con, is the Lord's will. With continued love and prayers, I am,

Your brother in the glorious harvest work, which we all love so much, R. G. JOLLY.

THINKS PHOTO-DRAMA WONDERFUL

My Dear Brother Russell:—

My purpose in writing is to let you know of my strong appreciation of the Photo-Drama of Creation. Throughout it is a wonderful production; surpassing even my most sanguine expectations.

I have met many truth friends who have seen the Drama —at Cincinnati, Toledo, and Indianapolis—all of whom were delighted with and benefited by it. They expressed the opinion that the Drama will edify the truth friends, as well as greatly enlighten and favorably influence others. The writer fully shares their opinion.

I wish all who are interested in the cause we so much love could see the production. I feel sure it would increase their love for the truth, and also their interest in the work generally. I was very much in favor of the project before seeing the exhibition; but I am much more so since.

It is marvelous to think of the thousands of people who are, through the Photo-Drama, hearing the precious Gospel preached, every day and night. I never heard the Gospel preached more plainly and impressively than it is for at least an hour, at each exhibition of the Photo-Drama. I presume that while the slide pictures are being exhibited, and the lecturing is in progress, at least an hour is occupied. And the motion pictures are so beautiful, realistic and instructive!

Apparently, a large majority of those who witness the production are very favorably impressed thereby. In my humble judgment, the Photo-Drama is the most successful project the Society has ever inaugurated.

Yours in Christian love and service, FRANK DRAPER.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

"IN UGLY TEMPER"

FOREBODINGS OF THE DUKE OF BEDFORD

In a letter of apology for absence from the dinner of the Bletchley (Bedfordshire) Working Men's Unionist Association, the Duke of Bedford says:

"The prospects with which 1914 opens are nowhere encouraging. Unrest prevails in every quarter of the habitable globe—from China to Peru. The difficulties of Great Britain are as great as, if not greater than, those of her neighbors, and her means of defense are less, for her Constitution has been deliberately destroyed to serve the cause of party.

"The House of Lords is only retained to supply the Radical Party with money for electioneering purposes. The House of Commons is muzzled and gagged, and the salaried representatives of the constituencies serve the electorate or earn their salaries, not with their brains or their judgment, but with their legs; they walk into the voting lobbies whenever the Government Whips give them their orders. Legislation is a mere question of shoe leather.

"When constitutional safeguards are swept away and no guidance is forthcoming, the only method of expressing discontent which remains is civil war. This is what we are now finding.

"Now a new danger looms before us. It looks as if the problem of naval defense would be shirked, that a body of men led by persons with ostentatiously German names may continue the support of the Radical Party. And meanwhile by assiduous appeals to envy, hatred and greed, Ministers have spoiled the temper of the nation. The nation is not only out of temper, but in an ugly temper."—*London Daily Mail.*

* * *

The foregoing shows some of the troubles of worldly princes and aristocracy. We cannot avoid a feeling of deep sympathy for the aristocracy in their present conditions. Jesus long ago foretold the conditions of our day, saying, especially of the rich and titled, "Men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking forward to the things coming upon the earth"—upon society. Special privileges have so long been enjoyed by the aristocracy that it is only natural that they should feel that these privileges are theirs by divine right.

On the other hand, the world of mankind are learning how the control of the earth came into the possession of so few people in olden times. They are learning that in less civilized times the better educated and more influential gradually gathered property and titles into their own hands. These have been transferred to their children from generation to generation, and laws have been framed which recognize their titles, until now any other laws which in any measure abrogate the title, or limit the special privileges, are felt to be unjust, ungodly—robbery.

Much could be said on both sides of the question. It is ours to consider God's view of the situation and the relationship of the whole to the Golden Rule—the divine law. Viewing matters from this standpoint, the majority can agree that even if there was an excuse in the past for the usurpation of titles, privileges and possessions of land, those privileges would cease with changed conditions. In other words, if there was in the past a time when the masses of the people were too ignorant or too superstitious to appreciate self-government and to exercise it properly, and if at that time it was in the interest of all that the land and the privileges were seized by the more fit of the race for the general welfare, this did not mean that matters must so continue forever. It did mean, rather, that with general education and general fitness for self-government all such privileges should be relinquished or abrogated.

THE PROPER PERSPECTIVE OF THE SITUATION

To state the matter in different terms: If the educated in times past believed that they followed the Golden Rule in seizing land and authority, the same Golden Rule would demand that their power be used in the public interest and welfare—that the public be educated and that, as the masses became capable of self-control, power and authority should be gradually delivered to them. The whole question, according to this standard of the Golden Rule, would therefore be, Have the masses yet attained that degree of development which would permit them to handle their own, or should the aristocracy continue to handle it for them under the plea that the public is not competent—not wise enough to manage its own estate?

Whenever the majority of the people reach the conclusion that they are competent to manage their estate, and whenever they learn that God gave the earth and its fulness not to the few, but to the many—then the people will take up their own inheritance and exercise their own control; and in that proportion the titles of lords, nobles, dukes, kings and emperors will be merely empty reminders of a darker time. Thenceforth, either by Parliaments or Congresses, the people will manage their own affairs, using the ballot for that purpose.

This condition of things, which has been coming upon the world gradually, is evidently quite right, quite in accord with the Golden Rule. True, it would have appeared nobler had the titled aristocracy voluntarily surrendered to the people their rights. But we must remember that all mankind are innately selfish, and hence disposed to look upon matters from the standpoint of their own personal interest and that of their families. It has been fortunate for the world's peace that this turning of their rights over to the people has been proceeding gradually, rather than by violent revolution. Inch by inch the people have been taking back their rights, in proportion as they became intelligent enough to appreciate them. Perhaps sometimes in their zeal, they desired too much or sought to grasp too much, or at least sought to grasp more than they were qualified to use wisely.

No wonder if many of the aristocracy feel deeply grieved, as does the Duke of Bedford. No wonder if many of them have dark forebodings respecting the future. No wonder if it seems to them as if justice is being violated. They have lost the proper perspective of the situation. They fail to see that as elder brothers to the remainder of the race, they should recognize that the masses are no longer "like dumb, driven cattle." They should recognize that a great awakening has come within the last century, and they should be as anxious to turn over the inheritance to their brethren as the latter are anxious to receive it.

THE NATIONS HURRYING TO ARMAGEDDON

The political battle which has been in progress in Great Britain in recent years, and especially within the past two years, is exciting the astonishment of the world. Kings and princes and nobles are in alarm, fearful of the results. The Bible alone makes the situation clear. It alone shows us that the wonderful changes of our day are incidental to the transfer of the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdom of God's dear Son.

We should not be misunderstood, however: We have no thought that the change of parties or of party leaders or of party policies in Great Britain, or in any other nation, will make that nation a holy nation, a member of the kingdom of God. Indeed, we have no reason to believe that Socialists as a whole would or could give the world the blessing of perfect earthly government, establish human rights, etc. On the contrary, we are to remember that while kings and princes have ruled sometimes with a heavy hand, nevertheless, in recent years at least, they have found it necessary to give the people and their interests greater consideration than ever before; and that their experience and their education doubtless qualify them above the average of their fellows for the management of large questions of national import.

Besides, the sudden change would involve not only great hardship to these lords of the land, but probably great distress and hardship to the masses as well. Indeed, this is just what the Bible points out to us. We are living in the time of Christ's presence. The selection of the church of Christ to be the bride-consort in the kingdom is nearly completed. The kingdom will, therefore, soon be established. But those possessed of the power and authority, not realizing this, are holding fast to all that was seized by their forefathers under different conditions.

To our understanding, the Bible teaches that this conflict of interests is about to precipitate a great time of trouble, the like of which never was before. (Daniel 12:1) Nobody wants the trouble, everybody will be injured by it, and yet everybody is rushing toward it. Both the aristocracy and the masses are goaded on by fear. The former fear the loss of their earthly all; the latter perceive that the money of the world, and the land, the basis of all wealth, are in possession of the aristocracy.

The masses realize that, with the bountiful blessings which God has been pouring out upon the world during the past century through increase of knowledge and invention, the world is becoming fabulously rich; and that these riches are gravitating toward the same hands that control the land. They are fearful that if they do not improve the opportunities now passing, they or their children will in time again become slaves or serfs. Hence the turmoil of speech and the conflict between classes, which are hurrying us toward the vortex of the great Armageddon.—Revelation 16:16.

MAN'S EXTREMITY GOD'S OPPORTUNITY

Although we are powerless to hinder either party, we are deeply interested in both, and sympathetic toward both; our

own best consolation and the best which we can offer to either party of the strife is that which we get from the Bible. It tells us that in the darkest hour, when human passion will have reached its climax in anarchy, there still will be hope—the brightest of all hopes. Following the dark hour of trouble will come the glorious sunrise of the Millennial kingdom, scattering earth's ignorance and superstition. Then the kingdom, taking a firm hold upon the race, will properly conduct humanity to the full heights of perfection lost in Eden, but redeemed for all at Calvary. With such a hope we may well possess our souls in peace, awaiting so glorious an outcome of the divine plan.

Although we are not to be active in the strife on either side, we cannot be without deep interest in both sides; and we must, to the extent of our opportunities and influence, tell the good tidings of the coming kingdom to as many of the warriors in that battle as may have the hearing ear. To whatever extent they shall be able to hear, to believe, they will have blessing, peace, comfort. It is the portion of the church to be faithful to the principles of the divine character and to make known the divine program, to bind up all the brokenhearted with the blessed message of divine mercy and to teach all the lesson of patient endurance, loyalty and faithfulness. It is ours, as the Apostle says, to "do good unto all men, but especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

Whether or not the climax of this trouble should be reached in 1915, is not for us to say. We should even have no wish on the subject, except that God's will shall be done. As we note the rapid changes which have taken place in the public sentiment in Great Britain within the past year, we cannot doubt that if the Gentile Times expire with the close of this year, 1914, a very short period might accomplish the full inauguration of the day of wrath, in which, as foreshown in Bible imagery, the ecclesiastical heavens and the political earth will be consumed in a wild revolution of human passion, which will thoroughly melt, or disintegrate, the elements composing the present order of things—the social element, the political element, the financial element, the ecclesiastical element. We know, however, that the great God of love is so wise that he has known long in advance every feature of the great conflict and conflagration; and that his arrangements are ample for the arrest of the trouble in due time, by the establishment of the kingdom of his dear Son with great and glorious power.

WE FULFIL OUR PROMISE

We had expected that if the Gentile Times should end with the present year, this would surely mean that all the bride class would participate in the first resurrection change from earthly conditions to heavenly conditions before the end of the present year. Although this was not stated positively, it was pointed out to be the logical conclusion. Now it does not look so. We see Scriptures which are not yet fulfilled and which, we are convinced, could not find accomplishment before the end of this year.

Of course, our conviction along this line is no stronger than it previously was in the opposite direction. Of course, with God all things are possible. Of course, the Scriptures most distinctly tell us that the catastrophe will come suddenly—"as travail upon a woman with child"—at a moment as unexpected to the mother as to others. Hence it is not impossible that all of our expectations may be realized before the end of this year. We consider, however that this is highly improbable. We desire all of our readers to know this, whatever influence it may have upon their plans and arrangements.

As for the Editor, he will be just as pleased to have the Lord's will done in the one way as in the other. Indeed, if allowed to have a voice in the deciding of the matter, we would feel afraid to exercise such a privilege. The poet has expressed the thought, saying:

> "We are afraid to touch
> Things which involve so much."

If the year shall pass without a special manifestation of divine favor toward the church in the way of resurrection change from earthly to spiritual nature, we shall know that we erred in judgment in respect to the time when this glorious event might be expected. The great fact would still remain, however, that the hope of the church of God is the resurrection change, "when this mortal shall put on immortality"—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." If it be the divine arrangement that we should remain longer this side the veil, we doubt not that he will have some service for us to perform here. And whether our service be on this side of the veil or on the other side, we should be fully content, knowing that he is too wise to err; nor should we lament our misunderstandings. Rather, we should be glad and rejoice, and continue active in the divine service, as glad to serve on one side of the veil as on the other, with the assurance that God's will is being done in us.

There is still a possibility that we have made no mistake in respect to the time, but have erred in respect to the things expected. For instance, it may be that the Times of the Gentiles do expire with the present year, but that the Lord will not dispossess them nor take from them their earthly dominion so quickly as we had anticipated. Considering that they have been in power for 2,520 years, dispossession in one year might seem very sudden—indeed, to accomplish it in five, or ten, or twenty years, might seem not an unreasonable time.

WATERS OF EUPHRATES DRYING UP
CHURCH LIFE IN GERMANY

Revelation 16:12

Germany is being overwhelmed with a deluge of infidelity, unparalleled in its entire history. The Monist Federation is endeavoring to draw together the cultured strata of the people into a solid phalanx against Christianity. The Social Democrats are pushing the general masses into a fanatical hatred of church and state, and in the pulpits a Liberalism is spreading, which is almost utterly devoid of the spirit of the Gospel.

While in believing circles earnest efforts are being put forth for individual salvation, and Mission Work is being done amongst the people, to stem the destructive tide, it becomes more evident every day, that "the State Church is doomed in her struggle with Infidelity."

General strike against the church is the latest slogan. The "No-Creeders" (Monists) in league with the Socialists, convened mass meetings in Berlin, Brunswick and Saxony, in which every means of incitation was employed in an appeal toward a secession from the State Church. At these meetings over 1,300 persons signed a declaration announcing their intention to secede from the church. Four thousand more followed, and according to judicial court-records received towards the end of December, 17,000 secessions took place in December up to the 23d, and the day after Christmas 8,000 more announced their intention. These are alarming figures!

To the Socialists the Church Boycott is a political campaign issue. They aim at depriving the church of her revenues and thus result in her overburdening the state.

The following press reports may serve as a typical illustration of the mode of procedure in such meetings. Said Dr. Liebknecht: "The church (especially the Prussian State Church) is not a religious, but a purely political Institution. She constitutes a blasphemy against the claims of early Christianity. She does not aim at the closer union and development of man with man, but is a conscious instrument of the ruling class for the oppression of the masses, and blandly supports the capitalistic element under the protection of the state. As such the church is additionally a bulwark of militarism. On the other hand, the so-called Christian Prussian State is merely a state of classes, reared upon the canonization of those 'treasures which moth and rust corrupt.' To belittle this Prussian State is therefore our aim. One means to that end is a strike en masse, which is inevitable.

"In the meantime, however, the 'Church Boycott' is a still more convenient and none the less effective means as a political onslaught. Thereby the church can eventually be starved financially. Whoever has severed with the church at heart, and continues to remain in her, is a hypocrite. Come out of the Prussian Military church! Away from the church and thus from the Prussian Feudal State!" Thundering applause followed this reasoning.

The second Socialist speaker of the day summed up the matter thus: "Whoever does not secede from the church, with which he has nothing in common, is a scoundrel! Every Socialist must secede, for the church combats Socialism by every available means."

The Post writes: "We attended one of the twelve Mass Meetings convened by the 'No Creeders.' We looked forward beforehand to an uncomfortable evening. Nor shall we say anything respecting the vitriolic remarks of the two speakers, who had not a single commendatory word for the church, and seemed to know only clerics, but no ministers. The painful fact was more than apparent, that Socialism is merely another name for infidelity. But one thing really horrified us: Such a degree of vulgarity, such degeneracy of mind, we had not deemed possible! Without exception, every one who even by vague allusion, ventured to take a stand for his church was howled down, hissed from the rostrum and subjected to filthy invectives. While appealing to the true, inner sentiments of man, supposing that every man must at least hold a faith in something higher, 'Whew'! burst from a thousand throats, piercing whistles were given, and loud hoots and guffaws

greeted such an accession. It seemed as if one were in an assembly of criminals, and not amongst men of feeling and sense.

"To illustrate: When a minister ascended the platform, the following was heard, 'He looks it'! 'Old Sky-pilot'! And from another part of the hall the same evening we heard the following words aimed at the ministers: 'Damned Rags'! 'Pig-priests'! A gentleman who interrupted was yelled at 'Rous mit the Parsonface'! At one time a vulgar interjection reached our ears, one from the 'underworld,' wholly unfit for print.

"The ministers had been invited. A few courageous men ran the gauntlet, and undertook the difficult task of obtaining a hearing amidst these roaring waves. Then one of them ascended the rostrum, a spirited character, whose mild facial expression alone invited reconciliation; with quiet, well-weighed words (Pastor Le Seur from Gross Lichterfeld, Berlin), attempted to make clear to the assembly the seriousness of the problem, with which unscrupulous agitators were here playing football. He frankly admitted that the State Church manifested serious fault. He withdrew amidst a flood of derision, ridicule and insults. Then came a woman of the working class. She yelled to the ministers, who stood close to the speaker's chair: 'I can believe in ten thousand devils in this world, but not in your God, Sir Pastor!' And the masses yelled applause."

In the *Vossische Zeitung*, Prof. Oswald, President of the Monist Federation, expressed the aim which he pursues in the Secessional Movement, as follows: "Thus far all attempts for emancipation from church rule through science have been confined to the comparatively small 'upper strata' of the cultured. The present movement is characterized, in that it takes hold, not only of the influential, but an exceedingly large number of our people, amongst organized labor. If the present movement assumes the proportion of an avalanche, which is very probable, in a short time it will be no more a question of thousands or tens of thousands, but of millions."

In an article, "Decay of the State Church," *Die Welt* writes in conclusion: "The rule of the 'Liberals' incites the 'Positives' to leave the State Church. While on the other side, 'Indifferents' are leaving in ever-increasing numbers. As a result, we may finally reach a state of things in Berlin, when the State Church will collapse."—Translation from *Der Apologete*, Cincinnati, Ohio.

"NOW IS OUR SALVATION NEARER"

St. Paul wrote, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed." (Romans 13:11.) God's people of today are surely justified in expressing the same sentiments. The salvation of the church through the glorious "change" of the first resurrection is nearing every day, we are sure, even though we do not know exactly how many days still remain before that glorious consummation. So also the world's salvation—the world's rescue from Satan, sin and death—is nearing every day, notwithstanding the fact that we cannot say positively just what day or hour Satan will be fully bound for a thousand years and the Messianic blessings begin to supplant and to roll away the curse which for six thousand years has rested as a great pall over humanity—a dark night, soon to give place to the glorious Millennial day and the bright-shining of Messiah's kingdom.

Nothing could shake our faith in the divine plan of the ages epitomized in God's great oath-bound Covenant made with Abraham, confirmed unto Isaac and Jacob and Israel. There is absolutely no ground for questioning that all the families of the earth will eventually be blessed. There is no room to doubt that God has laid a broad foundation for that blessing in the sending of his Son, who became man's Redeemer. There is no reason for questioning the fact that the church for more than eighteen centuries has been called out of the world to be sharer with her Lord in the sufferings of this present time and in the glories that are to follow.

There is absolutely no question about the fact that "faithful is he who called us, who also will do it." We have his promise that "if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ" our Lord. We have the divine Word that Jesus the Head and the church his body, Jesus the Bridegroom and the church his bride, constitute the antitypical spiritual seed of Abraham, through whom, when glorified, God's blessing will be poured upon humanity. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29), which promise reads, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."—Genesis 12:3; 28:14.

There is absolutely no ground for Bible students to question that the consummation of this Gospel age is now even at the door, and that it will end as the Scriptures foretell in a great time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. We see the participants in this great crisis banding themselves together under the leadership of Capital and Trusts, Labor and Trade Unions. The great crisis, the great clash, symbolically represented as a fire, that will consume the ecclesiastical heavens and the social earth, is very near.

But when we have said this we have said about all that it is safe or proper for us to say. We have never claimed inspiration nor prophetic vision. All that we have ever claimed is that "Wonderful things in the Bible we see," and that the dearest is the love of the heavenly Father and our heavenly Lord Jesus, and that the time for the establishment of the kingdom is very nigh.

CHRONOLOGY BASED UPON FAITH

We remind our readers here that in these columns and in the six volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES we have set forth everything appertaining to the times and seasons in a tentative form; that is to say, not with positiveness, not with the claim that we knew, but merely with the suggestion that "thus and so" seems to be the teaching of the Bible. The Berean Lessons are running now in Volume second of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES in order that all of our readers may have fresh in mind, the Bible chronology as furnished there in Chapter II. We have pointed out that the chronology is the basis of nearly all the suggestions of prophetic interpretations set forth in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. We have pointed out there that the chronology of the Bible is not stated with great clearness, that fractions of years are ignored and that there are certain breaks in it.

We have suggested that ordinarily the chronology would be quite insufficient as evidence and that our acceptance of it is based on faith—on the supposition that God wished to give us a chronology, wished that we might have some knowledge of the times and seasons, and yet wished that it might be so obscure and indefinite as to require faith on the part of his people. We pointed out further that we could not exercise that faith were it not for the fact that this chronology seems to be interwoven and interlocked with numerous prophecies—and these prophecies, in turn, interwoven and interlocked with other prophecies and fulfilments not dependent upon the chronology. Having thus set the matter before the minds of our readers, we asked each to judge for himself as to how much faith he would repose in the chronology and in the application of the prophecies connected with it. We announced that to our own mind it seemed reasonable to accept the chronology and the prophecies from this viewpoint.

Having laid this broad foundation, having put all of our readers on notice to use their own judgment, we proceeded to use this chronology in connection with the various prophecies, drawing various hypotheses and conclusions. We did not in any case remind the reader afresh that all these conclusions were based upon the chronology, and that the chronology is admittedly supported by faith. We assumed that all intelligent readers realized this, and that all such were using their own judgment, not ours, in respect to the chronology and in respect to the applications of the prophecies along the lines of that chronology. We ask you all still to do this.

The chronology still seems as strong as ever to the Editor. He sees nothing to alter or amend. Nevertheless, the Editor wishes to put all THE WATCH TOWER readers on notice, as he already has done twice this year, that to his judgment it now seems unreasonable to expect during the present year all that he had anticipated, as suggested previously. He sees no possibility that the Church Federation will reach its climax of organization and power, and then reach its fall, during the remaining months of this year. And he surely looks for this to occur prior to the full ending of this Gospel age and the glorification of the last members of the church, which is the body of Christ.

This does not prove the chronology wrong, nor does it prove that the Times of the Gentiles do not end with this year. It may be that Gentile Times will end before the ecclesiastical oligarchy attains sacerdotal power. We must wait and see. The Lord is still our Shepherd. No good thing will he withhold from those who follow him as his sheep, harkening to his voice and ignoring the voice of strangers. His prom-

ises will stand sure, and these, as all other things, shall work together for good to those who love him—the called ones according to his purpose.—Romans 8:28.

A SCRIPTURE TO BE FULFILLED

The Lord declares through the Prophet David (Psalm 149:5-9): "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgments written. This honor have all his saints." Heretofore we had not questioned that this description of the glory of the saints applied to them beyond the veil—beyond the completion of the first resurrection. But a more careful investigation of the words forewarns us that we may not be too sure in such a supposition. We suggest as a bare possibility that a time may come when a part of the saints will be in glory beyond the veil, and when those on this side the veil in the flesh will enter very fully into the joys of their Lord and into participation in his work.

If we interpret the statement, "let them sing aloud upon their beds," in harmony with the significance of similar statements elsewhere in the Scriptures, the expression would signify that the saints in glory will be telling the good tidings of great joy—singing, presenting in melodious cadences the messages which none can learn except the one hundred and forty-four thousand. But the word beds here, in harmony with usage elsewhere in the Bible, would signify a rest of faith—that these saints were at rest in the midst of conditions to the contrary. This could hardly be the case if the reference be to those who have experienced the first resurrection "change." Theirs will not be a rest of faith, but an absolute entering into rest.

Again, while the high praises of God are in their mouth they have the two-edged sword in their hand, according to the prophecy. This "two-edged sword" is evidently, as elsewhere, the Word of God. We can scarcely imagine the saints beyond the veil as handling the Word of God. On the contrary, this would seem to imply that the saints described are on this side of the veil, using the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, in connection with the showing of high praise to God—clearing his name from the dishonor attached to it through the ignorance, superstition and creeds of the dark ages.

The next statement, that these saints will use the "sword" to execute vengeance upon the Gentiles and punishments upon the people [of Israel], seems to imply that these saints, whatever their condition, will be in authority; for the Scriptural injunction to them elsewhere is that they should "judge nothing before the time." This Psalm, therefore, describes the time when they are to do a judging work in respect to the world in general, as well as in respect to Israel, God's people.

A SOMEWHAT SIMILAR SCRIPTURE

A somewhat similar description of The Christ in glory is given us in Revelation 19:11, where he that is called "Faithful and True" goes forth in righteousness to judge and make war. The heavenly armies follow him (V. 14), and out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations.—V. 15.

We know not why this prophecy speaks of heavenly armies—in the plural. We merely suggest that the heavenly army may possibly be in two divisions—one on this side of the veil, the other on the other side of the veil. We are waiting to see, and merely watching while we wait, and noting with possibly still greater care our Father's Word. We may be sure that if any commission be given to the Lord's people to execute judgment this side of the veil it would be so explicit as to leave no room for doubt, remembering that the divine requirement throughout the age has been that the saints of God shall be subject to the powers that be. Any change from this order to the effect that we should execute judgments upon them will need to be very positively and very clearly understood before being executed.

Just how the kings and nobles—financial, political and social—will be bound, and just what kinds of fetters of strength will be used, we may not know until qualified; but the outworking of all these will be, as expressed in Psalm 149:9, "to execute upon them the vengeance written; this honor have all of God's saints." Whether we participate in this work on this side of the veil or on the other side makes no difference to us. In any event, whatever we shall do at any time under the guidance of the Lord's holy Spirit will be in harmony with justice and all the time intermingled with sympathetic love. None except those possessing and controlled by this, the holy Spirit of God, will ever be permitted participation in the kingdom glories and power.

"Be patient and submissive—strength is given
For every step along the weary way.
And for it all thou'lt render praise to heaven,
When dreary night gives place to perfect day.

"Yes, perfect day, the day of God eternal,
When not a shadow shall flit o'er the scene
In that fair land where all is bright and vernal,
And we will be with Christ and naught between.

"Wait, then, dear heart; control thy sad emotion;
God will subdue each angry wind and wave;
And when the voyage ends across life's ocean
Within the haven of sweet rest will save."

THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION

We are being swamped with applications for the Photo-Drama. Evidently the whole country wants it. Not only is our supply of pictures inadequate, but we could not have nearly enough operators to meet the demand; and the rent for the theatres would be impossible for us to pay.

Under these conditions we shall be limited at first to the larger places. Later on, the Drama can be extended to smaller places. But do not expect too much; we cannot work miracles. Before the summer is ended we hope to have the work so expanded as to be able to reach many more cities and towns. Our plan for the present must be to prepare duplications of the Drama and to offer it free with booth operator to such cities as indicate their ability, willingness and desire to furnish suitable auditoriums, supply ushers, etc. Please exercise a little patience. Be assured the Society is doing all in its power to serve you and the truth. Do not spend money going afar to see the Drama, but save your dimes to assist in getting it to your own town.

We are pleased to remark that the public is taking a deep interest in the Drama, recognizing its educational value, the beauty of the pictures and the wider scope which it gives of human history. Unencumbered brethren of fair education and of experience as newspaper writers may be used in the work. We shall be glad to hear from volunteers.

WHO COMMITS THE SIN UNTO DEATH?—PART II

Besides the two classes of those who are saved among the spirit-begotten, there is a third class—those who go into the second death. The "sin unto death" is not only a failure to do something which is good, but a positive doing of something which is evil. The great company do not turn to wallow in the mire of sin; but this class now spoken of is a class of spirit-begotten ones that gradually turn from their covenant until they fall away entirely. They become covenant-breakers. They have covenanted to lay down their lives, and then they break that covenant, and turn again to sin and to hopeless darkness. This course, being a sin against clear light and knowledge, is a sin unto death.

Who or what is it that sins the sin unto death? "Whosoever is begotten of God doth not commit sin [wilfully]; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin." That which is begotten of God is the new mind, the new will; and the person having that new will, desiring to be in harmony with God, cannot sin the sin unto death as long as he has the mind, the will, the Spirit, of God. As long as his will is in harmony with God he cannot sin with wilfulness and desire. He cannot be in harmony with sin. The new mind cannot consent to sin. If there be a consent to sin, it is an evidence that the old mind has taken control.

We may understand the subject more clearly, perhaps, by considering the action of Congress. Suppose that the Republicans represent the natural man, and that the Republican party had had domination for a long time. Then there came a change of administration. There was a new sentiment, a new mind, there were new aspirations. Another party was in power, and the majority of Congress became Democratic. What made the change in the action of Congress? It was the new vote. The majority carried the day, and decided upon a Democratic form of government to control our Legislative Body. But if Congress should again change and vote the old way, it would no longer be Democratic.

Just so the new creature came into control of our mortal

bodies. Then if the new will should again change, and advocate as before the things of the flesh, the new creature is changed again into the old creature. It is not the new creature, however, that is wallowing in sin. The will has committed the sin unto death. THE NEW CREATURE IS DEAD.

ESAU'S LOSS A WARNING TO THE CHURCH

The illustration used by the Apostle Paul of Esau's seeking vainly with tears to regain his lost birthright, has a lesson of deep interest for us. It may be applied in one way to the condition of the Jewish people, who, having lost the great privilege, or opportunity, of becoming the spiritual Israel of God, could not get again, as a people, the lost opportunity. That privilege had gone from them; they could not recover it, although this would not hinder any individual Jew from becoming repentant and from becoming personally a member of the church class.

However, the Apostle's words (Hebrews 12:16, 17) seem to apply especially to the church, and to our danger of losing our birthright, as new creatures. Esau, "for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." He typified those Christians who barter their glorious inheritance as prospective heirs of the divine nature and the Messianic kingdom for the enjoyment of the fleeting pleasures of the present life—"a mess of pottage!"

WHO COMMITS THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

As to the general proposition respecting unpardonable sin, we have endeavored to point out in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES that sins are unpardonable in proportion as they are wilful. The only ones, however, who can commit a fully unpardonable sin are those who have come into the church—who have made a consecration of their life and have been begotten of the holy Spirit. If such should fall away, it would be a final matter.

Before coming into Christ, before receiving the holy Spirit, transgressions might have been committed, but these transgressions would not have the same degree of responsibility as would those of a consecrated Christian; for after one has come into the Lord's family, there is an increase of light and knowledge, and therefore there comes increased responsibility. The Lord said that those who knew his will and did it not would receive many stripes; but those who knew it not and did it not would receive fewer stripes. Many of the Lord's people have committed more or less wilful sins, and have received stripes more or less severe.

The Scriptures tell of a degree of wilful sin that would be unto death, and such sin is mentioned as a sin against the holy Spirit. This, we understand, is a sin against clear knowledge—a perception of the wrong, and a transgression of God's law wilfully, deliberately. The Jews who crucified Christ sinned against light and had great responsibility. However, the Apostle Peter says, "I wot, brethren, that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." (Acts 3:17) They realized not that they were crucifying the Lord of glory. But if any begotten of the holy Spirit should join in any similar crime, we understand that this would be a different matter. The penalty upon such spiritually enlightened ones would be nothing short of the second death.

The Apostle Paul points out why the church can sin this sin unto death. He says that if we sin wilfully, after we have received a knowledge of the truth, and have tasted the good Word of God, and have been made partakers of the holy Spirit —if then we should fall away (not if we should stumble, but if we should completely fall away, turning again to sin), it would be like a sow that was washed which returned again to wallow in the mire. In such case, the transgression would be to the full.

DID ADAM SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT?

In answering this question we need to have a clear conception of what constitutes the holy Spirit. The Scriptural answer is that the holy Spirit, in one of God's intelligent creatures, is the spirit of sonship. The brute creation do not have this spirit of sonship. They were not made in the moral image of the Creator. The angels have the spirit of sonship. Adam was created in the moral image and likeness of his Creator—a son of God. Therefore we should understand that he had this Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of sonship.

When Adam became disobedient, it meant a forfeiture of the Spirit of sonship, and the casting of him out from all relationship to the Father. And this relationship to God was forfeited for all his posterity. But God has made an arrangement by which Adam may come back to him—and all his children may come, if they will. This operation of uplifting and restoring mankind is in the Scriptures spoken of as an impartation, or pouring out, of the holy Spirit.

This has not yet come to the world, but is now fulfilled in the church. The church, accepted to a new nature, under certain special conditions are, during this Gospel age, begotten to sonship and are classed as sons of God. This receiving of the church into the relationship of sons now, and the blessing of the world later, is referred to in the prophecy of Joel. There the Prophet speaks of the Lord as "in those days," pouring out his Spirit upon his servants and handmaids; and he declares that, afterwards, he will pour out his Spirit upon all flesh—that they also may come back into sonship, into relationship with God.—Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-18.

Adam had the Spirit of God. It was received in a natural way; and had it not been for the fall, this condition would have been maintained, just as with the holy angels. These angels, not having forfeited this relationship, need not a special impartation of the holy Spirit.

COULD ADAM HAVE REPENTED?

Would it have been possible for Adam to repent, after committing this wilful sin? The word repentance may be used in two different ways. We frequently use the word to mean penitence, sorrow over a fault, etc., but this common use of the word is not its full import. It means to get back, to return to a former condition; or to take an opposite course from that in which one has been going. Adam could have repented in the sense of being penitent; but he could not have repented in the sense of getting back to the place where he was before he sinned. That would require the paying the price of his sin by another. St. Paul said of Esau, that he was a "profane person," and "that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." (Hebrews 12:17) Esau found plenty of opportunity to cry and to be sorry; but he did not find an opportunity to get back that which he had forfeited. And so with Adam.

But such inability to repent is entirely different from what the Apostle means in speaking of the church. He says, "If we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." (Hebrews 10:26, 27) There could be no repentance for these. Their hearts have become too hardened. They cannot be renewed unto repentance. (Hebrews 6:4-8) But the provision for Adam is God's arrangement that Christ should taste death for him. But now, Christ dieth no more; therefore, whoever receives once the benefit of Christ's death and misuses it, comes under the sentence of death a second time, and from this, the second death, there is no recovery.

GROUNDLESS FEARS OF SOME

We believe that the majority of people who think they have committed the sin unto death are merely being tormented by fears; and that in most cases they need only to have better instruction respecting the Lord, his character and arrangement. We have had people come to us in great terror of mind, believing that they had committed the sin unto death, and that there was no hope for their reconciliation to God. Sometimes they have merely told us of their fears, and we were puzzled; for their apparent penitence and regret were favorable signs. In some instances, where they have told us the facts of the case, we have been able in five minutes to relieve them entirely, and to show them that they had altogether misunderstood the matter. This gave them much peace. One person told us that the trouble had lasted for eighteen years. Since then this person has been rejoicing in the Lord and serving him very acceptably.

But the proper thought is that one could not be brought back if he were of the kind that have wilfully and deliberately renounced the Lord. God is looking for a loyal people; and if any show wilful, intentional disobedience, they would not be fit to live at all. However, when we see repentance, we may take a hopeful view.

SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT UNFORGIVABLE

We are to recognize a difference between a sin against the holy Spirit and the sin unto death. In other words, a sin against the holy Spirit may be of various degrees of heinousness in the sight of God. We might think of small sins and of great sins against the holy Spirit. No sin against the holy Spirit is forgivable. But some of these sins might be punished with stripes, and others with death.

The holy Spirit of sonship was not possessed by the Pharisees, to whom Jesus directed his words. But they had some knowledge of the light of the holy Spirit in our Lord's person. The holy Spirit was manifest in him in a remarkable degree. The Jews were in different degrees of condemnation, in proportion as they had the eyes of their understanding open. Those who received a little knowledge, and refused that little, had less responsibility than those who saw more and refused it. And

those who misrepresented him were not so much sinning against him as against the holy Spirit in him.

Our Lord said that all manner of sin and blasphemy would be forgiven men except a sin against the holy Spirit. This would not be forgiven them. The Pharisees, not having been received into God's family, nevertheless had a large measure of light, and therefore a large measure of responsibility. And when they, with much light, misrepresented it, this showed a measure of wilfulness on their part which, Jesus said, would be sure to have punishment. Very few, we may say, at that time, had so full a knowledge that they could be culpable in the fullest sense.

THE SIN OF JUDAS

The sin unto death is a full sin against the holy Spirit, the sin against full light and knowledge, deliberate, wilful sin. We know of only one person who had such full light and full opportunity prior to our Lord's resurrection and the coming of the Pentecostal blessing; and that one person was Judas. His special light consisted in that he not only saw Jesus and saw his miracles, and was a witness of his noble character, but Judas had himself received of this holy Spirit by impartation from Jesus, and had used it, casting out demons, etc.

Jesus said, "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born!" (Mark 14:21) Judas had a sufficiency of light, not to condemn him merely to stripes and punishment, but so to condemn him that he would have no further opportunity and hope. He had sinned against very great light. Aside from Judas we know of no other who has ever sinned the sin unto death, except those who may have proven unfaithful after having been begotten of the holy Spirit as new creatures, and who had thus received the mind of God, the holy Spirit.

TREATMENT OF SPIRITUAL SICKNESS

The Scriptures also imply that any who have gotten into a condition of very low spirituality might have a possibility of recovery, not through themselves, but through the ministry of faithful ones of the royal priesthood. The Apostle James speaks of some who are "sick." He says to let such a one call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, and that the prayer of faith shall recover him to God's fellowship—and he adds: "He that converteth [recovereth] a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death." (James 5:20) Apparently that soul is in death's throes; but if he manifest a sufficiency of faith, and will call in some true brethren and humbly confess his sin and ask for prayers, he would seem to be taking a step that would be considered favorably by the Lord, who might give him a further opportunity and trial.

Our thought is that, ordinarily, there would be no need for the individual to confess his trespasses to any one, unless it were to a person who had been trespassed against, and to whom, therefore, apologies would be due. Otherwise our sins are to be confessed only unto the Lord, unless under extreme circumstances, where one had lost fellowship with the Lord, and felt that there was nothing for him otherwise but complete alienation from God. In the latter case, we would advise such a brother to call in the elders of the church and make a confession, that his sin against the holy Spirit may be canceled.

LYING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Some have asked: Was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira unpardonable? We answer, It was an unpardonable sin; for Ananias and Sapphira are both still lying dead. They may have some future opportunity, so far as we know. It is not for us to determine the degree of wilfulness connected with their wrong-doing. The Lord only would be able to know, and he has not yet manifested his decision. It may be that they were merely cut off from the present life, and will have some opportunity in the future. If they were really begotten of the holy Spirit, this could not be; for all those who are to have a part in the little flock or the great company receive their chastisements and purifying experiences in this life, and none of them will receive any punishment in the future life. The Apostle says we will not come into condemnation with the world. We receive our trial for life or death everlasting in the present time.

In the day of the Apostles, when a partial community of interest was established, a number of the faithful sold possessions and contributed to the general fund. Although there was nothing compulsory upon any in respect to this selling of property and giving to the common treasury, the very fact that those who did so were highly esteemed in the church would naturally become a snare to some who, without the real spirit of helpfulness and sacrifice, would desire to have the approbation of the brethren.

STARTLING RESULTS OF WILFUL DECEPTION

Ananias and Sapphira were of this class, desirous of the approval of the church, yet deficient in the real spirit of sacrifice. They had a property which they determined to sell; and in order to pose before the believers as saints of a high order, they pretended to give to the general fund the full amount received from the property. Secretly, however, they had much less generous sentiments. They agreed together that they would retain part of the sale-money for future contingencies, yet would pass as sacrificers to the full amount.

The wrong of their course is manifest. As the Apostle Peter declared, the property was their own, and after they had sold it they still had a right to do as they pleased with the proceeds. But they should have been honest about the transaction, and if they wished to give a tenth, a half, or all of the amount, it was a matter of their own business alone, and no one would have had the least right to find fault with or criticize them. The entire wrong consisted in the deception practised—the palming off of a part of the price as the whole, for the purpose of deceiving the church and of gaining applause for an amount of sacrifice more than they made. As St. Peter said, they lied, not to man, but to the holy Spirit of God. In this, and in this alone, consisted the sin for which they died.

The record is that "great fear came upon all the company" —great reverence for God and for the apostles, his representatives. It brought also a realization that consecrations to the Lord were far from meaningless forms. This meant, not only to those who had already espoused the Lord's cause, but also to all who for some time thereafter would identify themselves with the church, that any who were insincere would best make no pretensions to discipleship. Quite probably the influence of the lesson lasted for a considerable time—during the lives of the apostles.

We may consider a lesson which may properly be learned from this incident of the past by the Lord's consecrated people of today. The lesson is that God desires "truth in the inward parts"—in the heart—and that any who have not this quality —candor, honesty, truthfulness—cannot be pleasing to God; and therefore cannot share in the glories to be dispensed shortly to the elect class of this Gospel age.—Psalm 51:6.

As we look at ourselves, we come to realize how imperfect are all the members of the fallen race; and when we consider God's perfection, we can conceive of only one quality that the fallen creature could possess that would meet with divine approval. That one quality is honesty. The true Christian must, in honesty, confess his own shortcomings, his own deficiencies. He must, in honesty, acknowledge that his sufficiency is of God, through Christ, and not of himself. He must honestly strive for the standard set before him in the Gospel. He must honestly admit that he cannot do the things that he would. He must candidly and fully accept the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, as the covering for his blemishes. We are inclined to the belief that the greatest sin in the church—amongst the consecrated believers—is the sin of dishonesty; the sin for which divine disapproval is so excellently illustrated in the case of Ananias and Sapphira.

This is an individual matter still, as it was in the days of the apostles. Each individual of the Lord's people must answer for his own course, to the Lord himself. It therefore behooves all who are seeking divine approval, to see to it that they are not influenced by the prevalent disposition to hypocrisy, but that they deal with the Lord in purity and honesty of heart. They should see to it that, having covenanted to give to God and his service their all, they keep nothing back, but consider that their time, their influence, their means, their lives, are fully devoted to the Lord, and that they use these as his—as they believe he would wish to have them used—as faithful stewards.

"WHERE ARE THE NINE?"

MAY 31.—Luke 17:11-19.

"Were there none found that returned to give glory to God, save this alien?"—V. 18.

The essence of our lesson for today is gratitude. It is a most reasonable trait of character and is frequently found even in the brute creation. It is impossible to imagine a perfect human being or an angel acceptable to God without this quality. We might almost say that the degree of our acceptance with God is measured by our gratitude. It leads to obedience to the divine laws and regulations, whether understood or not. It leads to self-sacrificing labors in the service of God, and according to a divine automatic arrangement has its blessings

Our lesson tells us that the Savior was approaching Jeru-

salem by way of Samaria and Galilee. It is surmised that this was his last journey to Jerusalem, which eventuated in his death. His fame had spread abroad; and ten lepers sitting by the roadside heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. Immediately they called to him as loudly as the hoarse whisper of their disease would permit. Ordinarily their appeal was for money; but in this case it was, "Master, have mercy upon us!"

Lepers are a class greatly to be pitied. Their disease has long been considered incurable, and hence in the Bible it is symbolically used to represent sin. It is an affection which seems to corrupt the blood. The joints twist, decay and slough off. Under the regulations prevailing at the time of our lesson, lepers were forbidden to enter the cities, under the penalty of thirty-nine strokes from a rod. They had no means of earning a living, and were always dependent upon the charity of their friends or the public. Nor were they allowed to approach others nearer than about one hundred and fifty feet, for fear of contamination. Theirs was a living death.

The ten mentioned in this lesson were drawn together by their common trouble which ignored the racial barriers between Jews and Samaritans. In answer to their cry for help, Jesus, although full of compassion, seemed to treat their appeal coldly. He merely said to them, "Go show yourselves unto the priests." According to God's arrangement with the Jews under their Law Covenant, they were to have no sicknesses except as these should represent sins; and the priests were to pass judgment upon cases of leprosy, determining whether or not the disease were indeed leprosy, etc. Our Lord's direction that the lepers go and show themselves to the priests implied a healing, and suggested that by the time that they should reach the priest they would be ready to have him pronounce them clean.

The lepers must have had considerable knowledge of the power of Jesus, and must have exercised great faith; for instead of crying out for instantaneous healing, they followed his direction and started for the priest to have an inspection. Doubtless they hoped that by the time they should reach him they would be well and would receive a bill of health. They had gone but a short distance when they found themselves cured. We can well imagine with what joy they hastened to have the priest approve them in order to return to their families, their business, etc. Surely they almost ran, as they felt the exhilaration of the cleansed blood! But one of them slowed up and then turned back; probably the others in their exuberance did not notice this. Back he came and fell at the feet of Jesus, giving him thanks. His was a grateful heart, and we cannot doubt that he will receive a blessing eventually, though he did not receive it then, for he was a Samaritan, an alien, a foreigner from the commonwealth of Israel.

ANOTHER CRUMB OF FAVOR

In his case, the healing was a "crumb from the children's table;" for the rich man had not yet died—God's favor had not yet departed from Israel. Jesus had not yet uttered the fateful words, "Your house is left unto you desolate." Nay, the favor to Israel continued three and a half years after their house was left desolate—individual favor. It was three and a half years after the death of Jesus before the individual favor to the Jews terminated to such an extent as to permit the Gospel to go to the Gentiles—Cornelius being the first to be accepted into fellowship with God.—Acts 10.

Had the returning one been a Jew instead of a Samaritan, no doubt he would have been invited by Jesus to become one of his followers—"Come, take up thy cross and follow me!" But because he was a Samaritan, Jesus merely said to him, "Arise and go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." We cannot doubt, however, that the Lord's providence followed this grateful Samaritan; and that when the time came for the opening of the door to the Gentiles, he was amongst those who gladly received the message, and made a consecration to become an heir of God and joint-heir with Jesus Christ our Lord to the heavenly inheritance.

We are not to understand that our Lord's words, "Thy faith hath made thee whole," meant that it was the man's faith aside from divine power that made him whole, but rather that it was the Master's using the divine power in connection with the faith of the individual. The power of God and the faith of the man co-operated for his healing. They did the same for the nine others who were healed. They also had faith and were healed, and as Jews under the Law Covenant, they had more ground for asking forgiveness and healing than had the Samaritan.

TEN HEALED—WHERE ARE THE NINE?

Jesus called public attention to the fact that ten were healed, but that only one had returned to give glory to God. True, he had not asked them to come back and offer praise and acknowledge the divine power wrought through him! True, they did what he told them to do—went and showed themselves to the priest—and no more, going then about their business.

Why did he not, before granting the healing, bargain with them, saying, If I heal you, will you consecrate your lives and become my disciples? Undoubtedly they would have agreed to this arrangement. Who would not agree to any terms to be rid of so loathsome and incurable a disease? Why did not Jesus take this method of adding to the number of his disciples? Undoubtedly the answer should be that he was following the spirit of the Father's dealings, which he expressed in the words, "The Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth." As the Father seeks no others, so the Son seeks no others.

In this respect the preaching of Jesus and the apostles is in strong contrast with much of the preaching of evangelists, revivalists, etc. Never did Jesus or the apostles urge worldly people to become disciples of Christ. They merely preached, or declared, certain great facts, and accepted those who came under that kind of preaching, influenced by the great facts set forth. They reasoned of sin, of righteousness and of a coming time of decision, or judgment, and left the matter with the individual conscience. They stated that those who forsake sin and turn to God may have forgiveness and reconciliation through the merit of the blood of Christ. They told of a high, or heavenly, call for all such penitents who would consecrate their lives wholly to the service of God, truth and righteousness, willing to endure hardness as good soldiers.

We remember that on one occasion Jesus apparently reproved even a spirit of enthusiasm that might beeloud the cool judgment, saying, "Sit down and count the cost." (Luke 14:28) It has pleased God through the preaching of the truth to call out the class which he desires to be joint-heirs with his Son. They are not to be brought into the family of God by prayers or by excitement, but by the declaration of the divine terms and conditions. To such as accept the grace of God the urgent message goes out that they receive it not in vain; that, having put their hand to the plow, they do not look back; that, having enlisted as good soldiers of the Cross, they endure hardness, rejoicing in the privilege of service and sacrifice.

The point we make is that according to the Bible, no attempts were ever made by Jesus and his apostles to obtain recruits for the army of the Lord by a "hip-hip-hurrah" process. In this we are not criticising others, but merely calling attention to facts which have much to do with the guidance of all God's people who seek to know and to do his will.

OTHER TENS, HUNDREDS, THOUSANDS

Let us view the incident of our lesson symbolically. Let the lepers represent sinners who, coming to realize themselves unclean, cry out to the Lord for cleansing, thus impliedly acknowledging his greatness and power as the Son of God, through whom only is forgiveness of sin, and impliedly declaring themselves as desiring to be his followers, his disciples, persuaded that sin is injurious and resolved thereafter to walk in the Lord's footsteps, fighting against sin in themselves and everywhere. How many of the tens, the hundreds, the thousands, whose devotion and faith the Lord has accepted—how many whom he has healed, forgiven and received according to their profession of discipleship—really have become his true followers?

How many who have declared to the Lord their unhappiness, their desire for forgiveness of sins, and promised life-long gratitude and devotion to him, to have his favor, have forgotten their privileges; and after receiving a blessing have gone, one to his field, another to his merchandise, another to pleasure, another to formalism! How few have remembered their prayers to the Lord for mercy, their resolutions in respect to what they would do if their prayers were answered!

A REVIVAL IS IN ORDER

Many Christian people are growing in the opinion that we are living today in a time of crucial trial as respects those who have made a covenant with God. They believe that we are nearing the time when the church, the body of Christ, will be received by the Lord in the resurrection change to be his bride. As the Apostle wrote, "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The call of this Gospel age has been to the finding of these who are to constitute the bride class, the associates of Jesus in his kingdom.

Of the Jews Jesus said, in a time of testing in the end of their age, "They knew not the time of their visitation." Only the comparatively few were in the heart condition of nearness to God which enabled them to understand the character of the times in which they were living and the change which was in progress. The thought is that a similar change is upon us now, which is being discerned by those who have had the eyes of their understanding opened.

The Samaritan in our lesson seems to represent a class of grateful followers of the Lord who seek to give him glory in

their words, thoughts and doings, while the majority of those who have similarly received his favor are disposed to pursue the ambitions and pleasures of the present life. Neglecting to take the path which the Master trod, they will not reach the glory, honor and immortality which he attained and to which he has called this class. A lower place must be for them. In a little while, according to the Bible, the glories of the kingdom will be revealed to an astonished world, but the glories of the present condition of affairs will fade away.

The true wisdom that cometh from above was manifested by our Savior, who counted not his life dear unto him, who freely made himself of no reputation that he might do the Father's will, and who is now highly exalted as a reward. St. Paul expressed the same thought, saying that he counted all things as but loss and dross that he might win a place in the body of Christ—the church in glory beyond the veil. Great as will be the blessings of the Millennial kingdom to the world, the blessings which the church will have will be transcendently better.

MESSIAH'S KINGDOM TO BE INVISIBLE

JUNE 7.—Luke 17:20-37.

"Behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst."—V. 21.

Our understanding of the Master's words depends considerably upon the setting in which we see them. John the Baptist preceded Jesus and preached the kingdom of God at hand. In due time he pointed out Jesus as the Messiah that should come, the Lamb of God. After waiting for months for Jesus to establish himself as an earthly king, and finding instead that his own work was closing, he was put into prison by Herod. John then sent to Jesus to inquire whether or not he was the one that should come or whether they should look for another. He was disappointed in not seeing evidences of the kingdom, as he had expected.

The scribes and the Pharisees heard of the claim that Jesus was the long-promised King who would set up his Messianic kingdom, and they derided him. They looked at his motley company of followers—publicans and sinners as well as honorable people, but none of special rank, influence or wealth. They considered Jesus a deceiver and his followers dupes. Our lesson tells how they attempted to expose what they supposed was a deception of Jesus, thus to turn away the delusion of his followers. Therefore they asked him in public the question, When will God's kingdom come? How long will it be before you set it up?

Doubtless they purposed to entrap Jesus; for if he should say, A long time, his followers would be disheartened; if he should say, A short time, they would proceed to query, Where will you get your army? How will you pay your soldiers? How will you supply them with food? Will you go to Rome to battle with the powers that be, that our whole nation has been unable to cope with? etc.

But these Pharisees got only as far as their first question, because the answer to it confuted them, and no doubt perplexed them. Jesus answered that God's kingdom would not come with observation; that is to say, when the kingdom should come, people would not see it. Proceeding, Jesus elaborated, saying that when the kingdom of God should be established, people would not see whether it was here or there; for the kingdom of God would be the power of God exerted everywhere in the midst of the people.

Our translation is faulty, though evidently not intentionally so, when it reads, "For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." The translators, had they noticed carefully, would have been on guard against saying that the kingdom of God was within those Pharisees that Jesus had designated hypocrites, whited sepulchres, etc. A closer examination of the original would have shown that the text would better be translated, "The kingdom of God is in your midst."

A kingdom is always represented by its king. Jesus, as the King, was present in their midst, but they did not recognize him. "There standeth One among you whom ye know not." Similarly, all through the Gospel age, the church of Christ, his "body," has been undiscerned by the world. "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not." For eighteen hundred years this has been true in this sense; but Christ and the church in the flesh are not the kingdom of God in the full, proper sense that the Bible promises it—a kingdom of power and great glory. Christ and the church have been only the incipient kingdom, an embryotic kingdom—the kingdom class, preparing for investiture of authority in God's due time, which we believe is now near.

The kingdom is to be a spiritual one, and hence its rulers will be as invisible as are the angels and the heavenly Father. Jesus declared, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more." What was true of the Head will be true of every member of the elect body of Christ, the church. "Changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," the world will see them no more; "for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," and flesh and blood cannot see that which is spiritual.

During the Millennium, the kingdom authority and power of God through Christ and the church will be exercised amongst men; and yet they will not see it with the natural eye, but merely with the eyes of their understanding. All the blind eyes will be opened. Thus every eye will see that the kingdom is established; and every one will understand that he who suffered has entered into his glory, that the church, his bride, is with him in glory, and that the blessings of the Millennium proceed from them.—Revelation 20:6.

"DAYS OF THE SON OF MAN"

Turning from the silenced Pharisees to his disciples, Jesus said, "The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and ye shall not see it." This was astonishing news to the faithful. Yet they were accustomed to hearing from the Master things which they could not understand; such as that they must eat of his flesh and drink of his blood, that he must be crucified, etc. They took all these things figuratively and wondered what might be the real interpretation. How could Jesus be the great King, as they had expected, and yet they not see him and his days?

Jesus continued to discuss the enigma, saying, "They shall say to you, See here; or, See there: go not after them, nor follow." In a word, do not believe anybody who will thus tell you about my second coming; do not be deceived into believing that I will come in any such manner. I will tell you how I shall come: "As the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, and shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of Man be in his day."

This astounding statement is better understood when we translate the Greek noun *astrape* as "shining" instead of "lightning"; for evidently it refers to the sun, which rises in the east and sets in the west, shining out of the one part of the heaven even unto the other. But how will this represent the Son of Man in his day? How will he be like the sun? We answer that the day of Christ is a thousand-year day, the Millennium; and our Lord's statement was one of the "dark sayings" of which Jesus said, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now," and promised that in due time the holy Spirit would grant them an enlightenment, that all of his words might be clearly understood. This portion, now due to be understood, is therefore becoming clear to those of spiritual discernment.

Then, that they might gradually learn that these things belonged to a distant time, Jesus explained that first he must suffer many things and be rejected of that nation. Coming back to an explanation of what would be the signs of his presence, in answer to their question as recorded in Matthew 24, He declared, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man."

Here we have something definite, concrete. We know what to look for at the time when the kingdom will be due for establishment—the time when the Sun of Righteousness will begin to shine forth from one end of heaven to the other. The signs of the time will not be in the outward condition of the world; for on the contrary everything will be going along in as quiet and orderly a manner as ever, just as in the days of Noah, just as before the Deluge came, and just as in the days of Lot, before the destruction of Sodom—they ate, drank, married, built, bought, sowed, planted, as usual. These things are not signs of wickedness, but are mentioned to show us that there will be no outward sign to indicate to the world the time of the second presence of Christ, when he will begin to deal with the world and to set up his kingdom.

THE DELUGE AND SODOM'S DESTRUCTION

Why introduce these two pictures—the Deluge and the destruction of Sodom—in conjunction, while talking of the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, which is to bless the world? The answer is that the Bible everywhere foretells that although Messiah's kingdom is the great provision of God which will lift the curse and bring in blessings world-wide, nevertheless it is to be established upon the wreck of our present institutions. And it in this wreck of social, financial, political and religious institutions of the present time that Jesus illustrated by the Deluge and the destruction of Sodom. And his own presence pre-

ceding this time of trouble is to be unseen to the world, unknown to the world, unsuspected, unbelieved, until the cataclysm of trouble precipitates with suddenness.

This is not a charming picture. We are glad that we may turn from it, and note the silver lining of the cloud, and the glorious blessings which will speedily follow the establishment of the kingdom on the ruins of our human failures.

Emphasizing the suddenness with which the calamity will overtake the world, Jesus said that on the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained down fire and brimstone from heaven; and he declared that thus it will be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed. The Greek text shows a difference between the *parousia,* or presence, of Christ before the time of trouble, and the later *epiphania,* or revealing.

The description of the revealing of Christ is given in the words, He shall be revealed in flaming fire. (2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8) Indeed, that time of trouble is frequently described symbolically in the Bible as a burning of the world—so much so, that all the creeds of Christendom express the thought that the earth is to be "burned." They overlook the fact that the heavens are to be "burned" also.

In the symbolical usage of the Bible, the earth represents the social order of human affairs; the sea, the restless, discontented masses; the heavens, the ecclesiastical powers. St. Peter tells us that all these will pass away with a great confusion, and that instead will come the new heavens and the new earth which God has promised. (2 Peter 3:10-13) The new heavens will be the new ecclesiastical society—the church in glory, joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom. The new earth will be the new social order which Messiah's kingdom will establish.

SAINTS ON THE HOUSETOP

Again recurring to the period in which he will be present before being revealed "in flaming fire," the Lord seems to assure us that all of his faithful ones will die, and be changed in the moment of dying, before the great trouble, the symbolic fire, will consume present institutions. In figurative language he says that in that day (of his parousia, presence, before his epiphania, revealing) those on the housetop, with their goods in the house, should not leave to take them out. What is here meant?

Briefly, we believe that the house represents the house of God, and those on the housetop represent the most saintly of the people of God. At that time such will come to realize the necessity for flight; and the question will arise, How much of their stuff, their valuables, will they seek to save? They are warned not to seek to save any of the stuff—considerations of social privileges, honor of men, sometimes titles of small offices; such as vestryman, deacon, elder, minister, etc. An attempt to save any of these things will mean disappointment. Everything must be forsaken, else the test of that time will not be successfully passed.

Likewise, any in the field must not turn back. The field represents the world. And any of the Lord's people who have gone out into the world—who have left the church nominal—are not to go back; but learning the truth of the situation they are to flee to the Lord from the field.

St. Matthew's account speaks of special troubles at that time upon such as are with child and give suck, which we believe is also symbolical, and refers to Christian people, seeking to convert the world and to teach beginners. These will be in special travail of soul, because of the change of dispensation and the call, "Come out of her, my people." It will be especially difficult for such to hear and to obey that call.

In the flight from Sodom, Lot and his family were warned to make haste, and not even to look back to the things that were to be destroyed. So the Lord's people are not to look back at the things to be destroyed. Give them no thought. "Flee out of Babylon!" "Deliver every man his own soul!" Lot's wife, disobeying, looked back longingly to the things of destruction, and failed to escape. The Lord applies this illustration to his people, and urges that their flight be with a full renunciation of the things of the present time. Whoever shall seek to save his life must lose it. Whoever will lose his life will thereby be preserving it—gaining the everlasting life.

CREATION PHOTO-DRAMA

THE WATCH TOWER readers everywhere are enthused by the Photo-Drama of Creation. In response to our recent suggestion, we are flooded with applications from various classes, giving the names of those appointed for the Drama Committee. We have answered many of these communications directly, but think it well to now give a general response and explanation.

We started with the thought that the Association should put the Drama on in different cities and trust to voluntary support; but by the time we had gotten out twelve sets of the Drama, the expense was enormous—our express bills alone on printed matter, machines, etc., running up to $2,000.00 in one month, besides post and freight charges. Then came the realization that each one of those twelve sets could be serving four cities at one time. This meant four times the cost. We perceived that unless the Lord worked a miracle we would run out of funds, without accomplishing anything like the work we see before us to do. At the same time propositions began to come in from various cities and towns, assuring us that the I. B. S. A. classes of these places would be glad to finance the Drama locally, if they were provided with operators, free literature, Pax Pins, etc.

We take this to be the leading of the Lord's providence—an intimation that the Lord desires to give his people everywhere an opportunity to participate in the Drama's great testimony in their own cities. We are following this plan now, and invite those classes of Bible students who desire to have the Drama to canvass the subject amongst themselves and then, through their committee, to correspond at once with our office, advising us what they desire to do and are able to do in the way of meeting the expenses of presenting the Drama in their home cities.

Such information should be sent to the Society's address, marked "Drama Department." Americans and Canadians should address Brooklyn, New York, Office; British classes should address the London Office; Swedish classes should address the Orebro Office; Danish classes, the Copenhagen Office; German classes, the Barmen Office; French and Swiss classes, the Geneva Office. Act at once; and then, having done your part, wait patiently, assured that we will do all in our power to co-operate with you.

On the same postal it will be well to state how many Sisters of medium age and of good address and good appearance would volunteer to serve as ushers, and whether or not one or two of them would learn to operate the phonograph under the instructor whom the Society would send. Advise also if there is a Brother in the class of good address suitable to serve the Drama presentation as floor manager and who could, without injury to his interests, give the necessary time.

We usually operate the Drama one week to each Part, afternoon and evening—four weeks to the Four Parts. However, where very large Auditoriums are used or where the city is small, we sometimes run the Four Parts in two weeks, beginning one Part with Sunday afternoon, another Part with Wednesday afternoon.

Theatres are better places for the Drama than churches, because Catholics do not care to go to Protestant churches, nor Protestants to Catholic churches, nor Jews to either—and all classes are interested in the Drama and it is for all. The dull season of the theatres has begun. Many of them are operating now at no profit; and, if run further, it would be at a loss. Under such circumstances, whatever amount is paid to the theatre people above the cost of light and janitorage is profit. Besides, many theatres are interested in bringing their name and location prominently before the public and would be benefited greatly by having the Drama.

Under such circumstances the theatre owners often give us astonishingly low prices—five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five dollars per day, according to size and quality of the theatre and the size of the city. In no case should we use an inferior Auditorium, nor one in a poor location even if it were offered free. Have these things in mind when writing to us. If you will, give us information respecting the best theatres, their seating capacity, the price at which they would be obtainable, etc.

In any event, be sure to inform us very definitely just what amount of assistance your class would need for the local presentation of the Drama. We must know this in every case hereafter, in order to know how to use the Drama most widely and how to use the Lord's money in connection with it most wisely. Give this immediate attention, if interested; for whatever is to be accomplished this Summer should be under way now, or projected.

Toward fall there will be numerous Fairs and Expositions everywhere. The Fair and Exposition and Chautauqua Managers are interested in the Drama, as they would be in anything else that would help to attract to their enterprises. They frequently spend large sums for attractions. We have circulars to the effect that our Society is willing to supply the Photo-Drama of Creation free to those who proffer suitable Auditorium and other conveniences. We make no objection to the

usual entrance fees charged by Expositions, etc., but merely require that the Drama shall be free to all those inside the grounds. Any of you acquainted with such Fairs may drop us a postal card giving us the date and the name and address of the Treasurer or Business Manager. Brooklyn address No. 124 Columbia Heights.

In some places theatre managers are anxious for the Drama and are willing to show it free, provided that they are permitted to charge for one-third of their seating capacity as reserved seats. We have no objection to this. Evidently there are some people who would prefer to pay something, in order to have seats reserved.

STRENGTH-DEVELOPMENT

The strong right arm is only strong
Because an active will
Has made it serve. But were that arm
Left idly hanging still,
'Twould lose the hoarded strength of years,
And lose more rapidly
Than it was gained, by Nature's law
Of inactivity.

'Tis true of souls. They gather strength
With every cross they bear,
With every humble sacrifice,
With every heartfelt prayer,
With every conflict bravely met,
And trial bravely borne;
With every throb of anguish felt
When tender ties are shorn.

The tears and toils of his dear ones
Are wisely, kindly, sent
By him who knoweth what they need
For soul-development.
The path of idleness is one
By vagrant children trod.
They grow in grace most rapidly
Who labor most for God. *Unknown.*

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER CELEBRATION

So far as reports have reached us the celebration of the Redeemer's death this year has been one of the most interesting, most impressive and most widely observed. Naturally the larger number of reports represent small gatherings —fully in accord with the Master's promise that where two or three were met in his name, he would be in their midst.

The reports show a steady increase in every direction over last year's reports. Be it remembered that these are not the names of persons or households that have been standing on a church register for a decade, and many of them dead and buried. Neither do these reports represent merely nominal church attendance. On the contrary, they represent people who with intelligence and deliberation have counted the cost and made a full consecration of themselves to the Lord and his service, even unto death.

We give the showings of reports thus far sent to us where the Memorial was celebrated by thirty or more persons. On account of the fact that The Temple is being used for the Photo-Drama of Creation, the Tabernacle was used this year, but was taxed beyond its capacity. Suburban gatherings were proportionately larger; hence the real increase in the Brooklyn congregation was the less apparent:

Brooklyn, N. Y.	842	Winnipeg, Manitoba	105	Lynn, Mass.	54
London, Eng.	741	Baltimore, Md.	102	Cumberland, Md.	50
Chicago, Ill.	693	Sheffield, Eng.	100	Pasadena, Cal.	50
Barmen, Germany	500	Louisville, Ky.	98	Dundee, Scot.	49
Glasgow, Scot.	464	Oldham, Eng.	92	Wichita, Kans.	49
Boston, Mass.	425	Edinburgh, Scot.	90	Schenectady, N. Y.	49
Forest Gate, Eng.	385	Denver, Colo.	85	Valenciennes, Nord, Fr.	48
Los Angeles, Cal.	362	Birmingham, Ala.	80	New Brighton Pa.	48
Pittsburgh, Pa.	345	Binghamton, N. Y.	79	Akron, O.	48
Philadelphia, Pa.	317	Richmond, Va.	79	Jackson, Mich.	47
Seattle, Wash.	219	Bellingham, Wash.	78	Easton, Pa.	46
Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn.	206	Worcester, Mass.	76	Port Limon, C. R.	46
Toronto, Ont.	204	Allentown, Pa.	76	Calgary, Alta.	45
Cleveland, O.	203	Toledo, O.	74	Ancon, Panama	45
Vancouver, B. C.	195	Tacoma, Wash.	74	Victoria, B. C.	45
Washington, D. C.	192	Spokane, Wash.	73	Port Huron, Mich.	45
Portland, Ore.	159	Camberwell, Jamaica, B. W. I.	72	Middlesboro, Eng.	44
Indianapolis, Ind.	156	St. Joseph, Mo.	69	Scranton, Pa.	44
Columbus, O.	144	San Francisco, Cal.	69	Rochester, N. Y.	44
Providence, R. I.	144	Hamilton, Ont.	65	Tamaqua, Pa.	43
Cincinnati, O.	140	Tampa, Fla.	65	Saginaw, Mich.	42
Copenhagen, Denmark	140	Youngstown, O.	65	Topeka, Kans.	42
St. Louis, Mo.	136	Birmingham, Eng.	64	Terre Haute, Ind.	42
Liverpool, Eng.	130	Springfield, Mass.	63	Jacksonville, Fla.	42
Buffalo, N. Y.	125	Grand Rapids, Mich.	61	Knoxville, Tenn.	40
Houston, Tex.	121	Atlanta, Ga.	60	Des Moines, Iowa	40
Dayton, O.	121	Memphis, Tenn.	60	Oklahoma City, Okla.	40
Oakland, Cal.	120	Newark, N. J.	59	Norfolk, Va.	40
Milwaukee, Wis.	113	Altoona, Pa.	58	Edmonton, Alberta	40
Kingston, B. W. I.	111	Hartford, Conn.	57	Wheeling, W. Va.	38
Bristol, Eng.	110	San Diego, Cal.	55	Sharon, Pa.	38
		Nottingham, Eng.	55	York, Pa.	38

Duquesne, Pa.	38				
Erie, Pa.	37				
Chester and Moore, Pa.	37				
Everett, Wash.	37				
Gloversville and Johnstown, N. Y.	37				
Lowell, Mass.	37				
Belvidere, Ill.	37				
Greenock, Scot.	37				
South Bend, Ind.	36				
Chattanooga, Tenn.	36				
Riverside, Cal.	35				
Paterson, N. J.	34				
London, Ont.	34				
Syracuse, N. Y.	34				
Wilmington, Del.	34				
Warren, O.	34				
Sacramento, Cal.	33				
Johnstown, O.	32				
Canton, O.	32				
Johnstown, Pa.	32				
Brantford, Ont.	31				
East Liverpool, O.	31				
Bradford, Eng.	31				
Brockton, Mass.	31				
Mattoon, Ill.	30				
Houston, Tex.	30				
Santa Ana, Cal.	30				
Watertown, N. Y.	30				
Reading, Pa.	30				
Tiffin, O.	30				
Ft. Smith, Ark.	30				

VOL. XXXV BROOKLYN, N. Y., MAY 15, 1914 No. 10

GIANTS IN THESE DAYS

Readers of these columns, and especially such as are familiar with the presentations of the volume entitled "Armageddon," know quite well that it is our opinion that there is a correspondency to be noted between the conditions which prevailed in the days of Noah, prior to the Deluge, and the conditions which will prevail in the days of the Son of Man, prior to the great time of trouble, which the Bible declares will symbolically melt, or dissolve, as in a furnace of fire, the social elements of today. We have called attention to the fact that the giants of Noah's day, according to the Bible, endangered the lives and the happiness of humanity; and that it was our thought that a counterpart of these giants is to be found in the great institutions and trusts of our day, which have the power to throttle, to strangle humanity.

We have pointed out that much could be said in favor of aggregations of wealth and intellect in mighty combinations, if properly used, not selfishly, but in the interests of the people. We have pointed out that although these giant corporations have accomplished great good, which could not have been accomplished without their aid or without some divine interposition, nevertheless, under present selfish conditions, they are a menace to the people.

We should not be misunderstood. We do not mean even to hint that the men at the head of these giant corporations are inferior to their fellows in sympathy and in wisdom. On the contrary, we believe that they are generally superior, and that had brutish men been at the head of these giant corporations they long ago would have sought to squeeze the very life out of the people. But, as we have pointed out, there is continually a tendency on the part of all imperfect people toward selfishness, acquisitiveness. That "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty" is as true today as ever it was. The people must watch the giants lest they become autocratic.

APPEARANCES SOMETIMES DECEITFUL

But, say some, The Editor of THE WATCH TOWER must be behind the times. Does he not know that the trusts are being throttled, and that these giants have been made the slaves of the people?

The Editor is well aware that apparently much has been done to bind these giants; and he well knows that they have apparently submitted and apparently acknowledge themselves the creatures, the servants of the people. But he also takes note that this transformation is merely an appearance. This docility is merely affected. The giants of intellectual and monetary strength have not really surrendered, nor is it in harmony with the laws of human nature to suppose that they would ever capitulate. Instead, they have seemingly acquiesced to the laws and regulations while merely transforming themselves and retaining their power. In several instances they have demonstrated that they are as powerful today as they ever were. And in their behalf it should be acknowledged that much of the legislation enacted against them is mere demagoguery—the work of politicians, intended to curry favor with the people and not for practical use.

We have no sympathy with those who make tirades against the courageous and brainy men who have, along purely commercial lines, done so much to help forward the world's condition—so much to prepare for the Millennium. Instead of being tantalized and hampered, these financial and engineering princes should be appreciated, honored. Then, while honoring them we should insist upon their reasonable control and supervision by the people through their governmental representatives. If these giants are necessary and useful, they can be better ruled by love and justice than by nagging and pinpricking. No doubt it is this very nagging that is producing more and more a spirit of bitterness in the giants—a feeling that they are not appreciated by some, a feeling that they must teach the people a lesson.

CONDITIONS AS THEY ARE

We are not especially finding fault with anybody. We are merely pointing out conditions as they are, and showing how these are shaping themselves and preparing for a great struggle between the giants and the people—a struggle in which the people will suffer more than will the giants. The fault is not with humanity at all. The fault is with the sin, the selfishness, the meanness, which for centuries has had a firm foothold in humanity—rich and poor. All are selfish. Each according to his opportunity seems disposed to take advantage. The giant corporations, we believe, are much more lenient than they would be if they were in the hands of naturally smaller men of lower class.

These giants are realizing that they have opponents on every hand. They have long contended with the labor unions, and more or less have been compelled to submit. Now, in addition to the unions, they are obliged to contend with the people in governmental legislation, and with new ideas in respect to corporation rights and liberties. These giants are saying to themselves, The people do not realize how much good we have done, nor what important factors in their welfare we are.

Few of the people realize that the managers and the presidents of our great railroads and large business enterprises are men of powerful mind, any of them well qualified for the highest stations of life, and many of them are earning salaries as great as that of the President of the United States, and solving problems as difficult as those which the President must handle. Few people realize that next to the farming element in importance come the railroads, as respects numbers of employes. And the latter are an increasing army, while the farmers are a decreasing army, because of labor-saving machinery.

Whoever supposes that these long-headed business men intend to sit down and quietly submit to every kind of legislation is deluding himself. The giants know their own strength. They prefer to hide it rather than to boast of it; but when it comes to a life-and-death struggle they will use it, and terrible will be the effects. The very fact that the people are seeking to bind them arouses them to a more arbitrary exercise of their power. If legislation, for instance, affects to hinder railroads from monopolizing the anthracite and other coal interests, the coal-owning railroads with a snarl of defiance raise the price of coal, and thus give a hint to the consumers that they will need to be thankful if permitted to purchase at all and to keep from freezing.

A SHOW OF GIANT STRENGTH

A more or less preconcerted action has begun on the part of the great railroads and affiliated interests. They have determined that unless they are granted permission to raise their freight rates they will make the restrainers of their liberties pay dearly for it by bringing upon the country financial disaster, reaching losses a thousand times greater than the five per cent. which they demand. It would surely in many respects be wise to placate these giants with the increase they ask, merely requiring them to render more prompt and efficient service in return.

But will this course of wisdom prevail? Possibly not. If not, we have before us already an illustration and prophecy of what may be expected. Already the railroads have laid off thousands of workmen who have been employed in road construction and repairs. Already they have canceled orders for rails and equipment, which in turn has rendered idle many of the large mills, throwing other thousands out of employment. Already they are cutting down their office forces. All this is done with a certain amount of justification in the fact that they have not been making as much money as formerly. For instance, a great steel corporation's recent report showed a "sad" falling off of revenue and profit, "leaving only $18,000,000 of profit for the quarter;" whereas they had for some time been accustomed to more. In accord with this policy, there has for some time been a gradual curtailing of train service, which is really a safe and sane policy.

We are not complaining, we are not finding fault even; we are merely recording facts, in supporting our contention that these great institutions are really giants which, if they ever become angry and malicious, may accomplish incalculable injury. Their power and dissatisfaction have already been hinted to the government, which is more or less fearful of the industrial suspension threatened.

On the other hand we have trades unionism, which is only beginning to realize its great power at the polls, and also its physical power through strikes. The threat of the railroad managers partially to suspend business until their demands are met may any day be duplicated by the giants of labor with their threat of suspension of labor, stoppage of fuel supply, walk-outs, etc. It may be said that these giants of labor are blind and unwise; but nevertheless it is manifest that they, like the blind Samson of old, are feeling for the pillars which support our present social structure; and that they have in view its wreck and ruin, even though this means also the destruction of their own interests.

THE DEATH STRUGGLE NEAR

How soon these great giants will enter upon their death struggle, each confident of victory, yet both doomed to destruction, no one can tell. Sure we may be, however, that in the battle of these giants the masses of mankind will suffer with them in the ordeal.

Looking from the Bible viewpoint, we perceive that these giants have reached their present size and strength through the light and blessings of the Millennial morning. Had the veil of gross darkness been lifted a thousand years sooner, these giants would have developed that much sooner; and their death struggle would have come that much sooner, with its resultant overthrow of present institutions in anarchy. But God would not permit this. It is no part of his plan to allow human passion utterly to desolate the earth. Hence, he withheld the morning light until the morning time, so that the struggle and its disastrous effects upon human institutions will occur just in advance of the time for the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, for the control of the world by its spiritual, invisible, but all-powerful King, who is so soon to take unto himself his great power and reign.—Revelation 11: 17, 18; 19:6; Psalm 99:1.

How soon this great catastrophe will engulf the world none is wise enough to say, yet the trouble is discerned and feared by all persons of intelligence, but more particularly by those whose intelligence is guided by the Word of God. The catastrophe may be put off for months or years, but it is sure to come. And we can see how it might be suddenly precipitated. Even as we write, the newspapers are echoing the mutterings and threats of the labor giants, while the capitalistic giants are admittedly feeling sour, and are half inclined to give the public a pinch as a mere suggestion of what they could do. It is these hints, suggestions and threats which are likely to lead from bad to worse, producing anger, malice, hatred, strife, and various works of the flesh and of the devil. as St. Paul intimated.

"SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT"

Whether this great trouble be very near or further afield, the proper course of God's consecrated people is the same—"Seek peace and pursue it." And not only so, but we are to be peace-makers and not strife-breeders. When all around men's souls give way, a special opportunity comes to the people of God for pointing their distressed fellow-creatures to the grand blessing which God has provided for the near future, and for re-establishing faith in the Creator and in the future life, and for pointing out that it is to be attained only by those who learn the true lesson of life and who come to love righteousness and to hate iniquity.

We would be inclined to expect this great trouble to break out very soon were it not that the Scriptures apparently indi-

cate that it will be preceded by a very powerful Church Federation, which will flourish outwardly in unrighteousness and which will be the first to succumb.

"I can see his coming judgments, as they circle all the earth,
The signs and groanings promised, to precede a second birth;
I read his righteous sentence in the crumbling thrones of earth:
Our King is marching on."

TRIALS ESSENTIAL TO CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations."—James 1:2.

All those who have been called of the Lord during this Gospel age are called with what the Apostle Paul styles the high calling (Philippians 3:14), the heavenly calling (Hebrews 3:1), which is a call to share with Jesus in his glory, honor and immortality. But the call is not the decision in the matter; it is merely an invitation with certain definite conditions. We are called, not only to righteousness, but to walk in the Master's footsteps of suffering and self-sacrifice. These are the only terms on which any are received as disciples of Christ. We understand the Scriptures to teach that during the Millennial age there will be other terms of acceptance with God, offered the world. But there are no conditions offered now other than those of becoming followers and disciples of Jesus, to walk as he walked.

The Apostle James intimates that temptations may overtake these followers of Christ, into which they will fall as into a snare. As for an army, traps are set by the enemy, so the great adversary sets traps and snares for us. He endeavors to misguide our minds and to lead us away from proper conceptions of truth and righteousness. We should be very careful to avoid his snares. Nevertheless, in spite of diligence, we may fall into a trap.

The Apostle says we are to rejoice when we fall into various temptations—not that we are to rejoice if we fall into sin when tempted, but that we may rejoice if we find ourselves suddenly precipitated into temptation. Temptation is not sin. If we could but keep in mind the fact that every temptation, every trial, every persecution, every difficulty in life, permitted to come upon us who have made the covenant of sacrifice with the Lord, is intended to prove us, to test our love, to see whether or not our characters are fixed, rooted and grounded in righteousness and being built up in love, it would put all these trials, difficulties and temptations in a new light before us, and greatly assist us in fighting a good fight and overcoming. When we find ourselves suddenly in temptation, trial, we should say, If by these temptations, or trials, the Lord is proving my love and devotion to him, then, however trifling they may be or however important, I will diligently use them as favorable opportunities to demonstrate to my Lord the fulness of my love and devotion to him and his cause. I must fight a good fight against this thing—the world, the flesh or the adversary—whatever it might be that had brought the snare.

Thus viewed and thus met we can rejoice in every such experience; every trial and every difficulty will prove a blessing; for we shall, first of all, have an opportunity to show the Lord that we will endure, and not compromise his cause or our own position as his servants. We can rejoice also because we know that under such trials our characters will make advancement toward crystallization, if we overcome; and because we know that the Lord would not let us fall into any temptation which he would not cause to work out for us a blessing if we are wholly loyal. Let us dwell often upon the words of the Apostles: "Beloved, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." "Greatly rejoice, though now for a season ye are in manifold temptation, that the trial of your faith, being more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." "Blessed is the man that endureth [faithfully under] temptation; for after his trials he will receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." "These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"—if rightly utilized; if we are rightly exercised by them.—1 Peter 1:7; James 1:2, 12.

"HE THAT ENDURETH"

We are assured that those who love the Lord, and who because of this will receive the kingdom, will be those whose love will have been tested by trials and temptations on the way. Those who do not love the Lord with all their hearts—in whom self or some other idol has first place—will be seduced by the world, the flesh or the adversary, into some form of rebellion against the divine Word or divine providences. They will have schemes and theories which they will prefer to the Lord's plan. These when analyzed will usually be found to be based either upon selfishness or upon ambition or an evil spirit of envy, hatred, etc. The Lord's leading and the Lord's words lose their attraction to such, and they lose their interest correspondingly. Like those who turned away from the Lord at the first advent, declaring, "This is a hard saying," they walked no more with him.

As there are some substances which are short and brittle, so are there some which have fibre, strength, endurance. The Lord chooses for himself such characters as have the strong, enduring qualities—fortitude, patience, long-suffering, etc. Some there are who walk close to the Lord, who will not be driven from him by any of the arts and wiles of the adversary. They are such as are at heart fully the Lord's—not their own; they follow wherever the Lord may lead, because they have no will except the will of God. These will follow the Lord in the narrow way of trial, discipline and testings during the present life, and by and by, as he has declared, "They shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy."—Revelation 3:4.

He who escapes all trials and temptations and difficulties has every reason to doubt that he is really in relationship to God as a son. If he were a son, the Lord would surely find it necessary to give him trials and difficulties. If he does not have these he should go to the Father and make sure that there is no impediment on his part—make sure that he has put himself in the proper place where he can be prepared for the kingdom. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Hebrews 12:6.

FAILURES AS "STEPPING-STONES"

All will rejoice when the testings are over and we are accepted as overcomers, to share with the Lord in his throne. But patience, trust and love must first do a refining work in our hearts, making us mellow, submissive and obedient to God. Let the good work go on! Let us rejoice if our trials have made us stronger in character, more humble and Christlike, more aware of our blemishes and imperfections, more watchful and earnest in our endeavors to correct them so far as possible.

Even the conflicts in which we have had only partial victory may have resulted in blessings to us. Even in those experiences where we have suffered absolute failure, there may be, through the humiliation and the pain of defeat, a strengthening of our character, a firm determination for greater watchfulness in that direction, and a more fervent prayer for the Lord's sustaining grace, the need of which has been more deeply impressed upon our hearts. Thus even failures may become "stepping-stones" by which we rise toward God and heaven. Only through much tribulation shall we enter the kingdom of heaven at all. If, therefore, the Lord's people find themselves involved in temptations, tribulations, instead of feeling downcast they are to rejoice and say, These are evidences that the Lord is preparing me for a place in the kingdom. This should give one courage to fight the good fight against the world, the flesh and the adversary. The flesh is suffering; but the new mind, the new will, has this joy; and the new creature can rejoice, knowing that these trials are not for his harm, but for his good.—1 Peter 4:13.

A WAY OF ESCAPE PROVIDED

The heavenly Father will with every temptation provide a way of escape. Hence when we find ourselves in difficulty we are to say, The heavenly Father is permitting this trial—the Lord Jesus will help me, and so I will rejoice in the fact that the Lord will not allow me to be overthrown; for he has promised that all things shall work out for my good.

As out text expressly says: We are to count it all joy when we fall into temptations—not when we walk into them. We are not to seek temptation. In our own fallen condition and that of those around us, with the adversary alert to harm us, we know that there will be plenty of temptations without our walking into them. But if we fall into temptation we are to say, I have been striving against this thing, but the Lord has permitted it; and there must, therefore, come some blessing out of it for me. Even temptations that come through negligence are not to be disesteemed. Some of our greatest lessons in carefulness have resulted from the effect of our own carelessness.

Our joy is largely dependent upon our study of the Word and our knowledge of the precious promises contained therein for those who overcome. The Lord wants those who will endure a great fight of afflictions, who will endure patiently, though the temptations continue long and the tribulations become more and more severe. But if they should lose faith, all their previous good resolutions and standing for what is right would not make them overcomers.

These trials are intended to develop in us patience—that this quality may be deeply ingrained. We are building character for all eternity; and patience could not be thus developed and maintained except by repeated difficulties, tests —by our resolving again and again to be stronger and firmer in building the character-likeness of our heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

A WORD OF WARNING

To those who are of this anointed company and who are striving to attain the glory promised to the faithful followers of Christ, the Apostle Peter issues a word of warning. In the first chapter of his second Epistle, he urges the church to add quality after quality of character-preparation, that thus they may be fitted for the glorious things that God has promised to the faithful. He specifies faith as the primary qualification. To this he says that we are to add fortitude, knowledge, patience, self-control, godliness, brotherly kindness and a broad, generous love for all mankind. The reason why the Scriptures declare that our judgment will be according to our faith is that while in the flesh we shall never be able to perform works such as God could approve.

What God approves is the new creature. By exercising faith and by demonstrating loyalty these new creatures will be able to please him, and to work out the proper character as enjoined in his Word, developing the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit. "If ye do these things," says the Apostle, "ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

Faith is necessary all along the line. Without faith we could not have courage to go on. If we did not have faith what would be our source of encouragement? The fall mentioned in the text above quoted (2 Peter 1:10), is evidently a fall from the position to which we have been invited and to which invitation we respond. We were called to be joint-heirs with our Lord. If we are obedient to the Word of the Lord and are properly exercised by the experiences which are given us in the school of Christ, we shall gain his approval; for "Faithful is he that hath called us." If there is a fall in our case, it will be due to failure to do our part. If we fail to cultivate character, we shall fail to gain the kingdom.

CAUSES INDUCING A FALL

Among those who fall some will fall more seriously than others. Those who fail to go on will receive certain tests which will determine whether they will turn back to the world or will continue in the narrow way. Some will fail in that they will not manifest sufficient zeal. These will come through great tribulations. If by these experiences they are brought to a full loyalty to the Lord, they will be granted everlasting life, but not on so high a plane as if they had not failed in their manifestation of zeal for the Lord, and of faith, energy and perseverance in doing the Lord's will.

Again, from lack of zeal in the Lord's service or from cultivating a spirit of bitterness, one may deteriorate until he becomes an enemy of the Lord, loving sin rather than righteousness. As an opponent of God such a one would suffer a complete fall. But those who have a temporary fall, but who afterwards overcome in the trials which the Lord will allow to come upon them, thus showing their loyalty to him, will be fully recovered. Those who fall utterly can never be recovered. Such will lose everything. They had sacrificed their human hopes before they could be accepted at first; therefore their falling away from this condition of a new creature will be a hopeless fall.

The fall of such will be far worse than the fall of Adam, whose fall resulted from having only limited knowledge and from lack of experience in the results of evil, for these have come to a clear knowledge of the Truth and have experienced a share in the redemption. The falling away of such would mean a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation—of destruction as enemies of God. Adam had only a small knowledge of the grace of God, and therefore is to be redeemed and ultimately restored, if he shall come into harmony with God.

Dear brethren, let us take heed to our ways. Let us earnestly cultivate the fruits of the Spirit, that we may indeed be presented "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

"'From glory unto glory' that ever lies before,
Still wondering, adoring, rejoicing more and more;
Still following where he leadeth, from shining field to field,
Himself the goal of glory, Revealer and revealed!

"Then let our hearts be surely fixed where truest joys are found,
And let our burning, loving praise yet more and more abound;
And gazing on the 'things not seen' eternal in the skies,
'From glory unto glory,' O Savior, let us rise!"

"THE ISRAEL OF GOD"

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."—1 Peter 2:9.

In our text the Apostle Peter is pointing out the fact that the church of Christ is separate and distinct from all other people. For many centuries before our Lord came, the Jews had understood that they were God's people. He had made a special covenant with them through Moses, which constituted them his people. He had also made certain promises to them dependent on their keeping of the law. Thus they were his chosen—heirs of certain special promises that were conditioned upon their obedience, and of certain other promises that were stated without specified conditions. God had also promised to make a New Covenant with them, to give them a new heart, to take away their stoniness of heart, etc. But after the first advent a different arrangement began.

The Apostle is directing attention to the new feature of God's plan—that during the Gospel age he is calling out a special people. There will be no competition between the two classes—the new nation and the nation of Israel—for the promises given to Israel after the flesh were earthly, and the promises given to Israel after the spirit are spiritual. The Jews were a "peculiar people" (Deut. 14:2), a special people whom God had separated from the world; they were a chosen generation, or race. They were the generation, or race, of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. This special generation was recognized of God as his people, Jews, Israelites, through the Law Covenant, as well as through the preceding promises God had made to Abraham.

But since Pentecost God has started this other work in the world—another generation—peculiar, separate, selected for a particular purpose. And this generation will all be holy—there will be none but holy ones in it! The other nation had a priesthood, but this new people is a whole nation of priests. We see how this description applies to the church. The Apostle Paul points out that while Aaron and his sons were typical in some respects, yet they did not typify all the features of God's plan. They typified how Jesus would die—as a sacrifice—how all his associates would be sacrificers. But Aaron and his sons did not typify the still higher priesthood which God had in mind when he established the Levitical priesthood. This higher Order of Priests was typified by Melchizedek, the king-priest.—Hebrews 6:20.

CHURCH'S FUTURE TWO-FOLD OFFICE

Jesus is this great antitypical Royal, or Kingly, Priest, and his church is the body of this antitypical Melchizedek. Before the new Order can reign as kings, and before they can serve as priests, they must go through a certain process. The members of this body of Christ must be first generated. It is a new race—all are begotten of the holy Spirit. As Jesus was begotten of the holy Spirit at the time of his consecration, and there became a new creature, spirit-begotten, so also the church, those who are to walk in his steps, must first make a full consecration before this new generative power will begin to operate in them.

This power began to operate in Jesus at his begetting, and completed its work in his resurrection. And so with us: This power will complete its work in us when we have

proven our loyalty even unto death. When this work has been accomplished in all of the priesthood class, then they will be of the royal priesthood indeed, on the heavenly plane. This power of the holy Spirit is not only a generating, or begetting, power, but an anointing power. And the anointing is not only to a priestly office, but also to a kingly office. This new creation are a holy nation in the sense that they are representatives of a special government, a divine government.

THE HOLY NATION—TYPE AND ANTITYPE

Israel purposed to be a holy nation, and in a typical way they were a holy nation. But in a broad sense, the church constitutes the holy nation—separate and distinct from humanity. We are a separate nation in every sense of the word—living in the midst of people of the world. We keep our laws and also their laws. We are obedient to the "powers that be," realizing that the Lord has permitted these and wishes us to be subject to them, wherever our consciences will not be sacrificed. The Lord tells us that as representatives of his kingdom we are to make known his message. He tells us that the world is in a rebellious condition because they have become blinded by the adversary.

And so he sends us as his ambassadors to tell men of his goodness, his plan, which he purposes to work out, that the hearts of those who have an ear to hear his message may turn to the Lord. He tells us not to expect many to hear this message; for they will be so deaf and blind that they cannot understand. But he assures us that by and by their blindness will be taken away, and they will be ready for what he has for them.

The world does not understand us—they do not know that we belong to a different kingdom; but we understand them. As the Apostle points out, "He that is spiritual judgeth all things." But they cannot understand, because no man can understand beyond his mental status, so to speak. We who have been begotten of the holy Spirit still understand the natural things, but the natural man does not understand the spiritual things—"neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"; "they are foolishness unto him." So we dwell in the midst of a perverse race, or generation, fallen into sin for six thousand years. As our Lord declared, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."—John 17:16.

OUR PRESENT GLORIOUS PRIVILEGE

And we are a peculiar people in the sight of the Lord. This word peculiar signifies a separate people—implying that God had done somthing special for us. The Lord Jesus has purchased us. His merit—the purchase-price—has been applied on our behalf. The only ones for whom this purchase-price has as yet been applied are the spirit-begotten ones. The Apostle's message is to these. What object had God in selecting this peculiar people? It was that we might "show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." Is God proud, or vain, that he wishes his praises to be shown forth? Oh, no! God wishes his praises to be known because his praises will show to his creatures the great blessings he has provided for them.

If we go out and tell men that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life," we are showing forth his praises. We are not making God happy by so doing—he was already happy. But we are in this doing a great favor to the people who hear; we are telling them that God will bring them back again into his favor; that he will remove the curse. So, then, it is a great privilege now to tell forth the praises of God! But alas! not very many have the ear to hear; yet by our zeal in showing forth the Master's praises, we are doing all that we can to help men back to God.

The greater work by and by will be the work of the kingdom in ruling mankind, in overthrowing sin, in instructing and healing the people, bringing them into harmony with their Creator. And this will require a thousand years for its accomplishment. This glorious work will be ours! How wonderful it will be to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord—to be higher than angels! We shall be next to Jesus, as he will be next to the Father—"far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named."

"BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH"

But it is not only the honor that we should seek, but also the privilege of service God is pleased to give this class; the privilege of opening all the deaf ears, of awakening the whole world to see, to know, to understand our God, to realize that the knowledge of the Lord is to fill the whole world—"for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"—ocean deep! (Isa. 11:9) That glorious work of the future shall be done only by those who have proved themselves wholly loyal to God. If we are careless or indifferent about telling forth the good message and showing forth his praises, we shall show that we are not worthy of the kingdom. Those who prove loyal and faithful to the end will be the ones whom the Lord will exalt by and by.

And in doing this, God has been merely carrying out a course which men have imitated. God laid his plans long before men were born; nevertheless, wise men instinctively follow certain great principles. Napoleon is said to have directed that the various men who were faithful to him be made princes in the countries he conquered. Our Lord says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) So we have from every standpoint the greatest encouragement to "show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." This Scripture implies that we realize we were once in darkness, and that we know we are now in the light.

Comparatively few have had this experience. Those who have been raised out of ignorance and sin into a heart appreciation of God's plan are the ones referred to here. They could not get this light, except by being begotten of the holy Spirit and becoming members of this holy nation, this peculiar people. And we cannot do the world greater good than by telling them of God's great favor, and thus helping them also out of darkness into the light. The light is given us that we may let it shine. May we be enabled to sing from our hearts:

"All for Jesus, all for Jesus—
All my being's ransomed powers;
All my thoughts and words and doings,
All my days and all my hours!"

WE ARE NOT OUR OWN

In Titus 2:14, St. Paul sets forth a similar thought: "A peculiar people, zealous of good works." The people here referred to by him are the saints of God, those who are waiting for the fulfilment of God's promises—for those things which were to be brought to them at the coming (during the parousia—presence) of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. These are the people who realize that they have been purchased with the precious blood. Some translators render 1 Pet. 2:9 "A purchased people, zealous of good works." The Lord's people are a people who have been redeemed, purchased. Whatever they were through the fall, they have been redeemed from that condition. St. Paul, in recounting certain sins, said, "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified."—1 Cor. 6:9-11.

The thought in Titus 2:14 is much the same as in the other. Ye are a peculiar people, a people bought back from sin and death, and all such are "peculiar," different from the remainder of mankind. Amongst mankind, in Christendom, we find some that are vicious, and even amongst the heathen we find noble people. But these peculiar people of whom St. Paul wrote, are different from all others—they are new creatures in Christ.

To these, "old things have passed away, and all things have become new." They have new hopes and new aims. They are hoping to attain the highest position offered to any in the universe; namely, to be made associates in the government of Messiah. These are very wonderful hopes. And the possession of these hopes by faith constitutes them different and peculiar, separate and distinct from all other people.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PECULIAR PEOPLE

While others seek the emoluments and distinctions of the present time, these count all the things of this world as loss and dross, in view of the wonderful things that God has set before their minds. They have seen the "pearl of great price," and have given their all to purchase it. They see that the kingdom of God is the most valuable thing that is obtainable now or ever will be attainable. They have recognized the terms upon which this kingdom-pearl may be obtained and are seeking to make good the purchase. The terms are self-sacrifice, faithfulness to God at any cost, and patient endurance under adverse conditions, even unto the end.

These peculiar people are seeking to accomplish this work in themselves, because they see that these are the most gracious characteristics and qualities that can be imagined. Hence they are doubly solicitous; they are zealous of good works. They love to see others good and happy, and they love to spread the knowledge of God. They love the things that God delights in, because they have the Spirit of Christ.

They are interested in reforms—social reform, temperance reform, every kind of reform; but this does not mean that they will engage in these reforms. The same man cannot be a great preacher, a successful farmer, a successful lawyer, etc. If he be a great farmer, he must give up the other things to a large extent. Or if he be a great preacher, he will have to give up, for the most part, other things. Yet he may have pleasure in them all.

And so with these peculiar people: they have one particular work given them of the Father. They recognize that this work is most important to be done, hence they cannot give their attention to political reform, social reform, or other reform, outside of their own work. For this reason they are called theorists instead of practical people. Nevertheless they have the most practical plan of all; for God's plan is of all plans the most practical. These people, in becoming co-workers, are taking the wisest course. But they do not find fault with others. They see that the only ones who can grasp these things are those who have the eyes to see and the ears to hear; they know that others cannot go beyond what they see. The peculiarities of these "peculiar people" extend to all the affairs of life

WHAT CONSTITUTE GOOD WORKS

This class of people are wise enough to know that all the truth even should not be mentioned at once. The Master said to those who had been his close followers for three and a half years, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." (John 16:12.) The Lord's people are eager to do good, but in the way that will be the most effective, and in the way that will not stumble others. The good works, then, that this peculiar people are zealous of are the works of God. As Jesus said, "I must work the works of him that sent Me."—John 9:4.

The world cannot appreciate this, not having the Spirit of God, but more the spirit of the adversary. The world are walking in the way of slander and hypocrisy, more or less. Jesus said, when speaking to the Pharisees, "Ye are of your father, the devil." (John 8:44) And when Jesus walked in the way of God, his course was a condemnation to them. Therefore Jesus declared, "The darkness hateth the light," and he forewarned us that it would be the same all the way down through the age. He warned his followers that they would suffer the same persecution he had suffered. But the Master urged that they be zealous for the truth—solicitous for it.

Since God has called us to good works, we are to show great zeal, even though it bring upon us the envy and hatred and opposition of others. We are to rejoice, even if we are called to suffer persecution for his sake. And though the world does not appreciate these good works now, they will see and understand by and by, in their day of visitation. (1 Peter 2:12) They will see that God's plan was the best plan. The church glorified will be the channel for blessing the world in general.

Only this peculiar people can now understand these things. Jesus said unto his disciples, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them [the multitudes who went to hear him] it is not given. . . . Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand." (Matt. 13:11, 13) Only those who have come into this special relationship can understand. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant."—Psa. 25:14.

We find a great many who gladly accept the truth, and then seem to forget that the only way they can make progress in the truth is to consecrate themselves to God. If they fail to make consecration, they must fail to make progress. We should be sure that we give people the right thought along this line. Only those who thus become God's "peculiar people, zealous of good works" can inherit the kingdom.

EXPIATION OF SIN—ADAMIC AND PARTIALLY WILFUL

The expiation of sin may be viewed from two different standpoints. A satisfaction to divine justice for Adamic sin is, first of all, necessary. The decree of the great Supreme Judge of the universe—that the human race must die—went forth because of the disobedience of Adam; and no one can be released from death until that decree shall have been revoked because of its requirements being complied with. The annulling of that decree of justice, however, will not make the individual at once a perfect man.

If a man had been put into prison for some offense, and after ten years someone should make satisfaction, should pay up his account and comply with the requirements of the law, the prisoner would be released—justice would be satisfied. But freedom from the restraint of prison life would not give back to the prisoner his clear vision, his teeth, his hair, his health, or anything that he might have lost or that had been impaired during his term of imprisonment. And likewise, whatever satisfaction of Justice is made for mankind, they will not, at the time they are awakened from the tomb, be free from the marks that sin has placed upon them.

There will be no divine disfavor holding over upon the world at that time, because the price for man's release will have been paid. But mankind at the beginning of the Millennial age will still have the blemishes resulting from the fall. It will be the work of that age to restore the human race, to lift them up out of imperfection and weakness. Man will be helped up from his fallen condition, because justice will have been satisfied.

The world will be in the hands of Christ, who purchased them by the sacrifice of his own life. We are to bear in mind that the satisfaction of justice does not bring about the restitution of humanity from imperfection, but this judicial satisfaction is merely the turning away of the disfavor of God, the annulling of the death penalty. This gives the opportunity for man to be restored to favor with God—to be brought into a condition worthy of divine acceptance at the close of the Millennium.

As for this satisfaction of divine justice which must take place before the new covenant can be inaugurated, it includes not only a satisfaction for Adamic sin, but it embraces also stripes for partially wilful sins, and satisfaction for certain gross injustices which mankind have committed when they had a knowledge of a better course and were in a measure responsible for their unjust words and actions. To an extent they were in ignorance, but often they were wilfully so, and in proportion to the measure of responsibility will justice require a recompense.

JEWISH AGE RECKONING

At the close of the Jewish age God had a reckoning with the nation of Israel, which was one of the most terrific times of trouble the world has ever known. The declaration of Jesus was, that of that age—that generation then living—God would require expiation for all the righteous blood that had been shed from the time of Abel to the time in which he was speaking. —Matt. 23:34-36.

And these partially wilful sins of the world are not fully covered by the sin-offerings. In so far as they have been wilful they must be expiated by punishment. These sins and trespasses are shown as placed upon the scape-goat class—the great company. In the great antitype shortly to be enacted, these will be allowed to suffer for some of the partly wilful sins of the world—especially the sins of Babylon. All the blood of God's holy ones, from the beginning of this Gospel age, will be required of the present generation, in the "great time of trouble, such as never was."

The martyrs of the past, "the souls under the altar," are represented symbolically as crying out for the vindication of justice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood upon them that dwell on the earth!" They were bidden to wait until others of their brethren should be similarly killed, when the guilt of all will be avenged.—Rev. 6:9-11.

RECKONING OF THE GOSPEL AGE

From the above we see that at the close of this Gospel age there will be another squaring of accounts. A time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, and never will be afterwards, is to come shortly. (Matt. 24:21, 22) This is shown forcefully in many prophecies of scripture. Our Lord is now again present, as the great Judge, and the storm clouds are rapidly gathering in this day of his kingly presence.

Why require the full payment for all the wrongs of the two ages—the Gospel age and the one preceding, extending from the time the blood of righteous Abel was shed to the present time—at the closing of these ages, is it asked? We answer, Because the chief light of each age comes at its close, and because those who sin against such light are worthy of more severe judgment than similar evildoers preceding them, who had less light. The Scriptural argument is that to endorse the wrongs of the past in the light of the present is to multiply the responsibility and to deserve the plagues of the whole.

We have not far to look if we would see these iniquities, or inequities, of the world today, especially of Christendom.

There is considerable light now shining upon the whole world, and more particularly upon its civilized portion. The principles of righteousness set forth in the Jewish law, and subsequently amplified by the Lord and the apostles, have enlightened the minds of the public in general in respect to justice and injustice, right and wrong, good and evil, so that there never was so responsible a generation as the one now living.

Notwithstanding this increase of knowledge, and notwithstanding that there are gross iniquities prevailing throughout the world, we find comparatively few willing to do anything toward a readjustment and equalization of the world's affairs, financial, social and religious. Rather, it seems that the majority of those possessing advantages are quite willing to hold to them, even though recognizing that they are inequitable, iniquitous.

We perceive also that much of the evil done against the Lord's holy ones of the past has thus far failed of the punishment due. Great systems which in the name of Christ persecuted the true church have practised and prospered, but have not yet received their just recompense of reward. In the terrible trouble of the near future great Babylon will go down as a mighty millstone into the sea, when every man's hand will be against his neighbor in anarchy, when "there will be no peace to him that goeth out, nor to him that cometh in."

LEGAL EXPIATION BY SCAPEGOAT CLASS

But it seems that the legal expiation of these sins must be accomplished by the scapegoat class, as shown in the type. (Lev. 16:20-22) Israel here represents the world. In this scapegoat type, the Lord pictures the sending into the wilderness of isolation and persecution the great company who, after consecration, were unwilling to go voluntarily "outside the camp, bearing the reproaches" of Christ. They shared not in the Sin-atonement, but will be permitted, yea, forced, to bear the weight of some of the world's wilful sins, and thus to become dead to the world, that their spiritual being may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

This class, particularly large in the present day, will be delivered over to the adversary, to suffer in this great time of trouble. Such of them as respond to these tribulations, faithfully and loyally, will be counted as overcomers and be granted palms of victory, as shown in Revelation 7, and will be privileged to share in the marriage supper of the Lamb and to be honorable servants of the bride of Christ. If they fail to respond, and to wash their spotted robes in the blood of the Lamb, they will go into the second death.

It is this great trouble-time which the little flock, the Lord's goat class of faithful sacrificers, will escape, and which the great company will not escape, but will share. They will come up out of this trouble with washed robes, made white in the blood of the Lamb. Their sufferings will not wash their robes, but in their sufferings they will learn to appreciate as never before their relationship to the Lamb of God and to his atoning merit, and will by faith be permitted to apply the same to their own cleansing. As we consider the experiences of these children of God, so soon to come, let us all the more manifest our love for the Lord, and all the more seek to lay down our lives faithfully in the service of our King, and in behalf of the household of faith.

JESUS ALONE THE RANSOMER

It would not be correct to say that the scapegoat class atone for sin and thus make it possible for a certain part of humanity to be brought forth from the tomb. The tomb represents the penalty upon Adam for his transgression, and this penalty has been inherited by all of Adam's children. The Apostle says that "by one man sin [disobedience] entered into the world, and death by [as the result of] sin; and so death passed upon all men."—Romans 5:12.

The death of Jesus alone can cancel the sin of Adam. He only was the Redeemer, the Ransomer. He gave his life for Father Adam's life, and thus as a satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. Those for whom Jesus advocates as the members of his body become associated with him and identified with him in his work, not by virtue of their own merit, but because "accepted in the Beloved." These are Scripturally shown as having something to do with the cancelation of "the sin of the world," because of their association with the Head. The great company have nothing whatever to do with the cancelation of the sin of the world.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SINS AGAINST LIGHT

"The sin of the world" (John 1:29) was the sin of Adam; but there are other sins aside from Adamic sin, which was brought on the race by the fall. We may suppose that in every age there have been sins committed against a measure of light. But the sinners were not begotten of the holy Spirit, and therefore their sins against light would not involve them in the second death.

Nevertheless, in whatever proportion they had light and knowledge, they had also responsibility. And while Jesus died in order that all might have an opportunity of coming back from the tomb, and to perfect life, yet he did not die on account of any individual sin committed against light. For such sins the individual is himself responsible.

In the case of the church class, wilful evil-doers will be cut off from life. The Apostle Paul says that some were delivered over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that their spirit might be saved. Every wilful sin, no matter by whom committed, or when committed, must be answered for by stripes or by the death of the sinner.

SINS NOT COVERED BY CHRIST'S SACRIFICE

Nothing is to be atoned for by Christ's death but the sin of Adam. But other sins of direct responsibility, sins against light, must also be settled for. In olden times there were bitter persecutions of God's people, and those persecuted were obliged to dwell in caves and dens of the earth. (Hebrews 11:32-40) The transgressions against these, in proportion as they were committed with a degree of light, were to be settled for by the transgressors.

God's providence squared off the account against the Jewish people in the end of the Jewish age. There came upon that people wrath to the uttermost. The squaring of accounts for that nation, we understand, was completed A. D. 70. As for other nations, we must assume that God has dealt with them along similar lines—though not just the same; because they were not in covenant relationship with him as were the Israelites.

Coming down to the Gospel age, many sins have been committed which could in no way be covered by Christ's sacrifice—sins against a measure of light and knowledge. The chiefest of all these sins have been, according to the Master's words, against his people. He said that whoever would harm one of the "little ones" who believed in Him should have punishment; and that whoever would give even so much as "a cup of cold water" to one of these should have a reward.—Matthew 18:6; 10:42.

We read of terrible atrocities committed against the saints during the dark ages. They were covered with tar and burned; they were fed to wild beasts, their poor bodies being torn to pieces. They were tortured in innumerable ways. We are reasonably sure that some punishment is due to those who committed these atrocities. But the Lord has told us that we are not to judge before the time. In due time we shall be made judges of the world. Now we are to look to the Lord and wait for his judgment.

THE ANTITYPICAL SCAPEGOAT

The Scriptures indicate that as there was a settling time, culminating in A. D. 70, with the Jews, so there will be a settling time with those claiming to be Christian nations. To whatever extent they have lent themselves to injustice, to whatever extent they have sinned against light, they are responsible. We do not know the extent of their responsibility —God knows! But in this time of trouble he will square all these matters, in order that the new dispensation may be free from all accounts—that there may be nothing of this kind charged up to humanity. The sins committed nationally will be expiated nationally. And of course, as individuals suffered from the wrong-doing, so individuals will suffer in the expiation.

And how will God reckon with the injustice which he wishes to cancel, so that the world may come forth with a clean slate? We answer, The great company class will have a share in that trouble. And since they do not really deserve a share in the trouble, in the sense of having merited divine wrath, what they will suffer will be in a measure a suffering the merit of which will go to others. It is not a punishment to get into the great company class. The great company will be a very blessed class. They will not be seated in the throne, but will serve before the throne; neither will they obtain the divine nature. The little flock class will get the great prize of being associated with the Master, joint-heirs with him in the kingdom. The other class will get a reward on a lower spiritual plane—a spiritual plane, because they also were begotten of the Spirit.

So far as the great company are concerned, God's permitting them to share in the trouble at the end of this age will be for their own development. Their covenant was unto death; and unless they lose their lives in obedience to the Lord, unless they prove faithful unto death, they will not be worthy

of any position of life on any plane. Hence it will be to their own personal advantage that they suffer in that time. They are said to suffer for the iniquities, the sins and transgressions of the people of the world as the antitypical scapegoat. (Leviticus 16:21, 22. See TABERNACLE SHADOWS, pp. 68-72) Instead of allowing that merit of the great company to go for nothing, the Lord makes a credit of it, as it were, to balance the world's account for wilful sins.

THE FRIEND OF SINNERS

JUNE 14.—Luke 18:9-14; 19:1-10.

"I came not to call the righteous but sinners."—Mark 2:17.

In our Lord's parables he dealt chiefly with the Pharisees and the publicans; for the Sadducees were Jews in name only, not believing the Scriptures nor expecting a future life. The Pharisees were orthodox, reverenced the law and taught it to the people. Outwardly, they were very correct; but Jesus in various parables pointed out that with many of them religion was a ceremony and the keeping of the law an outward obedience, which did not extend to the heart. The publicans did not profess holiness, but rather confessed estrangement from God and lack of harmony with his law.

The Pharisees treated the publicans as though they were Gentiles—refused their company and would not even eat with them. The Pharisees recognized Jesus as being exemplary, and his teachings as in full accord with the highest principles. They wondered, therefore, that he did not join with them, and wondered still more that he would have fellowship with publicans—confessed sinners.

The secret of the matter is that Jesus looked not upon the outward appearance, but upon the heart. He did not love the publicans because they were sinners, nor disapprove of the Pharisees because they outwardly kept the law. We remember the case of the young Pharisee who came to Jesus and who, when questioned about the law, said, "All these things have I kept from my youth up." We read, "Jesus beholding him loved him." He was a sincere Pharisee.

The parable of our lesson illustrates this matter. It shows us the heart-attitude of some of the Pharisees and of some of the despised publicans: Both men went up to the Temple to pray. The one said in his heart, How thankful I am that I am not a sinner, like the majority of men and like this poor publican! I thank God that I am a Pharisee —that I am righteous! But the publican felt differently. The weight of sin was upon him. He could not look up to heaven. Striking his hand on his bosom, he exclaimed, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!"

From God's standpoint, both men were sinners—both needed forgiveness of sins. But the one trusted in his own imperfect works, and asked no forgiveness; the other realized his blemishes, and prayed for mercy. We are not to get the impression from this that God is more pleased with people who live in sin than with those who strive to live to the best of their ability in harmony with his law. The lesson is to the contrary. We must all realize that we come short of perfection, and that we need divine mercy. The sinner who recognizes this is more pleasing to God and nearer to forgiveness than the more moral person who fails to see his blemishes.

At another time, Jesus referred to this same error of the Pharisees, saying, "The whole need not a physician," and, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." By these words he sought to call attention to the fact that although the Pharisees claimed to be righteous, they were not so. They were sin-sick, imperfect, needing a Savior. But they were not in a condition to appreciate their need and to come to the Lord for forgiveness—not until they should learn their need—that they and all other members of the fallen race are sin-sick and need the remedy which only Jesus can give.

Not realizing their need, the Pharisees did not come to Jesus, did not become his disciples; and thereby they missed a great blessing. On the contrary, the majority of Jesus' followers was made up of publicans and sinners—people who had not been living proper lives, but who were earnest, who acknowledged their faults, turned from them and accepted the forgiveness and healing of the Good Physician.

PHARISEES IN OUR DAY

Both classes are still represented in the world, amongst Christians. Some are trusting in their church membership, their benevolences and general morality, for salvation, and ignoring the fact that all are sinners, and that forgiveness of sin is obtainable only through faith in the crucified One. Others today, not so conspicuous in religious circles, are all the more ready to discern their own weaknesses, to confess them and to accept forgiveness of sins and everlasting life as unmerited gifts of God based upon the sacrifice at Calvary. These latter, we may be sure, will have much advantage every way over the others as respects divine acceptance to joint-heirship with Christ in his kingdom.

The general lesson to us all is expressed by the Apostles James and Peter: "God resisteth the proud, but showeth his favor to the humble"—the penitent. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." Confess your sins, strive manfully against them, and trust for deliverance, ultimate victory and life everlasting through the merit of the crucified One, in whose footsteps you seek to follow.

A LITTLE MAN—A BIG HEART

The latter part of our lesson relates to Jesus' journey from Jericho to Jerusalem, just prior to his crucifixion. Multitudes were journeying in the same direction, going up to the feast of the Passover. As always, Jesus was the center of attraction; all wanted to see and hear him of whom we read, "Never man spake like this man."

Zacchaeus, a rich man of that vicinity, was one of those whose curiosity was aroused to see Jesus, of whom he had heard much. He was not a Pharisee; he did not profess holiness of life. He was one of those condemned and ostracised by the Pharisees. He had accepted a minor office under the Roman government; he was a tax collector for the Romans—a publican. On this account he was despised, and declared to be disloyal to Judaism.

Small of stature, Zacchaeus was unable to see Jesus because of the crowd. He therefore ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree, that he might have a good view of Jesus as he passed by that way. Little did he realize that the Master knew him and had read his heart and perceived in it honesty, and that therefore he was to be greatly honored. When Jesus came where Zacchaeus was, he looked up at the publican, called him by name and told him to come down at once, for he was to be his guest. The summons was gladly received by Zacchaeus. And we may be sure that the whole circumstance was greatly to the disgust of the Pharisees. They murmured at Jesus' being the guest of one not orthodox.

Evidently the murmuring reached the ears of Zacchaeus, too; for forthwith he addressed the Lord in self-defense—as though urging that these charges against him should not hinder the Master from coming to be his guest, and as intimating his desire of heart to be all that he ought to be and could be. He said: "Lord, behold, I give one-half of all my goods to the poor; and if I have wrongly exacted money from anybody, I restore him four-fold." Thus did Zacchaeus intimate his devotion to God and to righteousness, and his acceptance of Jesus as his Lord, his Teacher.

How did Jesus receive all this? He replied to Zacchaeus, "This day is salvation come to this house; for as much as he also is a son of Abraham." From the Lord's standpoint, all the sons of Abraham were eligible to discipleship. The thing required was an honest confession of imperfection, a turning from sin, a hearty acceptance of Christ and an endeavor to walk in his steps.

Unquestionably this same principle still applies, regardless of what men may think or say to the contrary. The Lord is willing to receive the repentant. No longer is it necessary to be of the natural seed of Abraham in order to be acceptable as disciples of Jesus. The middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile has been broken down, as St. Paul explains. All who have the faith of Abraham may be counted in as children of Abraham by becoming related to the divine plan as disciples of Jesus.

Our lesson closes with our Lord's words, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." Some who deny that Adam was created perfect, who deny his fall from divine favor and who deny that redemption by Jesus was necessary, have sought to sustain their position by saying that Jesus never referred to the fall, although the account in Genesis tells of it, and St. Paul and other apostles particularly mention it. But in this text we have Jesus' own statement as to why he came into the world at all. He did not come into the world to help along the adversary's schemes; but, as he says, he came into the world to be man's Redeemer—to seek and to recover, restore, that which was lost.

Everlasting life was lost, Eden was lost, human perfection was lost, the image of the divine character was lost. These could not be recovered by humanity, all of whom were under death sentence—the curse. God's compassion arranged

a plan, by which Jesus came into the world and gave himself a ransom for all.

The very fact that the Master speaks of his work as a ransoming one (Matthew 20:28) corroborates the declaration that man was under a sentence of death and needed to be ransomed from it. Without the ransom there could be no resurrection of the dead, no future life. The Bible is beautifully consistent and harmonious when we allow it to speak for itself. It demonstrates that it is the Word of God, written under divine direction.

TWO SALVATIONS—ONE SAVIOR

Although the race was one and although all shared the same sentence of death, nevertheless it has pleased God to provide two different salvations from this curse of death. Both salvations are based upon the great sacrifice which Jesus accomplished at Calvary. The first of these salvations is for the church class, called out of the world during this Gospel age, called to a change of nature—from human to spiritual nature. Even this first salvation is not yet complete, and will not be until the whole company of the church shall have been selected from the world, and by the first resurrection shall have been glorified with Christ. These will be joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom; and that kingdom will begin its work on behalf of the remainder of the world.

The second salvation belongs to the Millennial age, during which Messiah's kingdom will control the affairs of earth, and Satan will be bound. Then the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth. Then all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears be unstopped; and at that time the second salvation will be effective to all mankind. That will not be a spiritual salvation—to the new nature, like unto the angels. It will be a salvation to human perfection, and uplift out of sin and death to the image of God, as at first experienced by Father Adam.

Both salvations will be grand, glorious, though that of the church will be the more glorious. This salvation alone is open now; and the pathway to it is by the low gate and narrow way of consecration and self-sacrifice, walking in the footsteps of Jesus.

DIFFICULTIES OF THE RICH

JUNE 21.—Mark 10:17-31.

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon."—Luke 16:13

It must have been an enthusing sight for the disciples of Jesus to see a rich young ruler run after the Master and, on overtaking him, fall down on his knees at Jesus' feet, saying, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"—a very hopeful subject, we all agree. The Good Teacher did not answer the question directly; but for the benefit of the young man, and of others who have since read the narrative, he inquired why the title "good" was applied to him. He would have the young man notice, and would wish all to notice, that everything that is really good must in some way be of God and in accordance with God.

There were only two ways in which Jesus could be viewed. Either he was, as he claimed, the Son of God come into the world on a special mission in the interest of humanity, and therefore a servant of God; or, on the other hand, if he was not, he was a deceiver, misrepresenting himself and deceiving the people, and was bad, very bad. Jesus wished the young man to consider the force of his own expression and to decide at once this important question, upon which so much would hinge.

Not waiting for a reply, Jesus proceeded: "Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor thy father and thy mother." The young man replied: "Master, all these things have I observed from my youth." And Jesus, beholding him, loved him and said unto him: "One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up thy cross and follow me."

WHAT DID JESUS MEAN?

What did Jesus mean by telling the young man that the way to everlasting life was the keeping of the commandments? We would not so tell him now. On the contrary, we would tell him that he could not keep the commandments perfectly, and that his only hope for everlasting life would be through the exercising of faith in Christ and his sacrifice for sins.

Why did Jesus point to the law? We reply that the Law Covenant was still in force in Israel, as it had been for more than sixteen centuries. God's promise to the Jews was respecting the law. "He that doeth these things shall live by the doing of them." Righteousness was to be the condition of everlasting life. All the Jews understood this; and this young ruler confessed that he so understood, and that he had been striving to live according to this rule. Yet he realized that he was dying, like the remainder of the race. Therefore his query. Jesus' answer signifies, "You should not strive only to keep the law, and no more; you must be a sacrificer, and take up your cross and follow my example."

We are not hastily to suppose that Jesus meant that the riches should be given away recklessly or indiscriminately. Had the young man agreed to the terms and asked the Lord how he could best distribute his wealth, we doubt not that the Lord would have said to him, "Give it all to God; and then, as his steward, distribute it according to the wisdom which God will give you and according to his providential leadings." Even this full surrender of earthly possessions would not be sufficient for one who would gain a place in the kingdom class. He must do more; he must become active in the Lord's service, take up his cross, practicing self-denial, and follow on patiently in the narrow way of self-sacrifice, in the footsteps of the Redeemer, even unto death.

After the close of the Jewish age, Jesus would not have suggested the possibility of everlasting life through keeping the law, but rather would plainly have stated the impossibility of any imperfect person's keeping the divine law perfectly and the necessity of having the imputation of Christ's merit to cover his imperfections. Only thus can the righteousness of the Law be "fulfilled in us who are walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

SORROWFUL! FOR VERY RICH

The young Jewish ruler was anxious to do God's will, but not sufficiently anxious to be accounted worthy of membership in the little flock. He was willing to do right, to do justly, but unwilling to sacrifice. Jesus and all of his followers, on the contrary, engaged to sacrifice their lives, even unto death. "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God."

The riches of the young ruler were not of themselves harmful. God is very rich; Abraham of old was very rich. The difficulty was that the young man had set his heart upon the riches, so that when the testing time came as to whether he loved riches or God more, he demonstrated that he loved God and the divine will less than he loved his earthly property. He forsook the opportunity to do the greatest good, and thus turned his back upon a membership in the kingdom class. We are not, however, to understand that there is no hope for that young man, who had such a noble character that Jesus loved him. In due time he will be getting necessary lessons. Even while missing the kingdom opportunities, he may be one of the multitude who will be blessed by the kingdom.

Jesus points out this test, saying: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." The call of this Gospel age is to be servants of God at any sacrifice, with the assurance that "all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," and find the path to glory, honor and immortality in the footsteps of Jesus a very rugged one. God has purposely put the matter so that we cannot be servants of wealth and servants of God at the same time. He wishes to bring us to the testing point. With all of this class now being called out of the world to be sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ, the test is "God first." We should have no idols—either wealth or fame or selfish ease—which might attract our devotion away from God and tempt us to ignore the rich blessings which he is now offering to the faithful.

FEW RICH IN THE KINGDOM

The rich young man's failure to become a disciple on Jesus' terms furnished a text for Jesus. He said to his disciples: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" How difficult it will be for any rich man to get into the kingdom class!

The disciples were amazed at this; for, of the great bulk of those who were claiming to be the holiness people of their day, very few were Jesus' disciples. The richer Jews were chiefly associated with the Pharisees. How, then, could it be that few rich would enter into the kingdom? Was it not a mistake? Could Jesus mean it?

But Jesus emphasized his teaching, saying: "How hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom!

It is easier for a camel to go through the Needle's Eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."—Matthew 19:23, 24.

A CAMEL THROUGH A NEEDLE'S EYE

The illustration regarding "the eye of a needle" used by our Lord was unintentionally spoiled by our translators. How many have looked at an ordinary cambric needle, and have noticed the smallness of the eye and the impossibility of a camel's going through it, and then have felt perplexed!

The Needle's Eye referred to by Jesus was the name given to a small gate or opening in a large gate in the city wall. The gates of Jerusalem were closed at night for protection against robbers, and watchmen were on duty. The gates were not allowed to be opened until morning, lest a considerable number of armed men might enter and pillage the city. An arrangement was made, however, for travelers who failed to reach the gate before it was closed. The smaller gate, the Needle's Eye, was just large enough to permit a camel to go through after it had been unburdened—its load removed. Thus understood, Jesus taught that as a camel could go through the Needle's Eye, or smaller gate, only by having its load removed, so a rich man could enter the kingdom of God only by renouncing his burdens, giving up all to the Lord.

All this placing of the rich, the favored class, apparently at a disadvantage as compared with the poor, or disfavored class, caused amazement to Jesus' disciples. They inquired, "Who, then, can be saved?" The rich seemingly had all the opportunities of time, influence and money to enable them to give more and better service to the Lord than could others; and if they would have such difficulty in getting into the kingdom, how would it be with others, less favored apparently? Jesus answered that "all things are possible with God." That is to say, if the rich man's heart be pleasing to the Lord—if he be honest-hearted and humble, and his riches alone stand in the way—the Lord would know how to show him his will in respect to their use; or if this did not avail, the Lord would know how to strip him of his wealth, even as the master of the camel would unload his beast to permit him to pass through the Needle's Eye.

Many have had this very experience. They have been rich in honors of men, in social standing or in a financial sense; and God, in love and mercy, has stripped them of all these, giving them the necessary lessons, fitting and preparing them for a share in the kingdom. With God this is possible. He knows how to overrule all things for good to those who love him with all their heart, mind, soul and strength.

"WE HAVE LEFT ALL"

St. Peter seemed to get the thought that joint-heirship with the Master in the kingdom would mean a full surrender to God—a leaving of all and a yielding up of all—in order to a close approach to God and full acceptance by him. St. Peter said: "Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee."

Jesus did not fully endorse St. Peter's statement. He knew about Judas, who had not nearly left all. He knew about St. Peter himself—that some self-will still remained, and that self-preservation would lead him to deny his Master. But the answer that Jesus gave fully covered the question, not only for the apostles, but for all who have become followers of Jesus from that day until now. He said:

"Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake and the Gospel's, but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands—with persecutions; and in the world [age] to come, eternal life."

What a broad promise, and how abundantly fulfilled in its earthly respects to many! The persecutions they are sure to get; but everything sacrificed for the Lord's cause is compensated a hundredfold in the present life. How gracious the divine arrangements; and then beyond, the everlasting life and, if faithful, a share with the Master in the kingdom!

"But many that are first shall be last; and the last first." In other words, many possessing great privilege and opportunity for divine favor and exaltation to the kingdom will fail to embrace the opportunity, while others, naturally less favored, will gain the great prize of glory, honor and immortality. Again, we might say that those who first had the opportunity of becoming disciples of Jesus at his first advent will not on that account (except the apostles) have any preeminence or advantage over others of the Lord's followers in the future, nor did they have here.

AN INTERESTING QUESTION

GOD'S SUPERVISION OF THE NATIONS

"The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men."—Daniel 4:17.

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God."—Romans 13:1, 2.

Question.—Should we understand from the above Scriptures that God guides the affairs of nations, and chooses their rulers?

Answer.—These Scriptures are in harmony with other statements of Scripture. In the case of Nebuchadnezzar, for instance, after he had been seven years insane, lying amongst the beasts of the field, his reason returned to him and he extolled the God of heaven, acknowledging that God setteth up those whom he will and putteth down those whom he will. We understand that God's dealing with King Nebuchadnezzar was prophetic.

In the case of Israel God had very particular oversight of their affairs, and dealt with their rulers. David was anointed when he was a youth, to be king in due time instead of Saul. So with several others of their kings—the Lord had them anointed in advance. It might be said of Israel, that whoever sat upon the throne was there as the Lord's representative. We remember also that on one occasion the Prophet of God was sent to anoint one of the kings of Syria and to give him a prophecy respecting himself, that he should take the throne.

Looking back, we see that in the case of Pharaoh, the perverse king of Egypt, God declared, "For this very purpose I raised thee up, that I might show forth my power in thee." God did not approve of Pharaoh, but used him to show forth his own glory. God also used King Cyrus of Persia as a servant to perform his bidding.

GOD'S SUPERVISION OF CURRENT EVENTS

All of these recorded instances show a vital interest on God's part as to who shall come forward and who shall be retarded when these matters would affect his own plan. We are not to understand that these different kings represented God's choice as respects their loyalty to him, but that these were the ones through whom the divine plan in operation could be signally manifested and outworked. And so it is today. The Lord knew which of the men running for the office of President of the United States in the fall of 1912 would be the most suitable—the one who would most fully co-operate in the carrying out of the very conditions which he is pleased to permit to come to pass at this time.

The Lord guides in the affairs of nations now, only in so far as such oversight will promote the fulfilment of his own purposes. When the monarchs of various countries declare themselves "King by the grace of God," we do not agree to the thought they have in mind in making such claim. They are expressing the thought which has prevailed throughout Christendom for centuries—that they reign as representatives of the kingdom of God, and by his special favor. And likewise the Catholic church: When the pope claims that he is the head of the church of Christ, claims that he is Christ's Vice-gerent, he thus claims that Christ has set up his kingdom, and that the pope reigns in his stead.

OVERRULE TO OUTWORKING OF GOD'S PLAN

After the Papal power waned in Europe, and the Protestants came into power, the Protestant rulers claimed the same right that the Catholics had claimed—to rule as the Lord's special representatives. And it is from this standpoint that kings maintain that they reign "by the grace of God," that the kingdom of God is set up, and that they are reigning in God's kingdoms. We do not understand this to be the right thought, but that in God's providence he permits these to occupy the thrones of the world for the time being. We understand that God does exercise a supervisory oversight in respect to them—not that he has authorized them to represent him, or that he is responsible for their deeds and acts, but that he is so controlling matters as to cause them to outwork his own arrangements.

God will not convert a king in order to do this; he will not make him a saint. But he can allow or hinder events without interfering with the free will of any individual, and without becoming responsible for his government.

We may assume that this supervision of divine power is for the ultimate interest of mankind. We remember that there is a prince of darkness, who is seeking to do violence to humanity. Our thought is that the divine power hinders or

restrains, so that the worst things cannot come to pass until his due time, and he overrules to bring those into power who will have the disposition to do what he purposes to permit when his due time has arrived. However, since the Lord does not explain to us just how he does this, it would be wise for us not to be too emphatic in our statements.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

SOUNDS A NOTE OF WARNING

Dear Brother Russell:—

A peculiar circumstance occurred here in the Ecclesia on Sunday, March 15th, which I think should be brought to your attention. Just what it portends or just how far the several versions are to be relied upon, I cannot say; but as it appears to be in line with numerous warnings issued through THE WATCH TOWER for years past, I will state the facts upon which there appears to be unanimity.

It is the custom of the parents in this Ecclesia to allow the children to play during meeting hours in the ante-rooms adjoining our main hall. On this particular afternoon after the Berean Lesson had been in progress for some little time a commotion was heard in the children's room, mingled with screams of fright. One of the sisters was just entering the building when the matter started, and rushing into the room found several of the children hysterical, others cowering in abject fear with heads covered, and all greatly alarmed. When pressed for an explanation they stated that they had seen "a ghost." The older ones, better informed, declared they had seen a demon materialized, and that several arms had appeared protruding from the bare walls of the room. They declared that when they began to cry and shout, the apparition disappeared in the air.

It required some little persuasion to quiet them and to furnish solace in the suggestion that the Lord would not permit harm to come to the children of consecrated parents.

Besides this circumstance, two of the brothers in the class have had particularly heavy trials through semi-materializations of the demons within the last few weeks. Another brother who, I understand, has been clandestinely attending "Tongues of Fire" meetings on different occasions, suddenly became insane a few weeks ago and was sent to the asylum. His sad case gives many evidences of obsession.

Too many of the dear friends only half-heartedly accept the plain Scriptural teachings respecting the actual existence of these evil personalities and their pernicious activities. Some of these are in danger of severe testings from this source. Would it not be well to sound a warning? Can this sudden increase of activity on the part of these evil spirits, reports of which are coming from many sources, be premonitory of the "loosing of the winds" in the very near future? God help us all to have on the "whole armor and to stand in the evil day."

The Vow is still as valuable a factor in this "wrestling against principalities," etc., in exalted positions, as it was the day I made it my own.

With Christian love, your servant, WM. A. BAKER.

A SOFT ANSWER

Below is a copy of a letter sent by one brother to another in the endeavor to effect a reconciliation. We commend it:

Dear Brother:—

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and from Jesus Christ our Lord be unto you!

What is it, dear Brother, that has caused this difference between us? As brethren of the Lord we should not devour one another; for that is the spirit of the world, and as the Apostle says in Galatians 5:15, there is a likelihood of our being consumed one of another: "Take heed that ye be not consumed one of another," urges the Apostle.

What if, in our appreciation of the liberty that is ours, and of which we know through the Gospel, we should reach the point where we would be so contentious for our liberties, great and small, that we would consume some brethren for whom Christ died! What if in injuring another, the spirit of strife should so react upon us as to poison our own spiritual lives, and we also should be consumed, lost, as respects the gracious things to which the Lord has invited us and for which we have been running in the race!

Now, dear Brother, let the Apostle's words ring in our hearts, "Lest ye be consumed one of another."

With this thought before our minds, let us more and more put on the armor of God to fight against our own fleshly weaknesses and to fight for our dear brethren, assisting them by example and by precept to war a good warfare also against the world, the flesh and the adversary. Nearly all these contentions come through some misunderstanding. Neither you nor I have a desire to injure each other, but we earnestly desire each other's good.

For what I have done in any way to hurt your feelings in the past, I heartily ask your forgiveness; and believe me, I do the same with you, remembering Matthew 7:1, 2 and 6:14-16.

If our views are correct, dear Brother (I really believe they are), with regard to 1914, we have no time to lose; and as the Apostle says, "There should be no schism in the body; but the members should have the same care one for another." Now let me conclude with love, and Jude 24, 25.

Yours by His grace, J. HODSON.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

DR. ABBOTT'S OUTLOOK

"A minister asks a question which I may summarize thus: How can one who has accepted the newer thinking in theology so present it as to satisfy the desires of those who are longing for the old religion? It is a question which a great many ministers and some laymen are asking. The answer involves a consideration of the use and value of sermons and church services.

* * *

"One reason why many naturally devout persons have discontinued church attendance is because the church service for them no longer promotes the religious life. It seems to them unreal. They still wish to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk reverently, but the church service does not help them to do so. They have abandoned the church, but they have not abandoned religion. To bring them back to the church the church must somehow put new life into its services. It must make its expression of the religious feeling more effective in promoting the religious life.

* * *

"When astronomy compelled a new theory of the universe, and modern biology and anthropology a new theory of the origin of man and of sin, and modern criticism a new theory of the Bible, and modern sociology a new theory of redemption, the Puritan churches began of necessity to construct a new theology. The ministers who were familiar with modern discovery and the modern mind began to teach a new philosophy of religion.

* * *

"We no longer express penitence, thanksgiving, and consecration by offering sacrifices. But penitence and thanksgiving and consecration are essentially the same experiences that they were in the days of Ezra. Theology has changed. We no longer believe that man was created perfect six thousand years ago, and that sin came into the world as the result of the fact that a woman was persuaded by a serpent to eat a forbidden fruit. But doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God are essentially what they were in the days of Abraham.

"In our time there are a number of self-sacrificing and devoted philanthropists and teachers who have discarded both worship and theology and are endeavoring to promote the higher life by ethical instruction, illustrated and enforced by moral example. But while they endeavor to promote doing justly and loving mercy, they make no effort to promote reverent comradeship with God. They substitute the religion of humanity for the humanity of religion. Some of them are preaching ethical sermons in Christian pulpits. Some of them have come out from the church altogether and are devoting themselves to various forms of social service. They are doing unselfish work for their fellow-men, and in the lives of many of them Christian ministers might well find both example and inspiration.

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"But I do not believe that ethical culture can take the place of spiritual life. If all that humanity wants is well-regulated conduct, ethical culture might possibly furnish it—though that is doubtful. But that is not all that humanity wans. It wants character. What men think is important; what they feel is more important; but what they are is most

important of all. For out of what they are will come naturally and spontaneously their thinking, their feeling, and their conduct.

* * *

"The minister who would satisfy the need of his people must realize that their need is not a form of worship nor a philosophy of religion, but a life. If he uses a prayer-book, it must serve him as an expression of his own penitence, thanksgiving, consecration. If he does not use a prayer-book, his prayers must be real communion with God, not an address to his congregation. Whether he believes that man has been six or sixty thousand years upon the earth, that sin is the consequence of a fall from perfection six thousand years ago or the consequence of the animalism in us from which we have not yet fully emerged, that Jesus Christ saves us by having paid once for all the penalty of our sins in a sacrifice suffered long ago or by living with us and giving life to us in a perpetual sacrifice, is not unimportant. But it is insignificant beside the question whether penitence for his own sins and joy in his living Savior are real experiences or only book-learned theories. If they are real experiences and he can communicate them to his hearers, he will satisfy their real needs. If he communicates them through the old theology, some of his hearers will think him old-fashioned in his thinking; if he communicates them through the new theology, some of his hearers will fear he is not quite sound. But if he succeeds in giving to them that life the fruit of which is doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, they will accept the gift with thankfulness, whatever may be the philosophy which he employs in imparting the gift."—*Lyman Abbott.*

COMMENTS ON DR. ABBOTT'S OUTLOOK

We have wondered how such noble men of good thinking capacity as Doctor Abbott regard the future and their own change of religious sentiment. We have above, Doctor Abbott's own words on the subject. His expression probably represents fairly, generously, the sentiments of the large class of scholarly men among whom he is a leader. They have abandoned the old landmarks altogether. The personal God who takes personal interest in the affairs of man is unknown to this class. Some of them recognize a force operating in nature, and give this blind force the name god—Nature god. Others, admitting that they have no real ground for their contention, hold that there is a personal God who is so great that he takes no more account of man and his interests than men take account of ants, insects, microbes.

Yet still there is in the human heart a yearning for the sympathy of a divine Friend, which causes some of these bewildered leaders of human thought to ignore their own theories and to crave and worship a personal God of love whom they know not, and who has made, they think, no revelation of himself or of his plans, respecting which they make liberal guesses, frequently altered, mended, amended, contradicted. St. Paul seemed to have some such philosophers in mind when he wrote, "without God, and having no hope in the world." Jesus seems to have had some such persons in mind when he spoke of "blind leaders of the blind" falling into the ditch.

A DEPLORABLE CONDITION OF UNBELIEF

With many of these good people the trouble begins with their loss of confidence in the Bible as the inspired Revelation of God for the instruction and guidance of his people. As soon as any assume this attitude toward the Bible, they are like the mariner on the high seas who has lost his charts and compass and has become befogged. Occasionally a little rift in the fog gives him a view of some bright star; and for a moment he rejoices in the thought that he at least knows by the stars which way to steer his craft. But as the fogs shift, he is pitiably bewildered. He dare not even confess to the trusting passengers under his care the real status of affairs. He must be brave; he must secrete his fears and doubts and ignorance.

This appears to be the deplorable condition of the Higher Critics and Evolutionists. If we misjudge them, we shall be glad to have them set us straight. We shall be glad to be informed by what process of reasoning they have any knowledge whatever respecting a future life of any kind in any place. We shall be glad to be informed respecting any process of reasoning along the lines of their presentation that would go to demonstrate that they have, or could have, any expectation of a future life, except representatively through their children, who in some future time, thousands of years ahead, might be evolved to such perfection of mind and body and to such a mastery of conditions of nature as would permit them successfully to combat germs, microbes and hereditary weaknesses, and to live forever.

But how poor a prospect is this in comparison with the hope set before us in the Gospel—the hope of a personal future life by resurrection from the dead, a hope which Evolutionists and Higher Critics deride as chimerical! We can only return the compliment by declaring that the Christian's hope, founded upon the Bible, "the hope of the resurrection of the dead," seems to us far less chimerical, far less unreasonable, and much more advantageous to us in every way, than the hope of the Higher Critic and Evolutionist that though they perish, some of their great, great grandchildren may achieve everlasting life.

While we have no sympathy with Higher Criticism and Evolution, we have every sympathy for the many noble minds that have accepted these theories, to the destruction of their own joy, peace, and faith. Our experience gives us this sympathy. Once we had very much their position. We thank God for our deliverance from it into the brighter light from heaven which shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, shines through his words, shines through the writings and prophecies of the past, as explained by the appointed and especially inspired apostles of Jesus. Quite probably the majority of those whose views we are criticising came to their present views as did the writer.

A GREAT LESSON TO BE LEARNED

For three centuries the darkness of superstition has been gradually breaking; and although the Bible has come back to the people, it has been interpreted through creedal spectacles of various hues, but all of them dark. We have been unwittingly trusting the creeds and not the Bible. But more and more the absurdities of those creeds have become manifest in the advancing light of the Millennial morning. We have now come to the place where practically no intelligent people any longer believe the creeds of the past. But in repudiating those creeds, all have been in danger through the error of the supposition that those creeds represent the Bible teachings. Hence, to nearly all of us, the repudiation of the creeds has meant the repudiation of the Bible, however much we have desired to hold to the Bible as the divine light in a dark place.

The great lesson for us all now to learn is that while we have been right in repudiating the creeds, and while every one of them should be publicly as well as privately repudiated, we should return to the Bible and give it a fresh examination, totally untrammeled by the theories of the darker past. We should go to the Bible, expecting to find it in opposition to these creeds—expecting to find that the pure message of divine truth, as given out by Jesus and his authorized apostles, was corrupted during the dark ages—during the time when the Bible was ignored in favor of creeds formulated by bishops who mistakenly thought themselves Apostolic bishops, and who under Satan's misguidance led Christendom into atrocious errors and "doctrines of devils."—1 Timothy 4:1.

Only by such radical change of attitude toward the Bible—only by such confidence in God, confidence in the Bible as the Revelation to man of a God of all grace, the Father of mercies, are we prepared to view the Old Book from the proper angle, to see its real meaning, and to be convinced that it is the message of hope for the world, and of glory, honor and immortality for the church, and indeed true and worthy of all acceptation.

A NEW STIMULUS TO BIBLE STUDY

One of the chief aims of the Photo-Drama of Creation is to re-establish faith in the Bible as the inspired Word of God. It is our conviction that many of God's consecrated people are trembling on the brink of infidelity. The teachings of higher Criticism and Evolution, which have gone forth from the colleges and intellectual leaders of Christendom for the past forty years, have permeated, leavened, the thought, the sentiment of the whole world.

God's consecrated people need the helping hand which he through this Drama is, we believe, extending to them. It is wonderful to note how some of these are being reached by it, and how quickly some of them respond. A young man who witnessed the Drama in the New York Temple (W. 63d St., near Broadway), inquired whether or not there was something more that he could read along the lines pursued in the Drama. He was told of the six volumes of THE STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. He purchased them at once and read them. Returning, he said, "I had $700 saved up to put me through a theological course. I have concluded that in these volumes I have the theological course that I need."

The fairness of the Drama, its faithfulness to the Bible, and the gentleness with which it treats opposition, commend it to sober-thinking, honest-hearted people; and while all classes are welcomed, this special class is particularly desired and appreciated by the promoters of the Drama. Only those

who have been rescued from the darkness, obscurity and "mentally lost" condition of Higher Criticism and Evolution, can fully appreciate what it means to be saved from all that darkness, doubt, fog—what it means to have a firm foundation for faith in a God of justice, wisdom, love and power—what it means to know God and to have an intelligent appreciation of his great and wonderful plan of the ages, in which the church has first place, but in which the whole world of mankind is yet to receive a blessing and a glorious opportunity for everlasting life.

GERMANY DESERTING THE CHURCH

Church attendance in Protestant Germany is shrinking in what *The Christian World's* Berlin correspondent, quoted in *The Christian Work* (New York), calls an alarming way. According to a census made on a recent Sunday only 11,252 persons were attending the 68 State Protestant places of worship in Berlin. In the town of Chemnitz, in Saxony, with 300,000 Protestants, "the church attendance on this particular Sunday was 2,248." Or, taking the communion statistics as a test, "in Berlin, last year, only 14.81 per cent. of the Protestant population partook of the communion."

Of course, says our informant, the numbers are more satisfactory in country districts, but "in the towns, and in numerous country districts as well, not only is the number of communicants sinking, but it is rapidly sinking, and has been rapidly sinking for several years past." And we read on:

"In Berlin it is an established fact that the number of those who make a practise of going to church is rapidly decreasing. A serious journal here has been investigating the causes for this, and as a result of its inquiries among the working classes, it has obtained the following six reasons for the falling off:

"(1) The influence of the anti-religious press.

"(2) Social Democratic agitation against church.

"(3) The influence of evil-disposed neighbors and fellow-workmen on those who would otherwise attend.

"(4) The notorious unbelief of the educated classes.

"(5) The widely spread suspicion and dislike expended on the clergy, especially the belief that they do not themselves believe what they teach, and that their piety and truth are merely hypocrisy.

"(6) Finally, the fact that all public places of amusement are open on Sunday, and that it is exactly on Sunday that the proprietors of these places use the greatest efforts to fill them. Another reason given for the increasing absence of young people from divine service is the recent institution of associations such as scouts, wanderers, and boys' and girls' brigades, all of which have their gatherings on Sundays. The great horse-races are held on Sunday, also the chief athletic events. It is stated that all these things help to deplete the churches.

"Another journal in examining the causes at work in emptying the churches does not hesitate to remark that the antiquated methods employed by the clergy in addressing their flocks and in conducting their services are becoming 'repulsive' to churchgoers. Modern men in modern life will not tolerate a man in a pulpit calling them 'beloved hearers.' They hate the sanctimony and unctuousness inseparable from so many pastors. It irritates them to hear, 'firstly, my beloved,' and 'secondly, my dear brethren,' and 'thirdly and lastly.'

"Then there is a strong impression that much might be done to modernize the service of song. The Germans are the most musical people in the world and possess some of the most magnificent church music ever written. But they are beginning to lose all patience with those slowly droned-forth chorales in which there is neither force nor fire. With a sigh they think of the bright services of song in English and American churches."—*Literary Digest.*

LOOSING THE "FOUR WINDS"

"And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation."—Daniel 12:1.

There is something peculiarly forceful about this statement. We have known some to lay stress upon the word "such" in this verse of Daniel's prophecy and to suggest that this might mean, not that the trouble will be greater, but that it will be of a different character than any previous trouble. We do not share that view. Our thought is that it will be the most intense, as well as the most widely diffused trouble, the most general trouble ever known. We see a great many things which corroborate this thought. We can readily see that anarchy at this time would affect mankind more than at any previous time of the world's history.

In the past the cities were supported by a large farming element; and each farmer was accustomed to keeping his stock on hand, selling more directly to the consumer. Today the cities are large, more massed together than ever before. Food is shipped to these cities in large quantities. Additionally, the people have become extravagant; we probably eat much more food as a people, and of a daintier kind, than ever before. We would feel ourselves starved by what people ate in former times.

Our Lord fed the five thousand with bread and small fishes. Now the people would not be satisfied, as they were then, to sit down on the grass, with a piece of bread in one hand and a piece of fish in the other. Now they would want five dishes, at least—and knives and forks, etc. They would think that they were starved if they had only a piece of fish and a piece of dry bread. And now, instead of gathering up the fragments, they would feel like throwing the fragments away.

SYMPTOMS OF THE COMING TROUBLE

We are reminded of the strike of last year in some of the large cities of England. In Liverpool, it was only by having Government troops on guard that food could be distributed to keep the people from starving. So we can see how soon whole cities could be put into confusion and everybody go hungry to bed; and they would soon starve, if supplies were cut off.

We have reason to believe that this trouble in some respects will be accompanied by a ferocity never seen in the past. True, there have been atrocities committed in every age of the world's history. And it is true that we now have a veneer that goes by the name of Christianity; but there is no Christianity about it. We see more and more clearly how easy it would be to scratch off this veneer and get to the savage nature below it. This being so, we can see how the rendering of assistance of one part of the world to another part would be at an end. We also see how the evil spirits will be stirred up. We have every reason for believing our Lord's words to be literally true—that the severity of the coming trouble will be such as never before has been known.

Then again, we understand that the trouble at the end of the Jewish dispensation was a type, or foreshadowing, a parallel, of the great trouble coming at the end of this dispensation. The trouble that then came upon the Jewish nation was reckoned as having been the most severe in the world's history. The trouble at the close of this age will be on a vastly larger scale—world-wide.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM THE ONLY HOPE

As to the Socialistic movement, it is our thought that the Socialists will fail entirely in their attempt to carry out their ideas. Some of the ideas are good; some of them are medium; and some of them are bad. But they can never carry out the best of their ideas, because those who are controlling capital and managing the world's affairs will never give them the opportunity. Whether it will be the socialistic, the anarchistic or the capitalistic element that will bring about the anarchy, will depend upon which obstacle will be the most difficult to move.

All parties are very earnest, very intense, very obstinate. The capitalists fear that the whole country and every other country would "go to the dogs" if Socialism were in power. Therefore they would be ready to put it into the ditch rather than give it a trial. And so we do not expect that the Socialists will get sufficient power to take the reins of government. We think the attempt would result in anarchy, until divine power shall set up the kingdom which has been promised.

And by this we are not accusing any party in particular. We believe that under stress of failure either side would be ready to see the streets run with blood rather than see the other side win—they would be ready to go to any length to maintain their purpose and ideas. Each party is sure that it knows what it is doing. There can be no possible settlement. All parties are sure that they are right and are sure that they will succeed. When the crisis is reached, which seems nearing, the great whirl-wind will come, which will sweep all civilization before it. Thank God, that the kingdom of God's dear Son will end it when men shall have learned their own impotency!

THE FOUR GREAT WINDS

In Rev. 7:1, St. John mentions this whirlwind: "And after these things I saw four angels, standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." The winds of the earth referred to here are, of

course, symbolic. The thought is that the winds from the four quarters—North, East, South and West—are being held back, and that when the restraint is withdrawn they will rush together, and the result will be a whirlwind. Certain Scriptures tell of a whirlwind that will be raised up from the coasts of the earth. See Jer. 23:19; 25:32, 33; 30:23, 24. We do not understand that this will be a physical whirlwind, but this symbolic expression is used to convey the thought of a severe strife of the powers of the air.

These "powers of the air," or "winds," are not powers of natural air, but are the powers referred to by St. Paul when he speaks of Satan as "the prince of the power of the air." (Eph. 2:2) Those spirits who have been under the control of Satan—the fallen angels—were to be restrained in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day. (2 Peter 2:4) The letting loose of these winds, or air powers, would seem to show that God has let go his hand of restraint; that he will have to do with the permission of the terrible trouble that will come upon the world as a great cataclysm, which will result in the complete overthrow of the social order in anarchy.

We find that in spite of the many advantages of our day and the blessings showered upon the world, people are unthankful and ungrateful. Discontent is growing; and the result will be a great strife, and the complete fall of present institutions. Our text seems to imply that this outside influence will exercise a baneful effect upon men, when finally granted the liberty. These fallen spirits have been under restraint for these many centuries, but they have exercised their influence to whatever extent they have had permission. If they had had unlimited power they would have wrecked the world long ago; but they have been restrained in chains of darkness.

FALLEN ANGELS SOON TO BE LOOSED

Apparently God will soon cease to restrain the fallen angels, and they will then proceed to vent their fury upon humanity, so that the whole earth will be full of violence, the same as in the days of Noah. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man."—Luke 17:26.

It is true that the Savior gave the thought that at his second advent he would be present, unknown to the world, doing a work of gathering the church—of making up his "jewels"—and that the world would not know of his presence until the time of trouble was upon them. He said that they would be eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. (Luke 17:27-30) And this is true. The world is going into large contracts, etc., quite unaware of how near we are to the new arrangement, the incoming kingdom. But we believe that the very near future will be a time of great crime and angry passions.

We read of the time that God beheld the thoughts of men, that man's heart was evil and only evil continually—a very desperate condition. Our thought is that the loosing of these "four winds" is still future. The power manifested by the demons when loosed, will, we believe, be with a view to the injury of mankind. We do not know but that many of our readers will have a share in that injury. We have every reason to suppose that, if these fallen angels shall get loose, they will vent their first anger upon the Lord's people. We are not to fear this, however, but to take whatever the Lord's providence permits to come, knowing that everything shall work for our good. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," the difficulty thereof. Let us leave the whole matter in the Lord's hands and trust in him.

JUSTIFIED OR CONDEMNED BY WORDS

"By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."—Matthew 12:37.

The word justified here used by our Lord is not the justification referred to generally in the New Testament. The "justification by faith" of which St. Paul writes is the clearing before God of those who have from the heart accepted Jesus as their Savior. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Our justification is on the basis of our faith in God; we cannot come into his family without faith. The Apostle James declares that a living faith shows itself by work. And in God's arrangement he has made it necessary that we manifest our faith by such good works as we are able to perform. So faith and works together are bringing us into the character-likeness of Christ, thus to be sharers in his resurrection. If we have only faith and not works we shall never reach the goal; if we have all works and no faith, we shall likewise fail.

But "by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words condemned": here our Lord is not addressing the church at all. None were accepted to full justification and begetting of the holy Spirit until Pentecost, which was some time after this statement was uttered. These words were spoken to the Pharisees, who were being reproved. The word justified is used here in a limited sense. For instance, we might speak of some transaction we have made, and say, I felt justified in taking that course. Jesus was here using this word in a similar manner. He was addressing those who professed to have a special relationship with God under the Law Covenant, and to be especially holy. The Jews were not justified to life, but merely to fellowship with God. And now they were in their trial time: would they prove worthy?

DAY OF THEIR VISITATION UNRECOGNIZED

We read that they did not realize that they were in a testing time—that they had come under a certain judgment of God as to whether or not they as a people might continue as his servants. "They knew not the time of their visitation." Our Lord said, when riding into Jerusalem, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!" They as the house of servants were not worthy of a continuance of special favor at that time. For three and a half years there had been a certain kind of favor shown to them; the Gospel was preached in their midst. But the Gospel did not appeal to the nation; only to the "Israelites indeed" from among them, the faithful remnant. After the three and a half years which ended the "seventieth week," the Lord's favor to the Jews terminated, and from that time the door was thrown open to the Gentiles. And ever since then the Jews have had no preëminence over others.

The Pharisees professed entire consecration to God and great holiness. Jesus told them that they made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments; that they took the chief seats in the synagogues, and for a pretense made long prayers; and that they paid tithes even of the smallest seeds, mint and anise and cummin, but omitted the weightier matters of the law, and that theirs was merely an outward, perfunctory observance of that law. (Matthew 23:5, 6, 14, 23-25) He declared that the law commanded that they should love their neighbor as themselves. And he charged that they "devoured widows' houses"; they were ready to take advantage of the fact that these had no natural protectors. He told them that it would be foolish to think that by offering prayers on the street corners, etc., they were keeping the law.

WORDS AN INDEX OF THE HEART

"By thy words thou shalt be condemned"; that is to say, they should lose God's special favor. By their words they proved themselves dishonest. They perceived the good works of Jesus, but through jealousy and spite they said all manner of evil against him and crucified him. Everything they said against him showed their real heart-condition. They were demonstrating themselves as unworthy of God's favor. We are not to think, however, that the Jews came under God's everlasting disfavor. During this Gospel age they have been under special chastisements: they have had much persecution; but their faith in God has brought them this persecution.

God's wrath came upon them "to the uttermost" during those forty years ending the Jewish age. At the close of the year A. D. 70 the nation went to pieces. But the people have remained very much alive! And they are now soon to return fully to God's favor: "they are still beloved for the fathers' sakes." They have still a share in the arrangement made from the beginning, so their condemnation was not an everlasting condemnation. But they have lost the chief blessing.

Had they said, We are not yet able to see that this is the Messiah, but we are convinced that there is some wonderful power operating in him—had they used such words, they would have demonstrated themselves as desirous of knowing the right way, which God would have shown them just as some others were shown—especially after Pentecost. In such a case by their words and their conduct they might have been justified. They did not speak those words, however, because they did not have the right condition of heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Their heart-attitude was shown in their words; favor to their nation terminated.

WHAT CONSTITUTES EVIL-SPEAKING

The Apostle Paul says, "Speak evil of no man"; he does not say, Speak evil of no creed. Some of the creeds should be very evilly spoken of! It would do the people good

who are bound by them. He does not say that we are not to speak evil of an evil principle, but brings the matter down to personality. The Bible speaks of mankind as evil-thinking, evil-speaking, evil-doing; they are all under the ban in this sense. And to say that the whole world are sinners, is not speaking evil; for all recognize the fact. It is true, and every person ought to know that all men are sinners: sin prevails.

But when we come down to personalities, we are getting on dangerous ground. Jesus said that the Pharisees were hypocrites and whited sepulchres. He did not thus address an individual, but he spoke evil of the system, and of a class. So if we call attention to pickpockets, we are not necessarily casting reproach on any one in our neighborhood. But when we single out an individual and speak evil of him, we are on wrong ground, according to the Scriptures, except as a matter of necessity. If you know of a pickpocket, the proper course is to have him arrested. If you know that at one time a certain person was a pickpocket, it does not necessarily follow that he is one now; he might have reformed.

Therefore, when giving advice respecting pickpockets, it would not be right to single out this person or that one, unless we have positive knowledge. There are some behind prison bars who are today serving truth and righteousness. And so it is with some who have come out from behind prison bars. To keep up a reproach and brand one because of certain misconduct earlier in life is not right. It is not right to hold a reproach against any one, and hinder him from an honest course in the future. We would better say, Now you are a free man, and I believe you are determined to do right. The effect of this would be good—to let him see that some one who knew about the past was willing to help him. But if he gave no assurance of doing right, then we would feel free to put others on guard against him. If he were willing to do right, we should co-operate with him in any way possible.

THE WORLD FULL OF EVIL-SPEAKING

There is no doubt that there is much evil-speaking: the world is full of it. A man in business will often say of another, I would trust that man about as far as you could throw an elephant by the tail—a graphic way of saying how much confidence he has in him. Another expression is, I would not trust him with even a cellar full of cold water! The world has not come into the school of Christ; it is the church, therefore, that is especially instructed to speak evil of no man. Of course, it is natural for our fallen flesh to "dodge" nearly everything, and to try to think out some way by which we could justify ourselves in saying something unfavorable of another; and it seems that even the Lord's people have often "edged around" to see what excuse they could find for speaking evil and yet not feel condemned.

THE HUMAN HEART VERY DECEITFUL

It is to be assumed and presumed that every child of God has a heart that is desirous of doing the Lord's will, and that, therefore, none of them would desire to do that which is contrary to the Lord's will. But there is something in the fallen human heart which is very deceitful—determined to do the thing it used to do in the world. We have known people of the world who think nothing whatever of telling anything and everything about people. They will often say it in a whisper, knowing that the person to whom they tell it will whisper it to somebody else in five minutes. Even if they are not sure that it is true, it is too "good" to keep! They want others to share such a fine thing! They roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongue for awhile, and then hasten to spit it out to others, that they may help to carry it on! Evil burns to get out.

Well, it would not be wrong to tell the truth about a person, says one. Yes, it would be wrong! But, if I do not tell John Smith that Mary Jones owes me a bill, he may trust her. I must tell it to others because she may get in debt to them. I will not say very much: I will just shrug my shoulder and nod my head and say, You would better look out, or you will get bitten! And so if it were only a dime the person owes, she would be done a thousand dollars worth of injury.

Do we know something that we could tell, and is it "aching" to get out? If so, let us go before the Lord in prayer, and earnestly strive to follow out the injunction of the Apostle Paul: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Ephesians 4:31, 32.

IMPORTANT TO THE LORD'S PEOPLE

We believe that this matter of evil-speaking, dear brethren, is one of the difficulties of Christians—to know how and when and where to hold our peace in respect to the reputation of others. We know of a brother who had been in prison, and was released. He told us that he was glad to get out. We asked, Have you been telling any one about your having been in prison? Yes, he answered. Well, do not tell it again. Very few of the Lord's people would trust you if they knew. We will go to these that you have told, and tell them not to mention it, at all. It is a trait of our fallen nature to speak of these things.

EVIL-SPEAKING DEFINED

Of course there are people who are foolish; they would tell unfavorable things about themselves as well as about others. But most people would not be willing to tell anything disparaging about themselves, and we should stop and think, Shall I say anything detrimental about anybody? If the circumstances were changed, if I were in his place and he were in my place, would I like him to tell this about me?

But how would it be if we saw a man picking another man's pocket? Then we would feel fully justified in taking all the steps necessary for his arrest, because we would think that it would be the very best thing for that man as well as for others. We would think it right to shout, Pick-pocket! Pick-pocket! and have him arrested.

So far as we can determine, evil-speaking means the saying of anything that would be injurious to another, in a way or under circumstances that, if it applied to ourself, we would think unkind and injurious. In certain instances we have known of one who had been doing wrong, and we have sent him word that if he pursued such a course, we would believe it our duty to take some action in the matter; but that if he assured us he would abandon his course, we would do nothing. In this way, in several cases, the person has been kept from doing harm to others; and we were saved from openly making reference to the matter about which we knew, and which, perhaps, no other person in the world knew.

We need the wisdom from on high. And we believe that this attitude represents a necessary development of Christian character. If we really desire the good of our neighbor, and our own good, if we desire to honor him as we would wish him to honor us, then we must follow the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you."

Much evil-speaking would be avoided by remembering the following bright little jingle clipped from a secular Journal. The sentiment is wholesome and Scriptural:

"Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can."

St. Paul gives the same thought briefly, in the words, "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men."—Galatians 6:10.

DOES THIS APPLY TO YOU?

We fear that some of the dear colporteurs are being attracted away from the colporteur division of the harvest work. We urge all who have any measure of success as colporteurs that they should consider it one of the very best parts of the harvest field, yielding more fruitage to individual effort than does any other.

The Drama, so far from hindering the colporteur work, should greatly increase it wherever the Drama is produced. Wherever it is heard of, the attention of the people is drawn to the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

This is the favorable time of the year for colporteuring. Therefore, we would like to say something to re-encourage the noble band of faithful reapers who are laying down their time, their strength and their lives in this service. "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life everlasting."

There never has been a time when so many people have been manifesting an ear to hear the truth. Superstition is dying. Ignorance is giving way before the better knowledge of God and of his Word. The Drama is helping all this. Nevertheless, those who merely see and hear the Drama have only gotten a start in the right direction. They need to read the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES with their Bibles, that they may be thoroughly furnished and may put on the whole armor of God, and thus be prepared for the impending trials of the near future.

The field is large. If you have time to invest in this precious service, write to us for hints, or methods, and for prospectus, and for assignment of territory—indicating what territory you prefer, giving first, second and third choice of locality. This proposition applies to all the unincumbered possessed of any talent and address. The greater your talent, and the better your education, etc., the greater your ability for serving the Lord in this part of the harvest field. Many housewives can spare one or two hours daily for this grand work. When the privilege reaches us it becomes an opportunity for demonstrating to the Lord our zeal for him, for his truth and for the household of faith. Many teachers will have vacations shortly. What better way could be found for spending it than in the service of the King of kings? Moreover, it is healthful employment. Those who cannot colporteur should remember that the opportunity still remains for volunteering, and that our new volunteer matter is ready and going out rapidly.

"CALLED OF GOD, AS WAS AARON"

JUNE 28.—Hebrews 4:14—5:10.

"The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost."—Luke 19:10.

Today's lesson deals with the Priesthood of Jesus and, incidentally, with the priesthood of his church. He is the High Priest, or Chief Priest, of our profession, or order, writes the Apostle. The Jews found it difficult to understand how Jesus could in any sense of the word be associated with the priesthood. The Lord God had confirmed the priestly office to the family of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi. Jesus did not belong to that tribe, nor did his disciples. How could he fill or have to do with the priestly office?

The necessity for discussing the question arose from the fact that, as St. Peter had pointed out, the church is a royal priesthood. So St. Paul shows that as the antitypical Priest, Jesus had offered up himself as the antitypical bullock for sin atonement; and that after so doing he had ascended up on high and thus entered the antitypical Holy of Holies, appearing there on our behalf—on behalf of his church, the antitypical Levites, the antitypical under-priests.

St. Paul argues that because we can by faith recognize Jesus as our great High Priest in heaven and know that he has sympathy for our imperfections, therefore we may come to him with great courage, when overtaken by a fault, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need. But all these blessed assurances will be without force unless we can realize that Jesus is our High Priest in heaven. Hence the Apostle's argument in this lesson is a demonstration of this fact.

AARONIC PRIESTS WERE TYPICAL

The Apostle reasons (5:1) that all the Jewish priests were taken from amongst their fellows and especially ordained, or set apart, for their work, to represent their people before God, offering for them both their gifts and their sacrifices for sins. In this arrangement the priests were able to sympathize with the people, because they were subject to the same weaknesses, and also had need of the forgiveness of their own sins. But even amongst these imperfect, blemished, sinful priests, who needed to make offerings for their own sins, none was allowed to take this office of himself. God must call him to the office. Thus it was with Aaron. God called him to be the head priest.

So, the Apostle points out, it must be with the antitypical priests on a higher plane. Christ, the High Priest spiritual, and his elect church, the royal priesthood on the spirit plane, must also be called of God. They could not assume the office otherwise. "Christ did not glorify himself to make himself a High Priest." God honored him in this way, however, saying to him in the prophecy of the Psalms, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee"; and again, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."—Psalms 2:7; 110:4.

MELCHIZEDEK A ROYAL PRIEST

On this broad foundation of the divine call the Apostle declares that Christ is not a priest after the order of Aaron—a Jewish priest, an earthly priest; but, although typified by Aaron in respect to an earthly sacrifice, he is really a glorified priest, not after the order of Aaron, who was never glorified, never a king, but after the order of Melchizedek, who was a king and a priest at the same time—not a sacrificing priest, but a reigning priest.

So Christ in glory is not a man, not an earthly being, not the sacrificing one, as before. He is the glorified kingly priest, in power and great glory now as the king of saints, able and willing to succor them in all their trials and difficulties. And by and by, after he shall have accepted all of his under-priests—after he shall have changed them to his own glorious likeness in the first resurrection, beyond the veil—then he will become the king and priest in glory to the world, and for a thousand years will reign to bless and to uplift all the willing and obedient who, under the enlightenment then afforded, will draw nigh unto God.

"IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH"

Coming back to his argument, the Apostle shows us the connection between the glorified kingly priest beyond the veil and the suffering Jesus in the flesh. (5:7) When the Apostle writes, "Who in the days of his flesh," we are to understand that the days of his flesh are past, ended. As the Apostle Peter elsewhere explains, "He was put to death in flesh, but quickened in spirit"—in his resurrection. But in the days of his flesh Jesus offered up strong cryings and tears. The Apostle seeks to give us, as the followers of Jesus, confidence in his ability to sympathize with us in all of our troubles. Therefore he reminds us that Jesus "in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him out of death, was heard in respect to that thing which he feared."

Our minds instinctively go back to the Master's experiences in Gethsemane—his prayers to God, his tears, his agony, and according to one account, his bloody sweat. The Apostle's thought, his suggestion, is that the Master who had himself passed through such trying and bitter experiences, and who is now in heavenly glory and power, will surely sympathize with and succor all of his true followers, even though he may allow them to have Gethsemane experiences and buffetings of the adversary.

AS A SON—NOT AS A SINNER

The sufferings of Jesus, the Apostle points out, came not to him because he was a sinner, but because he was a Son and because as a Son the heavenly Father would prove, test, his loyalty unto death, even the death of the cross. Only by such a test of loyalty could he be deemed worthy of the high exaltation designed for him and promised—glory, honor and immortality, divine nature. The things which he suffered, the things which he endured, not only were to constitute a sacrifice for human sin and to make possible human restitution through the Messianic kingdom, but those same trials, difficulties and experiences were necessary to the Master himself. As the Apostle proceeds to say, he was made perfect through sufferings.

Jesus was not imperfect at any time in the sense of being sinful. He was perfect, undefiled, in his glorious condition as the Logos, before he left the glory which he had with the Father and was made flesh. When born of Mary, the assurance given us is that he was still "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." His sufferings, therefore, did not make him perfect in the sense of making him sinless. The perfecting was of another kind.

Our Lord had entered into a Covenant of Sacrifice—to prove himself loyal to the Father's will, even unto death. He had the promise of perfection on the highest plane—the promise of the divine nature—as a reward, if he would fulfil his Covenant of Sacrifice faithfully, loyally. The beginning of that new nature was granted to him at the time of his baptism, when he was begotten of the holy Spirit. But the new nature begotten there needed development, or perfecting; and it was for this purpose that the trials, difficulties and buffetings were permitted to come to him. He was made perfect as a new creature of the divine order, or nature, by the things which he suffered.

SAVING HIM FROM DEATH

In the Master's case, after he had entered into a Covenant of Sacrifice, it was a matter of either life or death. His obedience to the Covenant of Sacrifice would bring him the life immortal, divine. But any failure would cost him his all; for his all was staked in that Covenant of Sacrifice. Hence in the Garden of Gethsemane his strong crying and tears were not caused by timidity in respect to the impending crucifixion, or by anything that man might do unto him. They were not caused by doubt respecting the divine power or the divine faithfulness. The Master's fear was of death—lest he should have failed to comply fully with all of the divine requirements, and should thus lose all in death, and not be accounted worthy of a resurrection.

The Apostle says, "He was heard in respect to the thing which he feared." He was delivered from the fear of death. From that moment onward the Master was the calmest of the calm, in all the trials and stress of that night and the follow-

ing day. We cannot doubt that the Father assured him that all was well—that thus far he had proven himself faithful.

LEADER AND HIGH PRIEST

On the basis of his own victory and exaltation Jesus is now "the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him," says the Apostle.—5:9.

The first salvation which this antitypical priest after the order of Melchizedek effects is the salvation of his church, a little flock, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. These are to be saved to the same glorious station which he himself has attained. Nor can they reach that station by any other road than that which he traveled. Hence his invitation to them is that they take up their cross and follow him; that they walk in his footsteps through evil report, through good report, faithful unto death, as he was.

Not that it is possible for any of his followers to overcome in the same absolute sense that he did; for he was perfect in the flesh, and his followers are all imperfect through the fall. What is required of his followers is that they demonstrate the same heart loyalty that he manifested—the same willingness to do the Father's will and to sacrifice every other interest. For these the great High Priest appropriates the merit of his sacrifice, imputing it to his followers as a covering for all their unintentional blemishes and shortcomings. Thus they are assured that they may stand complete in him in the Father's sight, and by and by in the glorious first resurrection be made actually perfect by that glorious consummation—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom."

But in order to attain this position, all of the followers of Jesus must obey him, must follow his directions. Then he will succor them and guide them to the heavenly kingdom. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Additionally, he will be the author of salvation to as many of mankind as will obey him when he takes over the kingdom, the dominion of the world, during the thousand years of his Messianic reign. All who then refuse to obey him will be destroyed in the second death; but all the willing and obedient will ultimately be perfected as human beings, earthly beings—restored to the perfection in which God created Father Adam, plus valuable experience in connection with sin and recovery from it.

"Tell the whole world these blessed tidings;
Speak of the time of rest that nears;
Tell the oppressed of every nation,
Jubilee lasts a thousand years.

"What if the clouds do for a moment
Hide the blue sky where morn appears?
Soon the glad sun of promise given
Rises to shine a thousand years.

"Haste ye along, ages of glory;
Haste the glad time when Christ appears.
O! that I may be one found worthy
To reign with him a thousand years!"

LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD

JULY 5.—Matthew 20:1-16.

"He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."—Matthew 5:45.

This parable is difficult of interpretation so as to make all of its facts find fulfilment. The Great Teacher gave it as a parable of the kingdom; hence we know that it applies to the experiences of the church during this Gospel age. If we were to apply the different intervals mentioned to different epochs in this age, we would have difficulty; for the apostles and others, called early in the age, did not live and labor throughout the entire period. Again, in so applying it, we would face the proposition that only those at the beginning of the age had definite promise as respects a reward—that all others got merely the assurance that they would receive what would be right.

Another difficulty which we would encounter in interpreting the parable is how to apply the murmuring of those who were first called and last rewarded. Other Scriptures show us that the apostles and others first called in the Gospel age will experience their resurrection change before those who will be living at the second coming of Christ. St. Paul declares that the dead in Christ shall rise first, and that then those of us who are alive shall be changed. Furthermore, it would be unthinkable that the apostles and others of the early church would murmur at the reward to be given them.

All of these difficulties must be borne in mind when we attempt to find a solution of this parable that would fit the experiences of the church as a whole during the Gospel age.

If we attempt to apply the parable to the individual experiences of God's people, we have trouble also. Applying it thus, we might say that those who begin a Christian life early, and are found faithful in the Lord's service at the evening-time of life, would be the ones first called and promised a reward. Others coming in later, and serving the Lord's cause with only a portion of their time, strength and talent, would correspond to those who heard the later call—some even at the eleventh hour. If we interpret the parable as meaning that all these will get a similar reward regardless of the time spent in the Master's service, we would still have difficulty with the fact that those called earliest murmured, complained, were dissatisfied.

On the contrary, we are surely convinced that any who would murmur against the Lord's will and his just and loving arrangements for his people, will never obtain the kingdom reward beyond the veil. We may feel assured that any who receive the Master's "Well done" and the resurrection change will be far from murmuring. They will rejoice and be glad, and feel more than rewarded for every little service and sacrifice. How then can we apply this parable consistently, in harmony with the teachings of other Scriptures respecting the reward of the kingdom class? We can think of only one way, and that is to apply the parable entirely to present-life experiences of the kingdom class, especially of those who will be living at the close of this Gospel age.

PARTLY APPLICABLE TO THE JEWS

For sixteen hundred years and more the Jews waited for the first coming of Messiah and the blessed opportunities which then would come. When Jesus began his ministry, he preached, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," and gave the Jews the privilege of entering into it. That privilege was a "penny," or a reward for their faithful endeavor to keep the law all their lives. But when the offer of the kingdom was promulgated, some publicans and sinners were attracted—some who had previously neglected God's service and labors in the vineyard. These new laborers were received by the Lord Jesus and given an opportunity to become his disciples.

The privilege of discipleship was the penny, or reward. The Scribes and the Pharisees, who had been faithful to the Lord God all their lives, considered that they should have had some pre-eminence or preference over the publicans and sinners; and they murmured at any arrangement as unfair which would not give them the first opportunities of the kingdom. If publicans and sinners were to obtain the blessed privilege of discipleship with Messiah, then surely, they thought, some still higher favor should come to them. They murmured that Jesus received publicans and sinners and ate with them.

One of the Master's parables was intended as a special reproof to the Pharisees along this line. The prodigal son represented a class of Jews not living up to their privileges, while the elder brother represented those who had continuously sought to be earnestly and actively engaged in the Father's business. When some of this prodigal class received the message of God's love from the lips of Jesus and his disciples, and returned to the Father's house and were treated graciously and given the same privilege of sonship as those who had not gone astray, but who had labored faithfully, the elder-brother class was offended. They murmured, and refused to participate in the feast. Thus there were some who were first in opportunity, but who were last so far as the blessing was concerned, and others who were last and least found opportunity for receiving the divine blessing sooner and more effectively.

APPLICABLE ALSO TO CHRISTIANS

The general lesson of the parable would seem to be that we should appreciate the fact that whatever God has to offer is a gift. We should enter his service with loving loyalty to principle, to righteousness. If we have served many years, that privilege of service should be esteemed; and our interest in the Lord's cause should make us happy. From such a standpoint of appreciation of the privilege of service, we should be glad to see the Lord's work carried on, glad to see others enter the service and glad to see them get the same reward that we hope for ourselves. Only those who have such a broad spirit, such an appreciation of the privileges of

the vineyard, such a sympathy for "as many as the Lord our God shall call"—only these will be fit for the kingdom proper and in readiness to receive the special privileges of knowledge and opportunity when the kingdom is ready to be announced.

As the typical kingdom was offered to the Jews in Jesus' day, and as those who were newest in divine service received the same opportunities for a share in the kingdom with those who had been long engaged, so apparently it is to be in the end, or harvest time, of this Gospel age. Those who have all their lives been seeking to be faithful to the Lord and to serve his cause should remember that they have had that much more of privilege and blessing. If some shall enter the divine service later, they should be rejoiced with as fellow-servants.

Indeed, all who are servants, according to the Word of the Lord, should be praying the Master to send other laborers into the vineyard, instead of feeling jealous of any others who might come. And as greater knowledge of present truth is now coming as a reward to all who labor at all in the vineyard of the Lord, let us not be surprised if this shall be equally distributed to those who have come in recently and to those who have been a long time in the Master's service.

Let us rather rejoice in the Lord's ways. Let not our hearts be angry because of his graciousness to those who have come into the service even during the eleventh hour. Are they not brethren? Under the terms of the Golden Rule should we not wish them to have the same blessings that we enjoy? Any aloofness on the part of those who have been longer in the Lord's service—any feeling on the part of such that they must have more manifestation of the Lord's favor now—is evidently wrong. The Lord would have us more like unto himself. And this is the suggestion of those who have selected the Golden Text for this lesson. Be ye like unto your Father; for he is kind to the unthankful. "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."—Matthew 5:45.

LESSONS OF THE GOLDEN TEXT

More and more we are learning that in a very large and important sense our forefathers during the dark ages lost the proper conception of God's character and of his plan for human salvation. Instead of picturing him in the creeds as loving and gracious, they portrayed him in very different colors. The creeds of the dark ages, which have been handed down to us, have given us colored and distorted views of the teachings of the Bible. Only in recent years are Bible students beginning to discern this fact. Nearly all people of intelligence have now cast away the creeds as irrational in the general trend of their teaching—in their representation that God from the beginning purposed a hell of fire and everlasting torture for nearly all his human creatures, numbering thousands of millions, and a Paradise of bliss for only a saintly handful, an elect few.

But alas, while we have been realizing the errancy of our creeds, and have been discarding them, many of us have failed to notice how different their teachings are from the teachings of the Bible! But the Bible is being sought after again. The colored creed-spectacles which distorted our view are being broken to pieces. We are learning to read the Bible in its own clear light, and a blessing proportionately is coming to us.

Notice, for instance, this text: "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." Brother Calvin, Bloody Mary, and thousands of others during the dark ages, committed horrible atrocities in the name of religion, in the name of Jesus, in the name of the Father, thinking that they were copying God, being like their Father in heaven. But alas, they knew him not aright! They had been following demon-drawn pictures which represented the almighty, gracious God, the Father of mercies, as most devilish in his plans and arrangements for his human creatures. Now we are seeing what Jesus really meant when he said, "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." Now we are including the remainder of his statement: "For he is kind to the unthankful"; and "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Two of the very noblest of Jesus' disciples caught the wrong thought, even though they were for awhile personally present with the Master. How much more should we excuse those who, during a long period of energetic creed-making and of neglect of Bible study, lost all proper conception of the divine character!

The two disciples referred to were James and John, the sons of Zebedee. When the Lord and his disciples had run short of food, James and John went to a city of Samaria to purchase bread. The Samaritans inquired why Jesus did not come to their city to heal the Samaritan sick, as well as the Jews. When they learned that his mission for the time was exclusively for the Jews, they were offended and said: Buy your bread from Jews, then; we will sell you nothing. Then it was that James and John, indignant that their Master, the heir of all things, should be thus dishonored, asked permission of Jesus to call down fire upon the Samaritans, to consume their city. These disciples thought that they had the spirit of God. But Jesus said, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

And if these two dear disciples needed to be corrected—needed to be shown that they had a wrong spirit in wishing to destroy the Samaritans—how much more would Jesus' reproof be appropriate to those who in the name of God would consign all opponents to an eternity of torture!

But such were some of us, in our ignorance, in our superstition, in our creed-intoxication—as a result of drinking the wine of false doctrine. (Revelation 17:1-5; 18:3) Thank God for the deliverance! Praise his name for the saner views coming to his people! The dawning of the morning of a new dispensation is giving enlightenment. The Sun of Righteousness is rising; the hobgoblins of the past are fleeing before its illuminating rays. "Tell the whole world these blessed tidings."

THE GLORIOUS CHARACTER OF OUR GOD

Now when we read our Golden Text we see that it tells us that as our God is gracious, loving, merciful, kind, even to the unthankful, even to the unjust, even to sinners, so we should be kind, generous, loving, should do good unto all men as we have opportunity, and especially to the household of faith. This view of God appeals to our hearts; and the more we study this God of love, the more we realize that he is the only loving and true God, and that all of our previous misconceptions were unreal, unloving, untrue—gods of our own manufacture—and the more do we see that civilized lands have made creed idols with pen, type, ink and paper, more horrible than any which the heathen ever made of iron, stone, brass or clay

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." If the ideal of his heart, the God that he worships, is cruel, vengeful, hateful, devilish, it would be a miracle if that man or woman worshiping such a false deity would not become more or less contaminated and be led into more or less of wrong thinking and wrong doing. But when we get before the mind's eye the loving and true God as our ideal, we are more and more changed and transformed day by day as we discern our Maker's gracious character. Unconsciously we copy this high ideal, and more and more become transformed through the renewing of our minds, and more and more prove the good and acceptable and perfect will of God in our daily lives.

Let us hold fast that which is good—the sure Word of God. Let us discard the human theories of the dark ages, which greatly misrepresented to us the divine message. Thus we shall be giving heed to the Master's words: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

"Who trusts in that Word has the sweet hope of life,
An end of confusion and error and strife.
Its grace it imparts to the truth-seeking soul,
Who humbly submits to its righteous control."

WELL-MEANING, BUT HINDERERS

We feel sure that all of the Lord's people have only the best of motives. How could they have other than good motives and yet be recognized by the Lord? Selfishness may creep in and assert itself to some extent without being detected by the new creature; but being detected, it is to be restrained, demeaned, put to death. The entire course of the Lord's followers is one of experience in respect to personal imperfections of mind and body, and in respect to properly understanding the words and conduct of others.

We have two items which we desire to bring to the attention of such brethren as have to do with public speaking, introductions, funeral services, etc. Our suggestions and criticisms should be understood as intended to be helpful to the brethren themselves and to the cause we all love to serve.

(1) We are informed that, when serving at funerals, some of the brethren, anxious to tell the good tidings respecting death and the wages of sin upon our race, and the redemption and the resurrection as the release from the penalty, are in

danger of going to extremes. Sometimes they preach too long —attempting to tell more than is proper on such an occasion. At other times they are so intent upon presenting the Gospel message and Bible explanation respecting death, that they forget to speak a word of comfort to the bereaved members of the family of the deceased, or to make some reference to the deceased, his character, his zeal for God, his devotion to the Bible—or some other truthful eulogy comforting to the bereaved family.

We are not wishing to intimate in any sense that ordinary funeral sermons, which are wholly eulogistic and give no attention to the Bible teaching respecting death, are right. We merely wish to suggest that a course of moderation is a wise one, bringing in an explanation of some of the divine plan, and making some reference to the deceased and his family, etc.

(2) Great care should be exercised in the selection of a brother to do the introducing of a public speaker. Far better is it that there be no introduction at all, than that a wrong one be made. The person who thinks the occasion a suitable one for showing off himself, his eloquence, his knowledge of the Bible, etc., should not be entrusted with any work of introduction. The person who thinks it an opportunity to tell all he knows of the divine plan and to inform the audience in advance what the speaker intends to tell them, is just as much out of place as is the person who, being invited to offer an opening prayer, stretches it out into a discourse, wastes valuable time and disgusts everybody with his lack of propriety. More harm can be done in two minutes by the person who introduces the speaker than the latter could undo in two hours.

Humility, modesty and brevity are grand qualities everywhere, but are especially appropriate in those who would introduce a speaker, whether at a Class Extension meeting, Pilgrim meeting or any other.

On such an occasion the one leading in prayer should make it merely an invocation. The audience has not come together to hear him pray, but to hear the address. His invocation should thank God for the privileges of the hour, for the liberty granted in our day, for the desire of heart to know the truth and for an open Bible. Requests should be made of the Lord for a divine blessing upon the meeting—upon the audience and upon the speaker, that the Lord's name may be glorified, that the truth be advanced and all who love righteousness be blessed.

The introduction should be brief also. It should not say, "The speaker will tell you what we believe," as though making a distinction between the audience and the small group in the audience who profess to be teachers. With greater humility, it should be something like this: "It is my privilege and honor to introduce the speaker of the afternoon. He comes to us under the auspices of the International Bible Students Association, bringing, we believe, a message from God's Word. We trust that it will be convincing, encouraging, helpful. Let us hear candidly, remembering the Master's words that we are to be sanctified through the truth, and that his Word is the truth. Let us therefore rejoice in proportion as the Word of the Lord is heard with the ears of our hearts. I now introduce to you ———, whose topic for the occasion is ———."

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL

The freedom of the will is an expression evidently brought forward in contradiction of the thought that humanity are mere machines, acted upon by certain influences; for instance, that God would act upon a person so as to oblige him to do or to will or to think in a certain way, or that Satan could control the will of any one for evil, against his desire.

The Bible gives us to understand that when God created man, he made him in his own mental image; that is to say, with freedom of will to choose his own course of action—ability and liberty to reach a mental decision for himself. The Bible indicates that God similarly created all the intelligences of the spirit world—angels, cherubim, seraphim, etc., all of whom are said to be in God's image, possessing full liberty of will.

As God can choose that course or this one, so can we. We can be obedient to God or disobedient to him, just as we will. But by reason of the fall and its curse, or penalty of death, and the blighting of human powers by the dying processes, the human will often finds itself in difficulty. The Apostle Paul says, "To will is present with me, but to perform" is not always possible. (Rom. 7:18) We should will to do perfectly, although none is able to do perfectly. On the other hand, one might will to do wrong, but might be more or less hindered in executing his will. In either case, the will is free.

There is such a thing as a dominated will. By yielding their wills to occult influences, some persons are mastered by evil spirits. Such practically lose their wills, and we call them deranged, insane. It is said that more than half of all the inmates of insane asylums are there, not because of any functional derangement of the brain, but because of being possessed by evil spirits.

INDIVIDUALITY TO BE PRESERVED

God's people are given to understand that the only way in which they come into relationship to God is by full submission of the will to him. Such a submission of the will would be unwise except to the Lord; or, in the case of minor children, to their parents, or teachers.

A child might properly reason, I have a will of my own, but I will ignore it and do the will of my parents. This is the proper attitude for a child in the hands of good and intelligent parents. The child should be taught to realize that its will is uneducated, and that it should, therefore, submit itself fully to its parents and look to them for guidance and direction. But every parent, while recognizing his responsibility as the supervisor of the child, should treat the child from the standpoint of its free will, and seek to show it the reason why a matter should be thus and so, controlling it as far as possible by the intelligent exercise of its own will.

And so with those who are in the family of God. It is a primary requisite that they first submit themselves to God —give up their own wills. They are first to recognize that they are unholy, born in sin; that they have imperfect, fallen tendencies, which if pursued, would be injurious. Therefore they should seek to make the will of the Lord their will. They should give themselves fully up to his guidance; his will concerning them is only for their good. The Lord teaches his followers that they are to reason for themselves; they should read between the lines in their study of the Bible, to gain the instruction which he there furnishes. They will thus be better enabled to know his will, and will come more and more to see how much better God's will is than their own, and thus will come more fully into heart-harmony with him, and with the Lord Jesus.

The fredom of the will is contrasted with the bondage of the flesh. We may will to go to the uttermost parts of the earth; but we may be sick, or lame, or may lack the money or the means of conveyance. While the will may be there, there is not always the power to put it into operation. So also in respect to sin and righteousness, and the will to do one or the other. Each one is hampered more or less by his own imperfections and by the imperfections of others who are under the dominion of Satan, the prince of this world. But when the will is fully yielded to God, he gives us more and more of the spirit of a sound mind—we become more conformed, from day to day, to his likeness.

DIVINE PARADOXES

"Because thy loving kindness [favor] is better than life, my lips shall praise thee."—Psalm 63:3.

There are two ways in which this text may be viewed, both of which are very proper. One way is to consider it merely from the viewpoint of the Psalmist and what he meant. The other is to consider it from the standpoint of prophecy. We understand the Prophet David to mean that to have God's favor is more desirable than life; that is to say, he would rather die than to live without divine favor. The other way, of viewing it prophetically, is to suppose that here, as in many other places, the Psalmist represented The Christ, Jesus the Head and the church his members.

Our consecration is unto death. God has invited us to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto him, and he has given us exceeding great and precious promises for the life to come. Therefore, because of our love for him and for the principles of righteousness for which he stands, we are not merely willing to lay down our lives, but glad to lay them down. We are glad to lay down our human lives in doing the things that are pleasing to God.

Another of David's Psalms gives us the thought that in God's favor is everlasting life. (Psalm 30:5) These para-

doxical statements are in harmony with the other divine paradox, that "he that loseth his life shall find it." He that surrenders his earthly life shall gain glory, honor, immortality, the divine nature. We are glad that we can appreciate these glorious things represented in the divine favor extended to the church and we gladly lay down our lives. We have chosen the better part.

"Therefore my lips shall praise thee." The Scriptures declare "that with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10) We may say that to live righteously is one of the best ways of proving our obedience to the Lord. Yet there are some who try hard to live pleasing to the Lord, who might be restrained from making a confession of him. There are reasons for the blessing which we receive by confession. One reason is that it is a witness to the world—showing forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness; and a second reason is that this witnessing has a good effect on ourselves. We enlist our natural forces to support this witness, and thus bring into unison all the powers of our nature.

The preaching of the Gospel brings opposition. If our Lord had gone about casting out demons, healing the sick, etc., and had not told anything about the divine plan, he would probably have been looked upon as a fine character—as a man going about doing good. But because he preached differently from the scribes and Pharisees, and his preaching of the truth infringed upon the teachings of those about him, it roused their ire.

So it is today. All the persecution comes about from the making known of the truth. In no time that we know has this not been true. In the dark ages and throughout the Gospel age, the preaching of the truth has brought upon those telling the good tidings persecutions from those whose minds have been benighted by the prince of darkness. In proportion as we open our lips and tell of the Gospel of the Lord, we are opposed by Satan and those who are blinded by him. With the lips one might praise God, and with the lips he might injure men. The lips of this class consecrated to God—those who are laying down their present life in his service—should be devoted to his praise, to showing forth the glorious character and lovingkindness of our God, to telling forth the wonders of the divine plan, which is marvelous in our eyes.

1914—GENERAL CONVENTIONS—1914

COLUMBUS, OHIO, JUNE 26-JULY 7

All sessions of the Columbus Convention will be held in Memorial Hall, on E. Broad St. The Photo-Drama will be presented each evening: Part 1, June 26th; Part 2, June 27th; Part 3, the next evening, then Part 4, etc., thus allowing for three full presentations of the four parts.

Twenty-four public speakers will be on the program. Brother Russell expects to speak on July 3d, 4th and 5th. Opportunity for symbolic immersion will be given on June 30th and July 3d.

Lodging can be secured through the local Committee at from fifty cents per day (two in a room) upward. No one should calculate on a less expense than $1.25 per day. All expecting to attend should give prompt notice by addressing the I. B. S. A. Convention Committee, care of F. D. White, 147 Winner Ave., Columbus, Ohio. Give full name of each person and indicate which prefer to room together and at what rate.

Do not send this information to Brooklyn. Send no money for rooms.

CLINTON, IOWA, JUNE 28-JULY 5

The Coliseum, located in the heart of the city on a quiet corner, facing Riverfront Park, will be used for all the sessions of the Clinton Convention. The Photo-Drama will be presented each evening: Part 1, June 28th; Part 2, June 29th; Part 3, June 30th; Part 4, the next evening; beginning again with Part 1 on July 2d, etc., to the end of the convention.

A full program of speakers has been provided. Brother Russell expects to speak June 28th, 29th and 30th. Opportunity for symbolic immersion will be provided on Monday, June 29th.

The Committee on Arrangements requests that all expecting to attend notify them at once, stating price expected to pay, color, sex, number in party and how many days. Prices for lodging will range from 50 cents per day upward.

Address all communications to I. B. S. A. Convention Committee, care of Frank T. Horth, 418 Second Ave., Clinton, Iowa. Do not address Brooklyn. Do not send money for rooms.

Railroads advise that the two-cent per mile rate applies practically everywhere and that, therefore, no convention rates will be granted this year.

Parties traveling in companies of ten or more and desiring to arrange for special coaches, or in some cases special trains to accommodate the friends who enjoy traveling together in numbers, should apply to their local ticket agents for special rates.

The Kansas City friends advise that arrangements have been made for a Special Convention Train to the Clinton Convention. The train will leave Kansas City via the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railway June 27th, at 7 p. m. Fare for the round trip—Kansas City to Clinton and return—$14.12. For reservation in sleeper and other information address I. B. S. A. Convention Committee, c/o Minnie E. Donaldson, 2621 Agnes Ave., Kansas City, Missouri.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

EPISCOPAL MINISTER AND THE TRUTH

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Ever since, about two years ago, I was led back to the Word of God and found the glorious truth, through the reading of the volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES, I have been wanting to write and let you know how I love you, and how grateful I am to the heavenly Father that I am one of those permitted to see the plan as revealed to the household of faith through "that faithful servant." I have been deterred from writing only by the knowledge that you are very busy in the Master's service, so that I have felt it almost an imposition to write you even of these things.

For about six years I was an Episcopal minister, and was reasonably "successful." I was supposed to have the gift of speech, and having been favored with a good education, I was able to put this gift to work so as to bring some glory to myself as a pulpit orator. But that was all empty honor, as I felt even then. In the course of time, and as my study advanced and I began to think for myself (a crime for a minister of a denomination), some of the doctrines of the church (for instance, those of the Trinity and the Incarnation as held by that denomination), became to me unreasonable and impossible of belief. "He descended into hell," of the Apostle's Creed, so-called, also became a very serious stumbling block.

After much fighting against my conscience and strenuous endeavor to keep down reason and avoid thoughts antagonistic to the creed and to those doctrines I was supposed to believe; and after trying vainly to take the advice of my Bishop that I should confine my preaching to those things I could talk about conscientiously, with the suggestion that I might still repeat the Creed with mental reservations, etc. (you know the arguments), I found that my natural contempt of hypocrisy and an innate honesty of thought compelled rebellion. And so, in the course of time, I gave notice of withdrawal from that ministry.

Eventually I withdrew altogether from that denomination, and, being blinded by the very thing I had taught to others, namely, that the Bible set forth those absurdities, I forsook the Bible also. Then, these foundations being removed, I became intensely worldly and came very near wrecking not only my own life and prospects, but also the life of my dear wife. Perhaps my experience in this regard was not very different from that of others in like case.

From early childhood I had been a dreamer and somewhat of a thinker. My earnest, compelling desire grew into a necessity to learn the truth, the meaning of human life and death, the solution of the probability of, and the nature of a future life. And so I searched in every field—the philosophies, the oriental religions—in fact everywhere in what seemed to offer help. None came. It was all unreasonable, it was all "vanity." Finally came a settling down to the conclusion that while there must be ultimate truth, it was impossible for man to know it. That is a despairing, hopeless condition to arrive at, and I knew it. For ten years, almost, I had not prayed. I knew not what to pray for nor to whom to offer prayers. Simply, I concluded, that one must only await the end, and then one would find the solution if there

were one. And so I waited and bothered no more to find the truth that I decided could not be found.

Then, about two years ago a friend sent me the first two volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. Years before that I had received the first volume, entitled then MILLENNIAL DAWN. But I disliked the title—thought it was in line with the other fulminations of sectarian writers, and had not read. Indeed, the book was lost or destroyed. But somehow I was led to read the last two sent. At first I was not impressed—the first volume did not make any impression on me. But when I had read the second, and saw the wonderful correspondencies between the chronology and the Time features, and saw how all of those laws and prophecies harmonized, the conviction was forced upon me that only the Spirit of the One God could have done this, and that the Bible that I had rejected, was indeed the revelation of Jehovah. And I rejoiced! O, how I rejoiced! Since then I have read and reread them all. I have studied the Scriptures, and the Book has become my dearest possession; the truth has become so real to me! Later, my wife, who at first opposed the truth, was "acknowledged by God." Recently she symbolized her consecration. And so, dear Brother, I thank God first, and then I thank you. God bless you!

Now I want to ask your advice in regard to a matter that is puzzling my wife and me. It is in regard to my twelve-year-old boy. He has recently taken a decided interest in the study of the Scriptures, and he loves the Lord very dearly. He unhesitatingly accepts every word of the Bible. He understands the significance of the ransom and knows about restitution. We believe that he takes in a little of the thought of the high calling of the church. Should we urge him to make his consecration? He is a restless boy, loving play and entering into it with all his mind, as he does into everything in which he is interested. How much knowledge ought we to see in him before it were well for him to make the "covenant by sacrifice"? Is it your thought that his consecration would not be apt to place him in any more dangerous position than it would one of maturer years and judgment?

Brother, we pray for you every day, and several times a day, that the Lord's strength will be with you in all your great trials, to sustain and keep you; and that his Spirit will always dwell in you richly and his love uphold you.

Your brother in the Lord, FREDERICK ROEHL.

IN REPLY

Dear Brother in Christ:—

Your welcome letter reached me while enjourney at Chicago homeward bound. I am now answering it.

I greatly rejoice with you and your wife and your little son that the Lord's grace has been extended toward you. It constitutes a further confirmation of the conviction which has been for some time growing upon me; viz., that the only thing in us commendable in the Lord's sight is honesty—sincerity. Because of this sincerity the Lord has led you and is willing to continue to lead all of us who are of this character to the end of the journey. His grace is sufficient for us.

I trust, dear brother, that the Lord is granting you opportunities for service. "He that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit." "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers in to his harvest."

In respect to your little son: If I were you, I would not press consecration upon him, but I would hold it up before his mind as the only proper course for all intelligent people who have come to a knowledge of God and his gracious purposes—"your reasonable service"—everybody's reasonable service. Nothing else is reasonable when once we see the truth. The whole world will be given the opportunity of consecration eventually. Without consecration none will ever gain everlasting life on any plane.

Your son cannot be injured by consecration, but may be greatly helped. If the Lord sees him incompetent in any sense or manner for the high calling he will not accept him to that, but to the earthly favor in due time. But who shall say that a child of ten may not very fully and completely come to an appreciation of full consecration in thought and word and act? Looking back I can see that my whole consecration was first made at a little advance—beyond twelve years of age. With Christian love,

Your brother in the Lord.

A BAPTIST MINISTER'S APPRECIATION

Gentlemen:—

I beg to state that I purchased one volume of "Bible Keys" recently, entitled, THE DAY OF VENGEANCE (now entitled, BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON), of Mr. O. Magnuson, Middletown, Conn. I have read and reread carefully, and cannot express in words the deep interest I feel in the spread of these great and vital truths. I must have the other volumes at an early date.

Never before has such a flood of light been thrown upon the sacred pages for me. I am a Baptist minister, in my fortieth year. In earlier life, I served quite awhile in the colporteur work of my church. I write to ask for information regarding this work by your Society.

An early reply, with advices in full, will oblige.

Yours for the Truth, J. H. ROBERTS, D.D.—Va.

IN REPLY

Dear Brother in Christ:—

We have yours of the 25th inst., and are glad to learn from it that the Lord has found you with the truth, and that you are rejoicing in as much of it as you have read. Since you have appreciated the first volume, we feel sure that you will appreciate the other five in an increased measure. Being a clergyman, we think you will specially enjoy Volume V., which discusses The Atonement in detail with all its incidental questions.

We shall be pleased to hear from you from time to time and to know of your progress in the narrow way; and will be glad to render any assistance or suggestions which may be in our power. Praying for your divine guidance and wisdom, we remain,

Your Brethren in the Master's Service.

GREAT GRANDFATHER'S MOTTO

Our Dear Brother Russell:—

Greetings in His name! The attached was my Great Grandfather's motto. Truly the Lord has blessed the fourth generation of his descendants, whereof we are glad.

We pray the Lord's continued blessings on your labors of love, and ever remember you at the throne of grace.

With much love from all the members of our family (mother and three sons),

Your brother by his Grace, JAMES GREENLEES.

THE HAPPY MAN

The Happy Man was born in the city of Regeneration, in the Parish of Repentance unto Life: he was educated at the school of Obedience, and now lives in Perseverance: he works at the Trade of Diligence, notwithstanding he has a large estate in the country of Christian Contentment, and many a time does jobs of Self-Denial: he wears the plain garment of Humility, and has a better suit to put on when he goes to court, called the Robe of Christ's Righteousness: he often walks in the valley of Self-Abasement, and sometimes climbs to the mountains of Heavenly-Mindedness: he breakfasts every morning on Spiritual Prayer, and sups every evening on the same: he has Meat to eat which the world knows not of, and his Drink is the Milk of the Word of God. Thus happy he lives and happy he dies.

Happy is he who has Gospel Submission in his Will, Due Order in his Affections, Sound Peace in his Conscience, Sanctifying Grace in his Soul, Real Divinity in his Breast, the Redeemer's Yoke on his Neck, a Vain World under his Feet, and a Crown of Glory over his Head. Happy is the life of such a man; to obtain which, believe firmly, pray fervently, wait patiently, work abundantly, live holily, die daily, watch your hearts, guide your senses, redeem your time, love Christ, and long for Glory!

ALMOST HOME

My frail barque rudely tosses on the sea,
In terror, Lord, I feebly cry to thee,
"My faith increase, as darker grows the night,
Oh, make me strong in thee and in thy might!"
He hears my prayer, he answers, with a smile,
"We're almost home, have faith a little while!"

Nor sun, nor moon, nor any star is seen,
Not e'en the faintest rift of blue between;
The chilling waters deeper, darker flow,
The storm-clouds lower, the winds more wildly blow—
Yet hark! Above the strife his voice, so mild,
"Be brave, be strong, we're almost home, my child!"

* * *

Do eager hands lie folded on thy breast,
And hath the Lord of harvest bid thee rest?
Dost see the happy laborers go by,
Nor canst refrain a tear or longing sigh?
Be calm, poor heart, and sink into his will—
"We're almost home, dear child, lean harder still!"

April 19, 1914. GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

THE VOICE FROM HEAVEN

"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Revelation 18:4.

The context of the above Scripture shows that our text refers to Babylon—not the literal city of Babylon, but to the symbolic city, described in the Book of Revelation. The term Babylon seems to signify a concentration of the various errors in apostate church systems, personified in Revelation as mother and daughters. "Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots," is the name given by the Lord to the original system, thus intimating that the whole brood is illegitimate in every sense of the word. She neglected the heavenly Bridegroom, and mingled in her "cup" a stupefying potion that has intoxicated the world; even the Lord's saints were bewildered.—Revelation 17:1-6.

After the apostles "fell asleep," the people of God gradually drifted into error of doctrine and practise, which culminated in the dark ages. A great system developed, and led into confusion and darkness. We need not suppose that in all these centuries every one connected with this system was hypocritical. As the people of natural Israel were led captive into literal Babylon, so the people of spiritual Israel, among whom were some of the Lord's true saints, were led captive into Mystic Babylon. Some of these would have liked to get free, yet did not know what to do.

When we come down to the Reformation, we see that instead of getting entirely free from Babylon and her errors, the various systems then formed partook to a considerable extent of the spirit of the mother system from which they had separated. The same spirit of persecution that was manifested in the "mother" has also been manifested more or less in the "daughters." The enslaving power extended from medieval times to the Reformation; so that, looking out upon the so-called Christian world today, we see that there could not be a better word used to picture existing conditions than the word confusion.

Yet there are true people of God still in this Babylonian system. But the time of separation is here: those yet remaining in Babylon must hasten! The fact that some of God's children have been in Babylon all through the age shows us why God has had any respect at all for Babylon; His saints have been more or less enslaved there for centuries. This is the reason why God has dealt with Babylon in any sense or degree.

BABYLON CAST INTO THE SEA

Our text with its context is a prophecy that in the end of the present age a time would come when God would wholly reject Babylon. In the picture given us in Revelation of this time, the Lord's rejection of the apostate systems is declared in the words, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen!" She has been spewed out of his mouth, and the Almighty now calls upon his true people to "come out of her." The faithful ones are delivering themselves out of Babylon during this harvest time; the separating work is almost completed. Soon, as pictured in Scripture, the "sea" of anarchy will swallow up the false systems. Babylon is to be "cast as a great millstone into the sea." (Psalm 46:2; Jeremiah 51:62-64; Revelation 18:21) We believe these prophecies are to be fulfilled in the very near future.

The nominal church no longer stands in a peculiar position—above the world. Some of her ministers declare that they do not believe in Jesus as the Savior of the world—man is his own savior, they say. They believe in the social uplift of humanity, which, according to their view, is to come by putting the right men into the right places, by giving woman the franchise, and by other methods of social reform. What a sorry hope!

Some may ask: How may we recognize God's voice calling his people to come out of the churches now? In what manner shall we hear his voice? We answer that God bids his people to separate themselves from all sin and sinful conditions. Our forefathers did not hear this voice, did not see this condition of sin. The voice had not then spoken. Even in the time of the Reformation these entanglements of error were not clearly discerned. But now, in this harvest time, we can see very clearly that the teachings of the nominal churches have been grossly in error—have grossly misrepresented the divine purpose and the divine character. We now perceive that Babylon is full of error and corruption of doctrine, and filled with the spirit of the world.

KNOWLEDGE BRINGS RESPONSIBILITY

Furthermore, the times and seasons of God's plan are now made plain. We are shown that we are now living in the time foretold, when these systems of error are to be rejected by the Lord. Should we not leave these systems when we see all this? This is God's voice to "come out of her." We hear this voice now speaking; we see that this prophecy of Revelation is now being fulfilled. If any remonstrate: But, Lord, we have many precious friends in Babylon, and we are loth to leave them. We have tried to show them what Babylon is, but they will not heed. It will be a great loss to us to leave them all and take a stand against them. Must we come out? Our friends will think us crazy! The Lord replies: "Come out of her," or "receive of her plagues."

You are not sharers of her sins until the time you see this. You were born in Babylon. The Lord is not holding you responsible for what you did not understand. But the better you understand, the more responsibility you have. If, when you see what the truth is and what the untruth is, you still remain in Babylon and support her with your influence and dollars, you will be very culpable. If you fail to come out of her when you hear the Lord's voice, it will imply that you are not thoroughly loyal to him. You may be his children, but if you fail to obey the Lord through fear of earthly loss, it will prove that these things are more precious to you than his favor, and he will treat you as he treats the hypocrites: you will have a share in their experiences.

If you are approving of the sins of the spewed-out systems by upholding them and giving them your influence, you will surely be partakers of Babylon's plagues. This is a fair warning. We understand that it is the duty of every Christian to break every tender tie, if necessary, and to be loyal to God, to stand free from the error and sins of Babylon. The time of her judgment has come.

The plagues coming upon Babylon are sore troubles, which will result in the complete overthrow of the present order of things—political, social, financial and religious. This order of things in its various phases, is one cause, under different uniforms; these interests are all united in one great policy. The princes and kings of the earth and their supporters are Babylon's great army, and pitted against it is another vast army, composed of the masses of the people. The conflict between these two great armies will ere long precipitate the present order of things of the world into anarchy.

THE VOICE OF PRESENT TRUTH

It becomes an important question then: Have all God's people heard this voice? We answer that we do not think all have yet heard; hence there must be some Christians still in Babylon, partakers of her sins, but confused because of ignorance, because of lack of knowledge. The question might be asked: Shall we go forth making this call a special message? We answer: This is not our thought. Our thought is that where this is made a special message the result is usually different from what is intended: it makes many angry. They say: By what authority do you call us Babylon, and by what authority do you tell us to "come out"?

Our thought is that it is the Lord who calls his people out of Babylon; the call is to be recognized especially as a voice from heaven. What is this voice from heaven? Apparently, the voice is present truth—a presentation of the doctrines of the Scriptures, with their times and seasons—a showing that while there has been confusion and error all the way down through the age, we are now in the harvest time, when truth is clearer than ever before. This voice of truth tells us whether or not we should support a system that is full of error, full of confusion.

In what way should we give God's message to come out of Babylon? We should show them the light, the truth; we should place before them the opportunity for investigation, and encourage them to prove these things for themselves. As they come to see the truth and the bondage in which they have been, they will be glad to stand free in Christ by breaking off these shackles. This will be the voice, then, that will show all the Lord's people who are in the right attitude of heart that they should stand free, that they should come out of sectarianism, that they should not misrepresent the Lord by claiming that they are of Babylon when they are not, but that they take their stand for God.

LOYALTY TO TRUTH THE TEST

This stand will mean the holding forth of the divine plan of the ages, the truth. If, after one has seen the real character of Babylon and has gotten his bearings in a general way, he then remains, it can be only by compromising the truth. By being worldly wise he might remain and continue for a time to have popularity, to have honor of men. But if

after seeing the truth, after understanding the truth, one were to continue in Babylon, he would of course be a greater sinner than one who had not been so enlightened.

It is not our thought that we should avoid doing our duty in the proclamation of the truth, but that we should avoid arousing unnecessary antagonism; for people in error are in no condition to have the error lightly spoken of. They must be in the right condition before one can even whisper to them, "Come out of her." Even if they make inquiry of us, we should not speak too positively; but we should say: Now, my dear brother [or sister], if you have heard the voice of God, if you realize that the various denominations are in error, then you will, apparently, see your duty. You once said you were of them; if now you see that you are not of them, you should tell them so. But when you shall see, and when you shall hear, is not for another to say. If, when you have heard and believe the truth, you remain in Babylon, you will be a partaker of her sins, and more guilty than the average one among them. When you are able to hear this voice yourself—this voice which will show you the right and the wrong, the truth and the error—no doubt you will have the fortitude to "come out."

BABYLON'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TRUTH

But those who hear the voice of present truth, and who obey the call to come out of Babylon, are usually subjected to persecution. In our Lord's day, when the believers were from among the Jews, some were put out of the synagogues. We remember a particular instance during our Lord's ministry. A man who was born blind was asked how he had his sight restored; and when he confessed Jesus, the rulers put him out of the synagogue. (John 9:22, 34) That same spirit, that same condition, seemed to follow with the apostles.

All through the dark ages those who were faithful to the light were kept out of the churches. The church creeds and practises were conscience-barriers to keep light-bearers out; those faithful to the truth were ex-communicated or put to death as heretics. This condition continued to some extent even after the time of the Reformation. Servetus, a brother Christian, whose horrible death by burning at the stake was caused by Calvin, is a case in point. Jesus said, "They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." The execution of Servetus was an instance of the literal fulfilment of our Lord's words.

Those who have ruled the synagogues have not always been bad people, but mistaken people. Thus it was with Saul of Tarsus, when he haled Christians to prison and approved the death of St. Stephen. And so with the churches of our day when any become enlightened and let their light shine. The same thing is true that has always been true; namely, "The darkness hateth the light." They say: If you stay with us you shall not present these matters. So those who are loyal to God are in this way forced out of the synagogues; indeed, the loyal ones are now called to "come out."

"YOUR BRETHREN THAT HATED YOU"

But our day has a peculiarity that other days have not had. The divine plan is now so beautiful that we can see that others are in darkness, and this impelling voice of the truth is the voice of God, the voice of conscience, the voice of enlightenment, calling us out of Babylon, which is misrepresenting God, his character, his plan and his Word. We do not know but that they may go to the extreme in our day—to kill socially, to kill ecclesiastically, perhaps to kill physically. Nearly all the persecutions that have come to God's people have come from professed Christians, fellow-believers. "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my Name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."—Isaiah 66:5.

We are glad that these shall one day, not far off, we believe, see their mistake. Instead of feeling like bringing vengeance upon our enemies, we should feel quite a sympathy—not with them, but for them. We should realize that it is with them very much as it was with the Jews in our Lord's day: those Jews and their rulers knew not what they did, or they would have been ashamed. And they will be ashamed when they come forth and realize what they did—just as Saul of Tarsus was ashamed when he realized what he had done. And so with these blinded ones of today: "Some shall come forth to shame and lasting contempt." This contempt will last until there has been a proper repentance for their share in the persecutions of the Lord and his faithful ones.

AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY

We surely appreciate very highly the value of knowledge, but we also remember the truthfulness of St. Paul's statement that "knowledge (alone) puffs up, but love builds up." Yet knowledge is necessary to growth in grace. Only as we perceive the beauty of the divine character can we appreciate our God. Therefore, we rejoice that he is lifting the veil and revealing himself more and more to our eyes of understanding.

We can see that mental capacity is not the same in all. Some can receive a large measure of the truth, while others can assimilate only a little. No one needs more knowledge than he is capable of receiving. God is judging his people according to their character-likeness to his son, our Lord, not according to what they know. While knowledge is very important, very necessary, still no one has a monopoly of understanding—no one has perfect knowledge in the present life; and if our eternal destiny depended upon knowledge, each of us would come short. Nevertheless, we believe that all who are the Lord's will be brought into touch with present truth, and will be judged by it. Those who obtain the knowledge and then show a disposition to shirk the responsibility connected with it or to deny the truth or to live ungodly after seeing the light, thus demonstrate their unworthiness.

The Apostle, speaking to the faithful ones in Christ, says, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are children of the light." He seems to imply that the Lord's true people will come to a knowledge of the truth. This does not necessarily mean all the truth, but enough to sanctify. One with large intellectual power would require and could assimilate a large amount of knowledge; one with small mental capacity would need less.

There are certain basic principles that the Lord's people have at all times grasped; for instance, the fact that there is but one God. Even those who hold to the doctrine of the "Trinity" declare that there is one God. Thus they have a measure of the truth, although they contradict themselves. It is the same in regard to the penalty for sin. Our forefathers desired to be right when they thought eternal torment the punishment for sin; and they called it a just penalty, in their endeavor to be right. But with these basic principles is mixed a large proportion of error. The whole world of mankind has been under delusions; and we who are now waking up are really surprised to see how little we actually knew—how ignorant we were in regard to some of the precious messages which our God has given us.

"WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH"

But as we were children of God before we received full knowledge, so we believe that it is possible for others to be children of God without having full knowledge. We are living in the harvest of the Gospel age, when God is causing the knowledge of the truth to encircle the earth. At the same time the adversary is doing all that he can to hinder people from studying the divine message—raising a dust of calumny to blind the eyes of the unwary.

It is because we believe that there are children of God attempting to live on the husks and skimmed milk of human tradition—brethren in Christ starving for the pure food offered in the Word of God—that we are trying to reach and help them. Otherwise we would abandon all special efforts at propaganda; for we know that as soon as the Messianic kingdom shall have been set up, conditions will be favorable to all to come to a knowledge of the truth as it is contained in the Bible.

The days that are almost upon us will surely bring "weeping and gnashing of teeth" to many of the Lord's people; for whoever stands for error will be in opposition to God. They are about to go into a great time of trouble, and it will be their own fault. Some of us heard God's voice early in the harvest, and therefore we had the responsibility earlier; some heard later. Some are hearing now about the sins of Babylon—that these sins are about to be punished, and that they should come out and be on God's side, if they would have divine favor. It is the desire to further sound out this present message that has led us to the production of the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION—that those who would not read might see. To whatever extent it helps each of God's children, still bound, to recognize his own responsibility, it represents the voice of God, telling them their present duty as Christians.

"When ye hear I am come, then can ye arise,
The joy of your heart springing up in your eyes?
Can ye come out to meet me, whate'er the cost be,
Though ye come on the waves of a storm-crested sea?

"When I call, can ye turn and in gladness 'come out'
From the home of your childhood, the friends of your heart?
With naught but my promise on which to rely,
Afar from their love—can ye lie down and die?"

"Yea, we'll take up the cross and in faith follow thee,
And bear thy reproach, thy disciples to be.
Blest Savior, for courage to thee we will fly;
Of grace thou hast promised abundant supply."

FERVENT IN PRAYER—WATCHING THEREUNTO

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance, and supplication for all saints."—Ephesians 6:18.

Prayer is a wonderful privilege. It is a very great favor to be permitted to approach the Supreme Ruler of the universe with our petitions. We should come, therefore, in the spirit of deep appreciation, of earnestness and humility and reverence. The greater our earnestness, the more acceptable will be our prayers, and the more abundant blessings shall we receive.

There is a great deal of formal prayer. The Scriptures speak of this as drawing near unto God with the lips, while the heart is far from him. (Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:7-9) It would be better not to approach the Lord at all than to do so in an improper manner. The man who merely utters words with his lips is not praying. A Christian should not say prayers, but should pray. We should not think of saying even one word that we do not mean and have not thought out. Many people have done themselves injury by praying in a formalistic manner.

When we come to the Father, let us draw nigh in spirit—with the heart, the understanding, the mind—whether the prayer be long or short. Let us come with true and earnest devotion, with supplication, that he may see our intense desire in the matter. As our Lord said, the Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. Without the spirit of prayer our petitions amount to nothing.

No one may offer prayer to the Father except those who have accepted his terms, and have come into relationship with him as sons, through the great Advocate. Others are aliens and strangers. There is a difference between worship, or thanksgiving, and prayer. Any one may offer worship—adoration, homage. Any one may bow the knee and express thanks and appreciation. But the privilege of making requests of God is directly limited to those who have been accepted in Christ.

There is a difference, too, between prayer and supplication. The term prayer applies to any petition, great or small; whereas the term supplication means a special, agonizing desire for a thing—entreaty with intense yearning. But whether it is prayer in the ordinary sense, or intense prayer—supplication—we should always come in the spirit, with an appreciation of the fact that we are entering into the presence of the great Creator and that in thus doing we are enjoying a great privilege.

"WATCHING THEREUNTO"

St. Paul adds, "and watching thereunto." Watching seems to be an attitude of mental alertness. If we really believe that the Lord has indicated that we should pray for the things we need, and that he will give us these things, then we should be on the alert to recognize when we receive them. We should take heed as to the things for which we ask, and be sure that we ask for the things promised, the things for which we are entitled to ask.

We should also watch for the Lord's providential leadings. The person who, after having prayed, forgets what he prayed for, and who cannot tell whether or not he has received an answer to his petition, has certainly missed a great blessing which it is designed that he should have.

Prayer is not to be offered to be heard of man, but of God. It is intended to be a stimulation to our hearts and to quicken us to an expectancy of certain things; and it should be our earnest endeavor to keep our lives in harmony with our requests. When Jesus told his disciples to pray the Lord of the harvest that he would send more laborers into his harvest, he did not mean that they were to tell the heavenly Father his business; but that they should be solicitous that others come into the work, that God would send forth laborers into his harvest field; and that the disciples themselves should watch for opportunities of service, in harmony with their prayers.

The Lord frequently called attention to the fact that we should be persevering in prayer. Perseverance is an essential quality in the sight of God. It includes patience, carefulness and interest. In short, it is related to every fruit of the Spirit which the Lord's people are to cultivate. Patience is good, but it needs perseverance. Love is good, but it needs perseverance.

Perseverance does not make the will. The will is already there. It is the will that God recognizes in the beginning. But by various experiences, trials, difficulties, tests of endurance, the Lord would prove us and develop us. He would have us become very positive characters in all these qualities which have his approval. So our praying should all be in the spirit, from the heart. We should watch thereunto with perseverance day by day, until the Lord shall see that we have attained the character which he can honor with a share in the kingdom.

LESSONS LEARNED BY THE LORD'S DELAY

Perhaps one reason why our Lord does not answer our petitions quickly is that he desires us to learn to watch for the answer and thereby get the lesson of appreciation and gratitude to him, as we realize that he has given us our request. We should therefore pray with all perseverance, watching for the answer until it come—not watching merely for a few minutes, or for a day or a week. The Lord might see best to further defer the answer to our petition, either to test our faith or to increase our earnestness and get us into a better condition to receive the blessing. It requires time to become emptied of self and prepared to receive the mind of Christ; and with some, more time is required than with others.

We are sure that the Lord will pursue that course which is best for us, just as a teacher with his pupils, and a parent with his children. The parent exercises judgment as to what is best for the child. So our heavenly Father wishes to give us the good things. Sometimes he sees best that we wait a long time before getting the answer to our petitions; at other times he may give us a speedy answer to our prayer. Nevertheless, as the Apostle Paul declares, we know that all things are working together for our good, because we love God and have been called according to his purpose. And we must ever bear in mind the conditions which our Lord imposes: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye may ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."—John 15:7.

We must search the Scriptures to know what is the mind of the Lord, what he has promised and what he has not promised. The fully consecrated will not want anything which is not in fullest harmony with the will of him we so love and adore, and who is so worthy of our love and loyalty. We must remember, too, that while we are praying with persistence and faith, the Lord is preparing for us, not only the blessing and opportunity of service which we desire, but he is also preparing the circumstances and conditions which will bring this blessing or opportunity in the best form. This will require our waiting on the Lord, which should be in perfect trust and patience for his good time to grant the desire of our hearts. "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working."—James 5:16.—R. V.

Family prayer is also very desirable in the homes of the Lord's saints, wherever possible; and prayer amongst the children of God when they assemble together is eminently proper. Our Lord sanctioned this by praying with and for his disciples; and it was also commended by the apostles. We are to pray, not for ourselves only, but for all of the saints and for the interests of the Lord's cause. The Scriptures commend both public and private prayer amongst the children of God. But secret prayer is absolutely essential to the life of a Christian.

PRAYERFUL ATTITUDE ALONE NOT SUFFICIENT

We have been surprised occasionally to hear some professed follower of Christ urging the impropriety of a form of prayer in words, and of assuming any particular posture in prayer, or of praying at any stated time, asserting that kneeling in prayer is unnecessary—that all of life should be a prayer. Such a proposition is astounding to us—the logic of it is incomprehensible. True, we are to pray always, to be always in the spirit of prayer, to be so devoted to the Lord that we shall ever manifest in our lives the beauty of holiness, that we shall be shining lights in the world. But we hold that no Christian can maintain this heart attitude, or glorify God in his life, without going to the Lord in a particular and formal manner, and preferably upon his knees, and if possible in solitude at certain times. "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret."—Matthew 6:6.

Our dear Master's constant attitude of prayer did not hinder his more particular devotions when he turned aside from the busy affairs of his life to converse with the Father in secret—sometimes briefly and sometimes spending the entire night in prayer in the mountain solitude. The very isolation of the Lord from all human help drew him the nearer and the oftener to the Father in prayer and communion. So it is, or should be, with all the true followers of the Master. As we grow in his character-likeness we will, like him, pray without ceasing, in everything giving thanks, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord, recognizing him as the center of all our hopes and our joys.

OUR "SOLITARY WAY"

We all realize at times the inability of even our dearest ones to enter fully into and appreciate our sorrows and our needs. They are unable to sympathize with us fully in our struggles and our trials. This realization should send us, as it did our dear Lord, the more frequently to the throne of grace, where we are always sure of having the ear of One who understands us perfectly and can make all needful allowance for our frailty; who knows the limit of our ability to do and to be, in our imperfect flesh; and who can give us the perfect sympathy which none other can give. He never fails to hear and to heed the cry of his children, even though he may for a wise purpose in love defer for a time a visible answer to their pleas.

JACOB AN EXAMPLE

The prayer of Jacob at the time he was anticipating a meeting with Esau on his return from Padan-Aram may be considered one of the most excellent examples of earnest, persevering prayer to be found in the Lord's Word. It is full of confidence and trust in God. It recounts God's promise to his grandfather Abraham and his father Isaac and the renewal of this promise to himself. He mentions to the Lord his promise also to bring him again to his home land. His humility is shown in his words: "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast shown unto thy servant; for with my staff [only] I passed over this Jordan [when fleeing from home], and now I have become two bands [great companies]."—Genesis 32:10.

He tells the Lord of his fear of Esau, yet shows that his fear is offset by his confidence in the Almighty. It was at this time, and doubtless in answer to this prayer, that the angel of the Lord appeared to Jacob, and so full of faith was he in the power of God and in his promise to protect him and make of him a great nation, that he laid physical hold upon the angel, declaring: "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me!" The angel here appeared as a man; but Jacob had recognized him as the representative of the Lord, sent to meet him.

We cannot suppose that the angel was not sufficiently powerful to release himself from the grasp of Jacob, but rather that God was pleased to bless him, and that these circumstances were designed for the very purpose of drawing out Jacob's longing desire for this blessing of the Lord, to demonstrate the depth and intensity of his desire. When this was proven, when he had manifested his deep appreciation of the blessing which God alone could give, and this great longing to be in harmony with him, then the blessing came—Jacob's victory. God was pleased to reward such faith and energy and zeal.

LESSONS TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

Jacob was only a natural man, yet his prayer has in it a lesson that may be of much profit to new creatures in Christ; not that we should wrestle with God as did Jacob, for we are sons of God, and sons have a much closer relationship than servants, and have no need to wrestle with God to gain his favor. The late Bishop Phillips Brooks expressed the true thought very beautifully and succintly when he said, "Prayer is not conquering God's reluctance; it is laying hold upon God's willingness." We have his favor now; and he has promised us his choicest blessings. But Jacob's earnest zeal and faith and humility and his perseverance of mind are well worthy of our emulation and imitation. We should always pray and not faint, as our Lord reminded us. God wishes us to be persistent, and to have unwavering faith in his willingness to give us his best gifts.

If the blessing in answer to our prayer does not come in the moment of asking, we are to continue "instant in prayer," patiently waiting for the Lord's due time, in an attitude of entire, sweet submission to his will, assured that if the answer be delayed it is because our Father in his wisdom sees a reason for it and has our highest welfare at heart. He is never indifferent to his children nor unheeding of their needs and of their cry for help and for fellowship with him. But let us see to it that God's glory is our chiefest desire.

Alas, how many spiritual Israelites seem to have a much less keen appreciation of propriety in prayer than had Jacob! He asked for God's blessing, in whatever manner he might be pleased to give it. Jacob did not specify even the earthly good things which God had promised him. He desired the Lord's glory in the fulfilling to him and his posterity of his great covenant. Many of God's children ask and receive not, because they ask amiss, that the answer may minister to the desires of their flesh. The Lord has promised to care for the temporal necessities of his children and will surely give them what is best, whether this be little or much.

How few seem to remember that as new creatures our desires and requests should be especially for the things which pertain to our spiritual interests; that it is this class of blessings that the Father desires us to have, and has promised to give us! He assures us that as earthly parents are pleased to give good gifts to their children, so our Father delights to give us his holy Spirit—his very best gift—the gift which comprises all blessing and glory, which will insure to us everything which is desirable, in the very highest sense. If the Lord's people who have consecrated their all to him, could be brought to the point where their one aim in life, the burden of all their prayers, would be that they might have a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of a sound mind, what an unspeakable blessing it would mean!

ISRAEL—MIGHTY WITH GOD

Jacob got the blessing and with it a change of name. Thenceforth he was called Israel, which signifies, Mighty with God, or "A Prince with God." This new name therefore was always a source of encouragement to him, an incentive to fresh zeal and to trust in the Lord. All of Jacob's posterity adopted this name. We have in antitype Christ Jesus, our Lord, the true Israel, the One who through faith and obedience to the Father has prevailed, who has overcome the world, the flesh and the adversary, and has received the highest blessing of God as the result of his great struggle. He is now supremely exalted, and is declared to be the Prince of the kings of the earth. He has sat down with the Father in his throne.

We also, the followers of Jesus, bear the name of Israel. We, like him, if faithful as was he, shall be exalted by the Father. We shall share with our Lord and Head his throne. We shall be made higher than angels, principalities and powers, as our Master has been. How glorious this thought! How wonderful! Should not this great hope inspire us to the utmost diligence and carefulness that we may make our calling and election sure?

If we prove faithful unto death, the name Victor, or "Mighty with God," will be our name. It will apply to every one of the Lord's faithful ones as it applied to our Head. But only those who manifest his Spirit, only those who so love God that they will hold on to his promise and who will not let him go without the blessing, will receive the fulfilment of the promise and will reign with Christ in glory and share his throne.

Jacob had a method of marking the special manifestations of divine providence—as when he called the place in which he wrestled with the angel Peniel—"the face of God." This was a reminder to him that there he had been privileged to receive from the Lord a particular blessing, a marked answer to prayer. Similarly it is profitable to spiritual Israel that we should make note in some special manner of the Lord's mercies and providences to us. Many feel poor as respects the favor and blessing of the Lord, simply because they have failed to let these blessings make a proper impression upon their hearts at the time they were received. We are all leaky vessels, and unless special notation of these favors of the Lord is made upon the tablets of memory, or in some other way, their lesson and the encouragement and strength which they bring are largely lost to us.

Doubtless we should all have more "Bethels" and more "Peniels" did we but follow the course of setting up some kind of monuments of our Father's faithfulness in his answers to our prayers, and there entering into some covenant or vow with the Lord in return for these his mercies. As each watches for fresh evidence daily of the love and special watchcare of our God over us, we shall find that we have far more cause for encouragement and thanksgiving than we would be aware of without such notation and watchfulness. Let each of us, then, daily, weekly and yearly raise to God our "Ebenezers," if we would increase our faith and joy and love.

FASHIONING OURSELVES AS OBEDIENT CHILDREN

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."—1 Peter 1:14, 15.

The Apostle is not addressing the world, but those who have become children of God—those who have passed out from their position of condemnation with the world, and have been justified by faith in the precious blood, who have been accepted of the great Advocate Jesus, and have been begotten of the holy Spirit. But it is not sufficient that we become

children of God; for these newly begotten children are only started in the narrow way, they are in an imperfect, undeveloped condition. They have this standing as children because they have put themselves into the hands of God and desire to do his will, loving righteousness and hating iniquity.

On the basis of this stand that we took—of enlisting under the banner of Jesus, to fight against sin and self and Satan—God purposes to prove how thoroughly in earnest we were when we espoused his cause. He wishes us to attain to that development of character which will fit us to be associates with Jesus in his great kingdom, which is to bless the world.

If we are obedient children, everything will work well. We shall get the proper tests, the proper chiseling and polishing, everything that will make us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." But if we do not prove obedient, this will hinder us from ever getting into the elect company, although we may have a place in that company of children who have had to be chastised and finally brought to proper obedience.

By this we are not implying that any of God's children are exempt from discipline; for we are told that every son receiveth chastisement. (Heb. 12:6-11) Those chastisements that came to our Lord Jesus were not deserved, but were experiences by which he proved his thorough loyalty and worthiness of exaltation. And so the chastisements that come to his followers are to fit them for future service and to demonstrate their worthiness of being counted in as members of his body.

The chastisements which are in the nature of punishments for sin should bring about a thoroughly loyal condition of heart in reasonable time, or the one chastised will lose his place in the body. If he prove ultimately disobedient, he will be counted unworthy of any of God's favors, and will die the second death. The exhortation of our text, therefore, is to the highest attainment and the utmost loyalty to the Father.

HOW TO FASHION OUR MINDS

There is a fashioning of our minds in progress. It is not the fashioning of our will. The will is given up to begin with. But the will has to do with regulating the mind as well as the body—the will has to do with this fashioning. We will that our minds shall be educated along the lines of obedience, that we may be properly exercised by all the trials which God has purposed for us.

We as new creatures should learn to think as God would have us think, to develop habits of thought which upbuild the new creature. We should eat and drink according to his will, and our clothing should be regulated according to his will. We are to seek his guidance in our life in all things—because of the weaknesses of the flesh, the promptings of the adversary, and our environment. The Lord has made provision, and has given us definite instructions in the Scriptures, by which we may regulate our lives in harmony with his Word; and we should seek more and more to know the will of God and to profit by his providences in our lives, and to apply the knowledge gained, so that whether we eat, or drink, or sleep, or labor, we shall do all to the glory of God.

Our organism of flesh we receive by heredity. These bodies of ours have various weaknesses and inconsistencies—some in one direction, and some in another. But they are all, more or less, perversions of the true ideal which God originally gave. Centuries of sin have left their mark upon us, upon our minds and bodies; and this mark is seen in the theories which have come into our minds. These errors in the past had control of us.

Before we saw the Lord's way, we thought it was right to follow after earthly pleasures and pursuits and to put self first. We naturally said, This is the proper course for us to take. We see that the prominent and the great are following this course, seeking first the affairs of this present life—praise of men, how finely they can be clothed and housed, how fine a carriage or automobile they can have. They seek—and are in large measure able to secure—the gratification of the taste for earthly things, whether it be for the satisfaction of the mind, as various kinds of literature, or for the body, as for certain kinds of foods or drinks, etc.

But when we become children of God, we ask, What is God's will in respect to what we shall eat or drink or wear, as to the use of tobacco, as to the cut of our clothes, etc.? It is not for us to decide now whether we shall go to the theater or play cards or dance. All these matters should have been decided before we consecrated ourselves. Now, in harmony with the covenant we have entered into with Christ, we are to know strictly the Father's will. As we learn to see things from God's standpoint, we change our ideas as to what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, etc. And this change going on in our minds is the "fashioning."

THE FASHIONING A GRADUAL PROCESS

Although we discover some things quickly, we do not learn all things at once. Some things are less conspicuous before our minds than are others, and represent the finer shadings of what would be proper for a new creature. We gradually come to note these things more and more; and we ask, Which things shall we continue to chose? The knowledge of God's will is a matter of education. We come to see that this is right and that is wrong. (The world sets such a style for evening dress, such a style for morning dress.) When we become Christians we have new standards, and it takes some time to get everything harmoniously adjusted therewith.

In line with this thought, the Apostle says, "Be ye transformed, by the renewing of your minds"—not by the renewing of the new will. We already possess the new will. But we see that the body is regulated by the mind. Therefore the new will says, I must begin with the mind. I must get my mind to see things correctly, according to God's will. I will use the Bible and all the providential indications that will give me a knowledge of God's mind, and I will begin to conform my mind thereto. Thus our minds become gradually fashioned—transformed into the mind of the Lord. As we come to see more and more what is the will of God, our minds decide to do his will. Our reason plays an important part.

God wishes to appeal to our reason, because we are thus better developed than in any other way. We are all in the school of Christ—under the tutelage of our Lord. In this school we are learning to do his will. We have the teachings of our Lord Jesus and the writings of the apostles; and our Lord declared that whatsoever the apostles should bind on earth would be considered bound in heaven; and whatsoever they should loose on earth would be so considered in heaven. Our education progresses, until, at the end of this life, those who have thoroughly learned the lessons of this school will be those who have been obedient children. These will have been transformed by the renewing of their minds, that they might prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."—Romans 12:2.

OUR STANDARD—JEHOVAH'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

The new will is, in substance, a will to be like our Father in heaven. The Apostle Peter exhorts, "As he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy." Holiness is the standard of perfection. Our will must be holy when we first make our covenant with God. Nothing less than a holy will is acceptable to him. If we had had an unholy will, a will not submissive to God, we would not have been accepted. So if our will be holy we shall, as far as we are able, do his will.

As he who has called us is holy, so we, as far as our will is concerned, will be holy. And we will so direct our mind, as to be holy in life so far as is possible. We will apply the principles of God's holiness to every affair of life. We will observe the Golden Rule, that we should do to others as we would that others should do to us. Whoever neglects to apply these principles of holiness to his own life is not growing in the new life, not being transformed. We should seek to have our minds fully in accord with God's mind, and our conduct as far as possible also in alignment.

If our mind is not running in the proper groove, we must see to it that we turn it into the proper groove. We want to render obedience to our highest conception of what is the Lord's will, as far as we are able. Our will will be determined by God as loyal in proportion as it has been on the alert to watch the mind and the body, the tongue and everything pertaining to our conduct.

The Apostle enjoins upon us that we shall be "holy in all manner of conversation." (1 Pet. 1:15) The word conversation here has its broad meaning. It relates to our intercourse with others—all of our conduct with respect to others—our manner of life. We are to be holy in everything that pertains to our lives—in our thoughts, words and deeds. This is a very high standard; and no wonder that the Lord has set a high standard! It is for us to learn what this standard is, and to help others to know what it is.

This is why we spend a few years this side of the veil after we have given our hearts to Jesus. We say that we have taken up our cross to follow Jesus, and the Lord wishes to demonstrate whether this is true. He is watching our course, and the foreordained number will be found for the bride class. Others will be given another position not so good; and those who manifest that they have not the true spirit of obedience will die the second death.

GREATNESS THE REWARD OF SERVICE

JULY 12.—Mark 10:32-45.

"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."—Verse 45.

It was at the close of Jesus' ministry. For more than three years the Master had been calling his disciples and instructing them. They had come to recognize him as the Messiah, the heir of all God's promises, the one through whom the Messianic kingdom would be set up, which would bless all the world of mankind—the dead as well as the living.

The Master had particularly assured them that if faithful they should sit with him in his throne. However, he had not told them that his kingdom would be a spiritual one, and that they would need the change of the first resurrection before they could be sharers of it. He had not yet made clear to them the fact that a whole age would intervene before they would be sharers in the kingdom, and the kingdom itself be established amongst men. But he had hinted all this. He had said, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come, it will bring my words to your remembrance and show you respecting future things."

Jesus did, however, begin to break to the disciples a part of the news necessary for them to know and appreciate, lest they should be entirely overwhelmed and discouraged. He told them that he was going up to Jerusalem, and that the result would be that he would be delivered to the Gentiles to be crucified. St. Peter, always courageous, this time brought upon himself a severe rebuke. He undertook to correct the Master, saying, "You are not telling us truth; these things shall not happen to you, and your saying them to us will only discourage us. You are, as I have confessed, the great Messiah. You are to reign; You are not to be crucified at all. Give up that thought, dear Master; and let us continue to think about the glorious things of the kingdom into which you will soon be ushered and in which we, as your faithful disciples, will soon have a share.

But Jesus rebuked St. Peter, saying, "Get thee behind me, adversary; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

And now in this lesson Jesus, in the same journey, again brought up the matter of the shame, ill-treatment and death which was to come upon him. This time he included the thought of his resurrection from the dead on the third day. However, the matter was incomprehensible to the disciples; and they merely said to themselves, This is another of those dark sayings of the Master which seem so mysterious. Remember how he said to us on one occasion, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." That was a dark saying, and we could not understand it. But we hung on, although we did not then, neither do we now, understand the meaning of these words. Here we have another similar statement: the Master is representing himself as receiving the treatment due to the vilest of criminals—crucifixion.

They could not comprehend the meaning of the Master's words; these thoughts seemed so different from what they had been expecting! How could they receive them? Not until after Pentecost did they get the full grasp of the situation and of what Jesus had told them. There the holy Spirit began to make plain the divine arrangement—that the sufferings of all the church must come first before the glories of the kingdom would be revealed and the blessings to the world begin.

ON RIGHT HAND AND LEFT

Another of the Gospels tells us that the mother of James and John came with them and voiced their plea for them. They believed that the time for distributing the honors of the kingdom was very near at hand. They wanted to speak for prominent places. We need not assume that these two dear disciples sought the positions closest to the Master merely for ambition's sake. Rather, let us suppose that they loved the Lord very dearly, and therefore thought that they could appreciate a nearness to him more than could some of the others. Indeed, they evidently appreciated being near to the Master in his hours of suffering and deepest experiences; and they were permitted to come nearer than the majority of the twelve. On several special occasions the Lord took with him the same James and John, and Peter. They were with him in the holy mount, and at the awakening of Jairus' daughter, and in Gethsemane's Garden. They were glorious characters, whom the Lord greatly loved.

Let us mark carefully the words of Jesus. He did not say, My dear disciples, there will be no throne to sit upon, but on the contrary he declared that while there would be a throne, and while there would be places of preference in that throne, they would not be distributed by himself, but by the Father.

The Father stands as the representative of absolute justice, while Jesus stands as the representative of mercy, compassion, forgiveness. Places in the Millennial kingdom are not to be given on the score of mercy or favoritism, but absolutely on the score of quality. The Lord Jesus himself will have the highest place, because he is worthy. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." The Father will give these to him, as he has promised. Indeed, he has given our Lord honor and great glory, even though this kingdom glory still waits until the church, the body of Christ, shall have been completed by the change of the first resurrection.

WHAT KINGDOM IS MEANT

For many centuries confusion has prevailed amongst Christian people respecting the kingdom of Messiah, so frequently mentioned by Jesus and the apostles, and the basis of this lesson. There was no confusion at first, nor for nearly two hundred years after Jesus' day. The early church understood very well the promise that Messiah would come a second time, would receive the church to glory with himself and establish the kingdom of divine power for the rule of the world and the subjugation of all things to the will of God; and that this Messianic kingdom would require a thousand years to fulfil its mission. But by and by a theory sprang up to the effect that the church was to be organized as Messiah's kingdom and was to conquer the world before Jesus' second advent.

This unscriptural view changed the whole course of church history. Instead of longer preaching the Gospel merely with a view to calling out and perfecting the saintly few who would have a hearing ear and an appreciative heart, to make these ready for kingdom honor and glory, the course changed. Thereafter the endeavor was to grasp civil power. Intrigues were begun, false claims were asserted, and the endeavor was made to obtain control of kings and nations along the lines of superstition. Additionally, persecutions were used; and as much as possible civil rulers were cajoled, threatened, induced, to become the tools of ecclesiasticism, for the purpose of establishing a world-wide dominion of the church.

For a time—through inquisitions, etc., etc.—these things flourished; but ever since 1799 all thought of ecclesiastical dominion of the earth has given way. In their confusion many have lost all faith in the Messianic kingdom, and few are looking for it at Christ's second coming. Many in perplexity discuss a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of believers. Others believe that Christ's kingdom is now represented in the great governments of the world, and yet are abashed and confused when asked whether certain portions of Messiah's kingdom are building dreadnaughts to destroy other portions of the same kingdom.

By the majority of Christian people, the teaching of the Bible seems to be regarded as not consistent nor logical; otherwise, they would see that St. James, St. John and the other Apostles could not sit upon twelve thrones without there being a ruling kingdom. They would also see that the kingdom must be future, in harmony with the Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as in heaven." What we need is to cease handling the Word of God deceitfully. We must learn to read our Bible reverently and to understand it by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Bible students who do so are receiving great blessings, and are perceiving that Messiah's kingdom is not only future, but apparently nigh—even at the door.

"ARE YE ABLE?"—"MY CUP, MY BAPTISM?"

To the two dear disciples who requested places of special nearness to the Master in the kingdom, Jesus made known the fact that any position whatever in the kingdom would require the fulfilment of certain conditions. It was not enough that they had been called to discipleship. It was not enough that they had surrendered all to follow the Lord; that they had been with him, had heard his teachings and had assented to them so far as they could understand them. There must be something more; else they might not get into the kingdom at all.

These conditions the Master declared, saying, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" What did he mean? Did he mean, Would they be able or willing to eat the Passover supper, and there partake of the unleavened bread and drink of the memorial cup which he would institute? They had already been baptizing many. Did Jesus mean that they should be baptized again in water? What was the purport of the words, my cup, my baptism?

We reply that Jesus' "cup" was the one to which he

elsewhere referred, saying, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" In the divine plan God had already marked out that whoever will be of the great Messiah, and entrusted with the Messianic kingdom glory, honor and power for the blessing of the world, must demonstrate worthiness of that honor and glory. In the case of Jesus himself the cup meant all those experiences of ignominy and shame, including crucifixion, which he experienced during the three and one-half years of his earthly ministry and which he fully accomplished at Calvary when he cried, "It is finished."

Of that cup the Master said to his disciples, "Drink ye all of it." In other words, whoever will be successful as a disciple of Christ in attaining to joint-heirship with the Master in his kingdom glory, honor and power, must first of all demonstrate a loyalty and faithfulness in respect to suffering with the Master, must prove his love, loyalty and faithfulness unto death—walking in the foot-steps of Jesus.

The Master made no reference to water baptism, but to his baptism into death, of which he spoke a few days later, saying, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" The Master's baptism in the beginning of his ministry was merely a symbol, or picture, of the real baptism. His going down into the water, his burial in it and rising up from it symbolically represented his going down into death and his resurrection therefrom. His real baptism into death progressed for three and a half years, from Jordan to Calvary; and when he cried on the cross, "It is finished," He meant that his baptism into death was completed. He was raised up out of that death-baptism on the third day by the Father's power, to the Father's right hand, which position he will always occupy.

This was the Master's baptism. It meant the full renunciation of all earthly rights. And now he asked those dear disciples whether or not they were ready, able or willing to follow him to this extent—to be sharers of his cup of ignominy and his baptism into death. Only by faithfully following him thus might they hope for any share in his kingdom. The same principle must apply to all the followers of Jesus. It is for each of us to decide whether we will drink of his cup or not; whether we will share in his baptism into death or not. Only the lowly, self-sacrificing, will be able or willing to endure such an experience.

Let us now apply these thoughts to the incorrect views of the kingdom so frequently held. How could these sentiments be applied to any kingdom of God in the heart, or how could they apply to the various kingdoms of earth? Is it necessary for the kings of the earth to partake of Christ's ignominy and sacrifice unto death, by consecration, before they can reign? Or, applying the matter to the church systems at the present time, as some do, is it through great difficulty that any attain membership in the earthly institutions called the church of Christ? Does it require self-denial to get into these? Are all who are in them buried with Christ in baptism—into his death? Do they all partake of the cup of his sufferings? Surely not! Only a right view of the kingdom dovetails into these various statements. We must see that the kingdom is the pearl of great price, to obtain which all else must be sacrificed.—Matthew 13:46.

"WE ARE ABLE"—"YE SHALL INDEED"

In the other account of this incident the disciples answered that they were able, that is, willing, to undertake to share the Master's cup and his baptism. Of course they did not know clearly what all this meant; but they were able, or willing, ready, to do anything that the Master would command. So it must be with all who, like those faithful apostles, shall come off conquerors and share with the Redeemer in the glory, honor and immortality promised to his kingdom class, the bride class.

In that account, Jesus is represented as replying, "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptized with my baptism." That is to say, willingness on the part of all is as much as the Lord could reasonably require of his disciples. We have not the power that he possessed: we are sinners by nature. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." We can merely, therefore, will to do right; and the Lord must needs take us under his care and into his school of affliction and experience, giving us the lessons necessary to prove our loyalty and faithfulness even unto death. How gracious, how Godlike, that because of our weakness as members of the fallen race we could not do all ourselves, God has provided for us in the Savior whom he has appointed! Our imperfections are accounted as imputed to the Redeemer, while his perfections are accounted as imputed to us. Thus through him only may we hope to gain the kingdom and glory and honor and immortality.

CHIEF SERVANT—MOST HONORED

The other apostles were indignant that St. James and St. John should have made such a request. However, the incident afforded Jesus opportunity for laying down the rules which must govern in respect to greatness in the Messianic kingdom. Whichever one will serve the others most will thereby be demonstrating to God a greater fitness for a higher place. This is different, as Jesus says, from the ordinary course of affairs, where a lordship is exercised according to some arbitrary rule.

The rule of the kingdom will be that the one who serves most will have the highest honor. Thus Jesus himself is preeminently servant of all. His position is the highest in the kingdom by divine appointment, and others will range next to him in proportion as they have his spirit of love, service, obedience and loyalty.

WHAT BLIND BARTIMAEUS SAW

JULY 19.—Mark 10:46-52.

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."—Isaiah 35:5, 6.

It was the Passover season, and many were journeying in the same direction with Jesus—toward Jerusalem. Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, sat by the wayside, hoping to receive charity from the passersby. An unusual commotion was created as Jesus passed, and Bartimaeus inquired the cause. The answer was that Jesus the Nazarene had just passed by.

Bartimaeus had heard that Jesus was the reputed Messiah who, according to the Scriptures, would eventually bless the whole world and do away with sin, sorrow and pain. He had heard that already Jesus was performing cures, healing the sick, casting out demons and opening the eyes of the blind. Oh, he thought, Why did not some one tell me while he was passing! He has healed others, might I not be one of the favored ones?

His faith and hope flamed up; and he shouted, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!" Be quiet! Make less noise! Do not interrupt the Great Teacher; He is talking with others, said the passersby. But Bartimaeus felt that it was now or never with him; he lifted his voice above that of the multitude, and shouted more loudly than ever, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus heard the voice, and ever ready to be gracious to those who call for mercy, he bade the blind man come to him. It would show his faith: it would thus be a more important lesson to the multitude. Helped by others, Bartimaeus finally found himself in the presence of Jesus; and the Master said, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" Promptly the answer came, "O Lord, that I might receive my sight!" Jesus said unto him, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." And immediately he received his sight, and became one of the followers in the concourse, praising the divine power and acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah.

"JESUS, THOU SON OF DAVID"

The blind man's words, "Jesus, thou Son of David," had special significance to him and to the Jews of his day, which is lost so far as the multitudes of today are concerned. The Jews knew that Messiah as the great High Priest was in a measure prefigured by Aaron; and as the great Lawgiver, was prefigured, or typified. by Moses; and as the great King was prefigured, or typified, by Solomon, David's wise, rich, influential son, his successor in the kingdom. The uniting of all these lines of prophecy is found pictorially represented in Melchizedek, who was a priest upon his throne; that is to say, he was a priest of God at the same time that he was a prince or ruler—he had a double office.

St. Paul calls our attention to this fact that Jesus is not ultimately to be a priest after the order of Aaron—merely a sacrificing priest, without any reigning power; but that he is to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek. St. Paul cites the divine declaration to this effect in the Psalms of David: "I have sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." (Psalm 110:4) St. Paul bases highly important arguments upon this prophetic statement. He shows the divine foreintention in respect to

Jesus and the Messianic kingdom, and the character of the same.

The committee arranging the order of these International Bible Studies evidently had in mind the fact that the miracles of Jesus at his first advent were the merest foreshadows of the greater miracles and works which he will accomplish at his second advent. In line with this thought, they have given us as the Golden Text for today's lesson Isaiah's prophecy respecting Messiah's kingdom. This agrees with the general trend of the Apostolic teaching to the effect that all the miracles which Jesus performed were foreshadows, or illustrations, of the greater work which is to be accomplished by the establishment of his Millennial kingdom, in due time. We read, "These things did Jesus and manifested forth his glory"; that is, showed in advance his kingdom glory and power.

We are not for a moment to think that Jesus and his disciples attempted to heal all the sick of Palestine. On the contrary, while many were healed, they were the exceptions amongst the multitudes that were sick—such as manifested special faith. In the present instance, Bartimaeus was only one of many blind beggars by the wayside, we may be sure; for Palestine, Syria and Egypt are the lands of blind beggars. The Lord had already passed Bartimaeus by, not heeding him, not offering to heal him. He had his eyesight restored because of his faith, because he cried out, because he would not listen to those who sought to still his voice and turn aside his faith.

THE WORST OF BLINDNESS

A similar case, we remember, was at the Pool of Bethesda. Multitudes were lying there, waiting for the movement of the waters, in order to step into the pool for healing. Jesus addressed himself to only one of these, saying, "Take up thy bed and walk." It is when we come to understand that the miracles of Jesus pictured forth coming blessings during his Messianic kingdom that we get the proper view of matters, and may rejoice accordingly that a good, glad day is coming for all the blind, all the lame, all the deaf, as indicated by Isaiah's prophecy.—Isaiah 35:5, 6.

"Eyes have they, but they see not; ears, but they hear not." The whole world is referred to in the Bible as being blind and deaf to the things that are most interesting, most profitable. Only an occasional one here and there, like Bartimaeus of old, grasps the possibility of relief from his blindness and deafness, and takes the proper steps to secure relief. St. Paul tells us of this blind condition, saying, "The god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."—2 Corinthians 4:4.

Six thousand years ago, Satan started this work of blinding human understanding to the goodness of God and to those things which would make for their highest welfare. He still continues it. He began by contradicting the Almighty when he told Mother Eve that the penalty for sin, "Dying, thou shalt die," was a deception on God's part. Satan declared, "Ye shall not surely die"; and he persuaded her that this threat was merely an attempt on God's part to keep her from great blessings of knowledge, and that the true welfare of herself and her husband would be promoted by disobedience.

The question naturally arises, What motive did Satan have in misrepresenting matters to our first parents? Why should he be interested in their disobedience and alienation from God? The answer is that thus only could he make them effectually his own slaves of sin. So long as they recognized God as their wise, loving parent and had confidence in him, they would remain loyal to him, and correspondingly would not be the servants of sin.

Satan has continued this work of misrepresenting God's divine character and plan for now six thousand years. St. Paul says that he puts light for darkness, and darkness for light, and that "we are not ignorant of his devices." After telling us that the god of this world has blinded the minds of all unbelievers, St. Paul adds the explanation that this is done lest the light of the knowledge of the glory of God should shine into their hearts—lest they should see the real goodness of God. He explains that this light of God's goodness is reflected, to those who see it, from the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.

In this beautiful, poetic form the Apostle presents a wonderful truth which Bible students are more and more coming to appreciate. God is love; and all the stories that we have heard to the contrary are intended to blind our minds and prejudice us against our best Friend. Hence it is that Satan has persistently propagated, not only amongst the heathen, but also amongst Christians, various doctrines which are the reverse of the truth. St. Paul styles these "doctrines of demons."—1 Timothy 4:1.

During the dark ages the adversary worked these into our Christian creeds, had them painted upon the walls of Christian churches, and had them acted out in theatricals of a darker day. These all picture God as the worst imaginable devil. They all represent him as knowing what he was doing when he created our race and purposed from the beginning that nearly every member of the race should suffer an eternity of torture. No wonder that during the dark ages the world was not drawn to God by these horrible misrepresentations! No wonder that even when the Bible came back to the reverence of the people, these doctrines of devils adhered to it, and have since hindered the world from loving it!

Now we are learning that we were all more or less blinded by the adversary; and as we get free from his blinding influence, our hearts rejoice in the favor of him who has brought us out of darkness into marvelous light.

ONLY THE FEW YET SEE

Writing to the church of Ephesus, the Apostle intimates that while they had seen something, there was still much for them to see. We quote: "Making mention of you in my prayers, that . . . the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." And again: "I bow my knees unto the Father . . . that ye may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." We still need to offer this prayer on behalf of ourselves and of all the church.

As for the world, it still lies in darkness, in the wicked one, as the Apostle declares, under the bondage of the superstitions which Satan has prospered. Only the few now get their eyes open, as did Bartimaeus. They are people of special character, who see special opportunities and who so greatly long for the light of the knowledge of God that they are willing to ignore the general sentiment of those who bid them be quiet and continue in ignorance—blindness. It is those who hunger and thirst after righteousness that have the promise of being filled, and those who are longing for sight that may hope to have it, in the present time.

But, thank God, a glorious change is promised! Satan, the prince of darkness, is to give place to the glorious Prince of Light, the same one who healed Bartimaeus in a typical way more than eighteen centuries ago. He is to take the kingdom. Divine power is back of the program by which Satan is to be bound for a thousand years and all his works of darkness to be undone. Instead of misrepresentation of God's true character and loving plans, the reverse will be given to mankind. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep—until no one shall need to say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord; for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest. —Isaiah 11:9; Jeremiah 31:34.

"ALL THE BLIND EYES SHALL BE OPENED"

Whoever in reading this prophecy thinks merely of the natural sight, and of the fact that all natural blindness will be done away in Messiah's kingdom, sees only a small portion of the glorious work to be accomplished. The blindness of ignorance and superstition with which Satan has afflicted the race is far worse than the physical blindness. And the assurance is given us by the Lord that all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. The Scriptural declaration, "Every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him," has undoubtedly special reference to the eyes of understanding. Jesus declared to his disciples, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye shall see me." Yea, the Apostle John says, "We shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is."

By the miraculous change of the first resurrection the church class shall be made spirit beings like unto the angels, and will then see the Master face to face, because spirit beings like him. But the world will never see him in this manner. They will see him with the eyes of their understanding opened, just as believers now see the Father and see Jesus by the eyes of faith and the eyes of understanding; just as we see the things which "eye hath not seen, neither have entered into the heart of man"—the things which God has in reservation for them that love him, the things which God has revealed unto us by his spirit, the things which we see with our spiritual vision.

Similarly, during the Millennial period, all blinded eyes will be opened to the goodness, the greatness, the love, the power of God. Thus the world will come to know God, being helped to that knowledge through the Messianic kingdom; and all who avail themselves of the privileges then extended may attain to that glorious degree of knowledge mentioned by Jesus when he said: "This is life eternal, that they might

know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.''

HELPERS, NOT HINDERERS

In the type, the people first of all bade Bartimaeus keep quiet; but when Jesus called him, they joined in giving words of encouragement and in helping the blind man to the Savior. The latter action should represent the course of all who are the Lord's people. They should encourage the blind, the superstitious—all who are out of the way—to come to the Savior, to realize that he is indeed gracious and willing to save them from their blindness.

We might extend these observations to various affairs of life, and say that many are blind as respects the beauties of the Bible, and that all who have gotten their eyes of understanding opened to see the beauties of its real teachings should be on the alert to assist others to the same blessing. We might extend the lesson to the use of the natural sight. Some are so deeply engrossed in business or in pleasure-seeking that they never lift their eyes to the glorious beauties of nature. The shining stars are telling of a divine wisdom and of an omnipotent Creator, yet the blinded ones fail to get a blessing from the message, because they fail to see. ''Eyes have they, but they see not.''

All nature is speaking of a great, eternal God, and telling us that humanity is his chief earthly handiwork, and that our highest aim should be to seek to know him and to serve him. But how many are born blind and deaf to the lessons of the stars, of which the Prophet declares, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard''! There are some so blind mentally that they see not that the unhappiness which they feel is largely the result of their own selfishness. They see not that their homes might be more beautiful, might be places of comfort and happiness, instead of places of selfish grasping, upbraidings, discontent.

All who realize these conditions to be prevailing in themselves or others should be crying out, ''O Lord, that I might receive my sight!'' and should be rejoicing also to the extent that they are learning that the time is coming, yea, is near at hand, when Messiah's kingdom will grant the blessing of the opening of the eyes of understanding to all of Adam's race.

MIND AND WILL

In THE WATCH TOWER for April 15th there occurs a statement which seems to call for an explanation. On Page 117, lines 11 and 12, we read: ''The will of the body was reckoned entirely dead before the individual could be counted a new creature.'' While it is true that the words mind and will are often used interchangeably, nevertheless, it has been our custom to differentiate between these; but in the above sentence this was neglected.

The will of the flesh dies actually; and we receive a new will, a holy will, the will of God, instead of our own will. If that will should ever cease to be holy, and turn again to be a fleshly will, that would be what the Apostle terms, ''drawing back unto perdition.'' St. Peter says that such a change of will would correspond to a sow returning to her wallowing in the mire, after she had been washed. Those who turn wilfully and deliberately back to the will of the flesh are described as ''twice dead and plucked up by the roots.'' In other words: This would mean that, the fleshly will having revived, the spirit-begotten new will had died.

But with the mind it is different. The mind is a part of the body. The body has its fleshly appetites, preferences, propensities, and is continually clamoring for the earthly rights against the decision of the new will. The fleshly mind, therefore, is not dead; else it could not clamor and war against the spirit of the new will, the new creature in Christ Jesus.—Galatians 5:17.

Such clear-cut distinctions are to be found only in the Bible, and probably will not be appreciated by any but close Bible students. What we would better, therefore, have said is, "The mind of the flesh is reckoned dead, before the individual can be counted a new creature.''

This is in line with the Apostle's statement, ''Reckon ye yourselves dead indeed to sin, but alive unto God.'' Again we read, ''Mortify [deaden] your members which are on the earth''—your fleshly mind. This mortifying, or deadening, of the fleshly mind means a continuous struggle on the part of the new will against the old creature reckoned dead, but not actually dead.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

A MATURING OBLIGATION

Dear Brother in Christ:—

Accept love and greetings from one who has been greatly blessed by your faithful service. For several years I have recognized THE WATCH TOWER publications as the means of grace provided for the ''feet-members'' of The Christ—the Anointed.

The information herein desired I feel sure has already been given, had I a mind sufficient to have grasped and retained it. But I hope you will bear with my feebleness and, if you think proper, serve me a morsel of advice.

I have a wife and three children for whom I am able to earn but a bare living. As a colporteur I have been able to provide as well for my family as by other employment. For some months I have suffered from a peculiar physical weakness, causing a nervous strain which, in turn, affected my mind. My salvation has been in concentrating my attention upon the study of God's great plan, so that, by his grace, what seemed about to wreck me was turned into a great blessing. I have found, in secret prayer and study, peace of mind which enabled me to bear my disordered condition, although I grew physically weaker.

Having taken up the colporteur work I find joy and peace in keeping actively engaged in the service, but I can barely make expenses. I am owing a note at bank which will be due October 1st. I have a life-policy for $1,000, and I have an undimmed faith in the correctness of our chronology. In spite of the deadly attacks of Satan I have hope that I shall, through much tribulation, enter the kingdom.

My question is, Shall I be accounted faithful if I go on in the colporteur work and leave it to the Lord's providence to provide the $100 to pay the note on October 1st? I have given instructions that in case of my death the note be paid from the policy, as it now appears that the insurance companies may hold up longer than the church militant.

I wish to express my deep appreciation of the ''meat in due season'' provided by our Lord through you, as a ''chosen vessel,'' and that to me, also, the article, ''The Peace of God,'' in the August 1st TOWER was a master-piece and one of the weapons of resisting Satan's attacks upon me. I have learned that there is life in activity, mentally, physically and spiritually.

Pardon my obtruding upon your valuable time. Please do as you see fit in this matter, but I shall be glad to be remembered in your prayers—that I may be given strength to serve acceptably. It is a delight to remember you and all the dear ones at Brooklyn Bethel and everywhere.

Your brother in love, service and hope, ———.

* * *

[We advise that you pay the interest in full, immediately, apologizing for delay, stating your excuse and promising to be punctual as possible in the future. Thus the matter may stand for some time, until you can conveniently pay the debt according to the evident original intent of the lender. But if, at any time, payment be demanded, you should cash your insurance to pay, or borrow on it.—Editor.]

GRATEFUL FOR THE TRUTH

My Dear Pastor:—

It is nearly twelve months since I wrote, thanking you for the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. In that letter I said that if nothing happened apparently to fulfil our expectations, that 1914 marks the end of Gentile favor and the setting up of Christ's kingdom, I should be as prepared as ever to accept with gratitude and joy your explanations of the Scriptures.

Oh, what blessings I have received from THE STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, THE WATCH TOWER, the tracts, TABERNACLE SHADOWS, etc.; I have feasted royally on ''present truth.'' I grow hungrier after each meal! I feel I must thank you, and tell you also what a blessing the vow has been to me.

I came into the truth in a remarkable way. Having been **a professing Christian for thirty years, and taking part in all** kinds of **religious work, yet I was most unhappy, with a** hungering for something I never received. One day I said, I will read nothing but the Bible; I will know, if possible, what is God's will and do it with his help.

After this for weeks I was seeking books to throw light on the Bible. A man brought some Swedenborgian literature to the village, and loaned me one of their books. One night I took this up, as I thought, and found I had THE DIVINE

PLAN OF THE AGES. The verse on the front page caught my attention at once: "To make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery," etc.

I felt, This is something I want. I started to read and never rested till I had read it through; looking up all the references, with growing joy and wonder over every chapter. Oh, how precious it was at once! I said to my neighbor, I would not give away the knowledge this book has given me for a thousand pounds. In six weeks I had all the STUDIES, and soon I had all of your literature that I could get.

THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES had been in the house for four years and I had not seen it. That day it was lying where I had put the Swedenborg book; I do not know how it got there. It seems it had been sent to my father four years previous. But the most remarkable thing I have not yet told you: A few days previous to finding your book I had gone to my room and on my knees told my heavenly Father that I was unsatisfied. I was not being "persecuted for righteousness sake"; most people appeared to love me. I told Him I wanted, like Paul, a share in Christ's suffering: I was ready to die, if only I might attain. I wanted nothing less than the best. In a few days I found THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES, as I have told you. Then I was short of time to read, and I fell and sprained my ankle very severely, and so had plenty of time to read.

Oh, how thankful I am for my heavenly Father's mercy and loving kindness and condescension in allowing me to have a place in his little flock! My heart is full of Christ, and "longs its glorious matter to declare"; but so few will hear —especially because I have come out of the Wesleyan church and all the offices I had there. My old friends fight shy of me; some have told me they would rather not hear if it would convince them they must come out.

I am only a woman keeping house for my dear old father, and now that I have no offices in any church, I feel I am feeding and not passing the food on to others. I do not wish to be like the servant who buried his talent. I speak to all as I have opportunity, and some listen with great interest; but I do not know that I have succeeded in bringing any into the truth. Two persons have bought full sets of THE STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, but are not reading them.

I have never looked back and feel I never shall. I feel consumed day by day to know my God, and do his will. Though a Wesleyan I was baptised (immersed) eleven years ago into Christ's death, understandingly, though not so fully as I understand today. Do you think I need to be baptised again? Please excuse me for taking your valuable time.

Yours very gratefully and lovingly in His service,

GRACE E. ROWSE.—*Eng.*

A WORD TO THE WISE

Dear Pastor Russell:—

While the closing hymn was being sung at The Temple recently, I noticed that rather more than a few of the ladies were apparently more interested in getting together their loose articles of attire and assuming their wraps than giving their respectful, if not devout, attention to the solemn and beautiful words that closed the day of praise and worship. The same people were in no particular haste to leave the building, as evinced by the greetings and adieux to their friends.

Perhaps you might consider it would help in realizing our duties as the Lord's people, to wait quietly and orderly until the final words of the service are uttered, followed by a few moments of quiet thought and prayer before plunging into the cares of our daily life. A few words from you in THE WATCH TOWER, and occasionally an admonition, might remind the whole church of the great privileges which we enjoy, and for which we should be grateful.

Yours in the service of the Lord, ROBERT E. BRAY.

BE PROMPTNESS AT MEETINGS

Dear Brother Russell:—

It seems to me that a word of encouragement to some of the dear friends in respect to greater promptness at meeting hours would be helpful. Apparently some do not realize the necessity for reverence in this respect. If we do not preserve order in regard to our meetings we are not observing heaven's first law. We must lack reverence for our heavenly Father and for our Master, if we are less prompt in the Lord's affairs than we are in our own.

Some of the dear friends come to the meetings as much as from thirty to forty-five minutes late. The same dear friends are very prompt in observing other appointments. How can we expect the Lord to be pleased with us if we give him the inferior things? How can we expect to receive the chief promises if we do not put forth as much effort for our everlasting welfare as we do for the temporal?

If we set a certain time for meeting and very seldom get there on time, we are not to be depended upon; our word is broken. How can we expect the Lord's approval in such a condition as that? He was so prompt and precise, doing the Father's will to the dot.

These same dear friends are very noble in other respects; and how they can be so indifferent about coming into the meetings on time I cannot understand, except it be that they have gotten into this bad habit and do not know how to get out of it. I am sure I would like to lend them a helping hand in this direction.

Yours in the one hope of all saints, FRED OTTI.

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NECESSITY OF SELF-CONTROL

"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls."—Proverbs 25:28.

In olden times cities were particularly places of refuge, where the inhabitants of the country congregated for protection. When the earth was less populous and the necessity for government was less appreciated than now, any marauding band was likely to take possession of whatever was open to their attack. So the cities of ancient times had strong walls. This was true, we remember, of Jerusalem and Jericho. It was true of ancient Troy, and also true of cities in Europe. In Vienna, the old wall of the city still stands; and so with other walled cities.

But as improved forms of government were adopted, cities no longer needed protecting walls. The police nowadays constitute a wall of protection. Our text is referring to a wall such as was formerly used, and to a city which had become dilapidated and the wall broken down. King Solomon gives this as a picture of a human being who has no rule over his own spirit. He is unable to protect himself against evil influences from within or without, as a result of having suffered his will to be broken down.

All mankind are born with more or less of determination. Some have this in a very marked degree; others in a lesser degree; no one, we believe, is wholly without this quality of will, purpose. But we find that whether our wills are strong or weak they need direction. Lessons in the directing of our wills come from various quarters; for instance, we have the laws of the city, laws of the state, laws of the country, which direct the individual as to what he may do and may not do—particularly what he may not do. As one looks into the source and history of these laws, he finds that they represent the accumulated will of a long period. Mankind now have very good laws. We have often thought it strange that fallen men have produced such just laws as we find on the statute books today.

But although very good laws may be made, yet people may ignore the law. A jury may set aside all law. A judge may pervert the law. Thus things that are unlawful may become a practise of an individual or a town or a city. To cultivate in one's self a lawless disposition is to cultivate the spirit of anarchy—a spirit of indifference to the rights and interests of others. There are some who manifest reasonable respect for the laws of man because necessity or public opinion makes it impossible or inadvisable to do otherwise, who may at heart be anarchists as regards the law of God, the great Law-giver of the Universe.

SAD PERVERSION OF SOUND JUDGMENT

To yield ourselves to passion, to allow it to sweep over us and master us, is disastrous, whether we are weak-minded or strong-minded. The weak-minded have their limitations; the strong-minded have the excess of power, and are more potent for evil. We hear a great many say, when they have lost control of their temper, or have been petulant or morose or ill-natured or discourteous, Well, that's my way; I do not mean any harm. They acknowledge the matter, and seek to justify themselves by saying that it is natural to them. But no human being should live according to what is natural to his or her fallen nature. A being created in the image of God, and still retaining some traces of his original Godlikeness, should live above the plane of the lower animals, which follow merely their natural instincts and passions.

Some seem to glory in what they are pleased to term their high spirit, which will always stand up for their "rights." They are not so weak and childish as to let anybody run over them! If they do not like what others do or say, they will tell just what they think of the others. They have some force of character! Oh, how the great adversary and his hosts, together with the perverse fallen nature, can deceive and mislead and blind the judgment that is not guided and instructed by the only true guide—the Word of God! How they can make that which is noble, and truly strong and Godlike appear weak and puerile—and make that which is weak, base, selfish and animal appear strong and manly!

ALL NEED REGULATION BY SOME STANDARD

All should recognize that the inclinations, the impulses and the preferences of the fallen nature of man are often contrary to that which is right, noble, truly desirable. All should be regulated by some standard, either the civil standard by which the world is governed, or the standard of God. But one might live up to the letter of a law and yet be violating its spirit. The Law of God is the very highest standard of law. And the spirit of God's law is embodied in the Golden Rule. This standard the whole world recognizes as right; and surely the Lord's people should measure all their conduct and their words, yea, their very thoughts, by this standard. Thus they will be rulers over their own spirit.

The word spirit in the text under consideration represents the mind, the impulses of one's nature. We are to rule our mind, our natural impulses. This means that if a thought present itself to the mind, or if we feel a certain impulse, we should be quick to perceive the nature of the thought or impulse; and if it is not in harmony with the principles of righteousness or with our covenant as children of God, we should at once resist it. If we are unable to do this successfully of ourselves, as is often the case, the heart should be promptly lifted to the Lord for His promised grace to help in time of need. If we feel an impulse toward a certain action or course, we should carefully weigh the matter, and decide as to its righteousness or propriety in the circumstances, looking to our unfailing source of help for guidance.

The world would say that this is too exacting—that they would have more pleasure in doing their own will. But we know that in doing their own will they frequently get into difficulty. A Christian has covenanted not to follow his own will; he has given up his own will, and has taken the will of God instead. The more advanced the Christian, the more should we expect that he would be able to rule his spirit—"casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought" to the will of God in Christ. And if we rule our mind, our thoughts, we shall rule our tongue. If the thought were not in the mind, the tongue would not utter it.

There is a grave danger of saying things, or of doing things, under a momentary impulse, that our heart, our consecrated judgment, would not approve; hence the necessity of bringing our thoughts and impulses into subjection. We are to consider, What would be the effect of my words or my action upon another? Would it bring harm? Would it be an injury, or cause needless pain, for me to say or do this thing, or would it do good? By thus scrutinizing himself, by thus taking himself in hand, and ruling his spirit, the child of God is showing his earnest desire of heart to be pleasing to the Lord and true to his covenant. And those who learn to rule their own spirit according to the will of the Father are the ones whom he will be pleased to make joint-heirs with his Son in his kingdom.

HOW TO ATTAIN STRENGTH OF CHARACTER

In what way can a Christian cultivate this control of his own spirit? At first the individual has not the power to control himself in everything; but as he learns to exercise self-control in the little things, more and more doing what he can in this direction, in thought and word and deed, he will gain in strength of character. We should remember the story of the man who wished to develop his muscles, and who for this reason began to practise each day in lifting a calf. He commenced when the calf was very young, and he lifted it day by day for weeks and months. In due time the calf had become an ox, and he was then able to lift the ox. His daily practise had gradually strengthened his muscles; they increased in strength with the increase in the weight of the animal, until he was strong enough to lift the full-grown ox.

And so with the Christian in his character-development: If we daily practise self-control, we shall gradually attain a strong character along this line, which will be of inestimable advantage to us in our Christian warfare. The cultivation of self-control should properly begin in one before birth, yea, at the time of conception. The mother should practise self-control, that this disposition might be impressed upon the mind of her unborn child, that thus it might enter the world in a much more favorable condition in this direction. And this spirit of self-control will grow in the child after birth, under the proper training of the parent, so that the child, approaching manhood's estate, will be able to exercise more natural self-control. Such a one, if he become a child of God, will make a very noble Christian indeed; he will be strong in the Lord and be helpful to others. But all have not had this natural advantage, and must battle the more determinedly for this reason.

MORAL STRENGTH MORE DESIRABLE THAN PHYSICAL

There is no place where the proof of our ability to rule our spirit is better shown than in our own home. With husband and wife, with parent and child, with brother and sister, this is an important matter. The battle with self is the greatest battle we have to fight; and the Word of God declares that "he that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." He is greater because he has learned to exercise the will, the determination, of a true character in the right direction, in the direction of control of self.

Moral strength is infinitely nobler and more to be desired than the greatest degree of physical strength or the keenest strategy. And it is only after we have conquered ourselves, only after we have become master of our own flesh, only after we have cast out the beam from our own eyes, have subdued anger, malice, hatred and strife in our own hearts, that we are able, by means of these severe battles with our own weaknesses, to assist the brethren, to assist our neighbors, to aid them—by our example—in overcoming their besetments and infirmities.

WE MUST FIGHT TO THE END

To rule one's own spirit, mind, disposition, implies a conflict similar in some respects to that of taking a city; for no matter where we begin, we find entrenched within us many armed and opposing powers. They have possession by heredity—they are there as the result of the fall. And if we have passed the days of youth they are the more strongly entrenched, and it requires the greater skill and generalship to rout them. But whether one has begun early or late, he that would succeed in ruling his own spirit must "war a good warfare." He must "fight the good fight of faith," down to the very end of the present existence.

If the child of God would be the victor in this fight, he must not only storm all the fortresses of inherited evils, which seem to be a part of his very nature, but having gained possession and taken his seat upon the throne of this symbolic city (his will), he must thereafter be continually on the defensive; for the old enemies are constantly on the alert, and ever and anon seek to regain possession, so that he who continues to rule his own spirit is one who has not only routed the enemy, Sin, from the throne of his being, but is continuing to keep him at bay.

This ruling of one's spirit is by no means an easy task; and, as in the illustration, it cannot be done single-handed and alone. Consequently, the wise "general" will invoke all the assistance at his command, remembering the words of the Apostle—"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high places." (Ephesians 6:12) These powers of the world, the flesh and the devil are closely allied, and therefore he who plans for conquest and an established reign thereafter, must seek alliance with another and stronger power. This power is tendered to all who earnestly undertake this great work. It is none other than the almighty arm of our God, who says to those who accept his strength, Greater is he that is with you—that is for you—than all they that be against you; gird yourselves like men, be strong, fear not.—See 1 John 4:4; Isaiah 35:4.

The ruling of this symbolic city—one's own spirit—will never be accomplished until first the "commanding general," the Will, has positively decided to change his allegiance from Sin to God, and to rout the rebels who resist the change. But, in the words of a trite saying, "Where there's a will, there's a way"—for good or for evil. God will assist, through various agencies, toward good; Satan, through various agencies, toward evil. If the Will says, "It must be done," it calls in the needed, available help; and forthwith it sets all the other faculties of the mind at work, first to subjugate, and then to rule and regulate the entire being. Conscience is commanded to keep a vigilant watch over all the mental operations. Judgment, under the influence of Conscience, must decide as to the righteousness or the unrighteousness of any matter, and report to the Will, which is under the same moral influence.

THREE DEPARTMENTS OF MENTAL GOVERNMENT

Thus we have three departments of government established—the legislative, which should always be the Conscience; the judicial, the Judgment; and the executive, the Will. In every well-regulated and righteously-ruled mind, all the other facul-

ties must make their appeal to this Congress and, as the Will insists, in due and proper order. Their appeal to the Will to execute their desires before submitting them first to Conscience, and then to Judgment, should never be tolerated; but when approved there, they may freely urge their claims upon the executive power, the Will. The Will governs; and if the Will be weak, the government is slack, and the appetites, passions and unholy ambitions take advantage of the situation. They seek to overbalance Judgment and to silence Conscience, and loudly clamor to the Will to have their own wild way.

If the Will be weak, but strive to keep itself under the influence of Conscience and sound Judgment, it will be fitful and irregular in its rulings; and the government will be unstable and ultimately wholly at the mercy of the fallen appetites, passions and ambitions. The condition of such a soul is one of anarchy which, unless its wild course be speedily arrested, will hurriedly sweep the whole being toward destruction. It is all-important, therefore, that the Will be entirely consecrated to God and righteousness; and that it strengthen itself in the Lord, and in his name and strength rule with a firm hand, cultivating as its assistants Conscience and Judgment, in determining the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, as expressed in his Word.—Romans 12:2.

The Will has the most difficult office to fill; and the Lord's commendation will be to the man of resolute Will, instructed by an enlightened Conscience and Judgment. Blessed is the Christian who sets his house in order, and who maintains that order to the end of his days. The thorns and thistles of his old nature have been exterminated; the beautiful flowers of peace, righteousness and love have been cultivated; and now they flourish and adorn his character. The warring elements of his old nature have been brought into subjection to his new Will. As the poet Whittier has beautifully expressed it:

"All the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm;
And all the angles of the strife
Now rounding into calm."

OUR RESPONSIBILITY CONCERNING PRESENT TRUTH

"His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."—Jeremiah 20:9.

The Prophet Jeremiah is here using a very forceful comparison. He had a burning zeal in his heart, a consuming sense of the importance of the message given him to deliver. His previous declaration of the Word of God concerning Israel had been so despised and rejected that he had become disheartened. He himself declared, "The Word of the Lord, was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said: I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary of forbearing, and I could not stay!" His message had to be spoken. The Lord had instructed him to tell Israel that they were about to be given over into the hands of their enemies.

This Word of the Lord to the Prophet Jeremiah was given prior to the seventy years' captivity of the Jews. There were false prophets among them who declared that the King of Judah was to gain a victory over their enemies. The people were glad to hear this assurance; and they despised the true Prophet of the Lord, who gave them the real Message from God. Jeremiah told them that they had failed to keep their covenant with the Lord; that they had failed in their responsibilities to Jehovah, whose people they professed to be, and whom they had promised to serve faithfully; that it was not too late even then for any to be delivered, who would repent; but that the nation was surely to be delivered to their enemies and carried away into captivity.

JEREMIAH'S CRUCIAL TEST

Jeremiah knew that the false prophets would encourage the king, and that he himself would bring the king's wrath upon his own head by reiterating the message which Jehovah had commissioned him to deliver. He shrank from the infamy, the reproach and the persecution which by experience he knew would result from loyalty to the Lord. But he overcame the temptation to hold his peace. He would speak as God commanded him, let the cost be what it would. He would tell Israel again the words which had been given him. He would give them a further warning.

If Jeremiah had allowed his fears to overwhelm him, and had withheld the message, undoubtedly he would have been set aside as the mouthpiece of God, and another would have been commissioned to deliver the message. The burning within the heart of the Prophet would have grown feebler and would ultimately have died out. When a fire is kept shut off from a draft for some length of time, it will become extinguished. This is as true in the realm of moral and spiritual forces as in that of physical nature. This is why the Apostle Paul urged: "Quench not the Spirit." We might let the holy Spirit of God die out in our hearts by a failure to do our duty, a failure to keep our covenant faithfully. The light within us, the holy fire, would smolder for a time, and finally become extinct. The Prophet Jeremiah could not withhold that which God had commanded him to speak; he could not quench the fire within his soul without losing his relationship with Jehovah.

GOD'S MESSAGE GIVEN US TODAY

Thus it is with us today. God has let us into the secret of his counsels. He has granted us a wonderful spiritual illumination. He has given us a message of the utmost importance to deliver to his professed people. We have been informed by the Lord that a great change is impending—that the lease of power to the Gentile nations is about to expire. We are instructed that the present religious systems of Christendom are to go down, that the rule of the present order is about to end, and that the dominion is about to be given "to him whose right it is" to reign. The kingdoms of this world are about to "become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

This message is not to be stated in a rude manner. But it is to be stated, nevertheless. The great King whom God hath appointed is about to come in. In Jeremiah's time, the message was that the kingdom of God, His typical kingdom, was about to be overthrown. The lease of power to the Gentiles, under the domination of the Prince of this world was about to be inaugurated. This order of things was to be permitted to run for an appointed time. That time is now about to run out. The King's Son is soon to receive his long-promised inheritance. (Psalm 2:7-9) We are glad that our message is not now the overthrow of God's kingdom, but the very opposite of this—the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness and the establishment of the kingdom of God.

So we are to tell forth this glorious message. We are to tell it in our actions, in our words, by the printed page, by pictorial presentations to the eye, and in every way that the Lord shall give us the opportunity. If through fear of persecution, of losing prestige in the eyes of men, for love of ease, or for any reason whatever, we should fail to give forth the Message of God, it will be taken from us and given to one who is worthy. The Lord is seeking those who are valiant for Him, for righteousness, for truth. If we prove ourselves weak, we are not fit for the kingdom.

ARE WE FULFILLING OUR COMMISSION?

Is this wonderful message, this message the like of which was never before granted to men or angels to tell, burning within us? And are we speaking it forth, that its inspiration may cause other hearts to take fire? Can we sing with the poet:

"I love to tell the Story,
It did so much for me!
And that is just the reason
I tell it now to thee"?

If we refrain from telling the glad tidings, the result will be that the fire of God's holy Spirit will become extinguished within us. And if the light that is within us becomes darkness, how great will be that darkness! The possession of the truth—God's message—brings with it great responsibility. Shall we prove faithful to it? Shall we show to our God our deep appreciation of his loving kindness in granting us the knowledge of his wonderful message of salvation, his glorious plan, with its times and seasons?

There is a difference between the operation of the Lord's Spirit in his children now and its operation in the days of the Prophet Jeremiah, and the other holy prophets. During the Jewish age the holy Spirit acted upon the servants and mouthpieces of God in a mechanical manner. Now the people of the Lord have both his message in his written Work and the begetting of the Spirit, which gives us a spiritual understanding impossible to his people of past ages. The mysteries of God are now opened up to his faithful children, the watchers; and we are granted a clear understanding of "the deep things of God," some features of which were never revealed until the present time, even to the most faithful of the Lord's saints.—1 Thessalonians 5:1-6.

"THE DAY IS AT HAND!"

We are also told by the Apostle Paul that the things which were written of the servants of the Lord in past dispensations were written for our admonition and instruction and comfort, "upon whom the ends of the ages are come." (1 Corinthians 10:11) Seeing all these things, dearly beloved, "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?" How earnestly, with what painstaking care, should we give heed to the Word spoken unto us! Let us be faithful in proclaiming the message of our Lord, now due. Let us tell forth the words which he has put into our mouths, whether others hear or whether they forbear—whether our faithfulness bring us the favor or the disfavor of the world and of nominal spiritual Israel. But let us speak his Word in meekness and love, leaving the results with our great Chief Reaper. "The day is at hand"!

"He cometh to his own—our glorious King!
Can human tongue or pen show forth such glory?
Through earth and sky let our glad praises ring!
O saints of God, tell forth the wondrous Story!

"He cometh now to reign. What wealth of joy.
To all the world! Thy matchless name confessing,
O Son of God, we sound thy glory forth
O'er land and sea—thy promised Reign of Blessing!"

THE GREAT SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP

"The Lord is my Shepherd."—Psalm 23:1.

Throughout the Old Testament the word rendered Lord is in the Hebrew Jehovah, and therefore applies to the heavenly Father and not to the heavenly Son. The thought presented in our text—as in other Scriptures—is that the great Over-Shepherd appointed his Son to be the Under-Shepherd of the sheep, even as the Son has appointed under-shepherds in the church subject to him. The work of shepherding is not exercised toward the world. The great Under-Shepherd does not shepherd goats or wolves. The only ones who are shepherded are the sheep; and special care is taken of the flock of God. The great Over-Shepherd looks out for the interests of his sheep, provides for them, leads them into green pastures, as the Psalmist tells us. He also protects them from wolves and other ravenous beasts.

If we would inquire, Who are these sheep? we find that the Scriptures give us good evidence that originally the Jewish nation constituted this flock, and that King David recognized himself as one of the sheep. Israel was not chosen by the Lord because they were better than the rest of mankind; but God made an exception of that people on account of Father Abraham, for whose sake he became the "Shepherd of Israel." Because of Abraham's great faith in God and his implicit obedience under the most crucial tests, the Lord promised to make of his seed a peculiar people above all the peoples of the earth. He promised to bless them, to assume a particular care over their affairs, and eventually to use them in blessing all other nations. So God made the Hebrews his chosen people. In proportion as they were obedient to his commands, he blessed them; and whenever they went astray, he chastised them and brought them back again under his care.

But Abraham was to have another seed, a spiritual seed, who were to reign over the natural seed, and to bless all nations and kindreds through the natural seed. The special application of this text, then, we understand to be to spiritual Israel, just as all the chiefest of God's promises are to spiritual Israel. Natural Israel were the children of Abraham according to the flesh; but the spiritual children of Abraham are those begotten of the holy Spirit to a new nature—the spiritual nature. So while the Lord had a care over the affairs of natural Israel, and still has a care, he has a still more particular care over the affairs of spiritual Israel.

Hence, we understand that the speaker of this text, viewed from the prophetic standpoint, is primarily the Lord Jesus; and that all his consecrated followers throughout this Gospel age, all the members of his body, are also represented in the speaker. All these are likewise privileged to use these words: "Jehovah is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

BEWARE OF WOLVES

In this 23d Psalm there is a distinction implied between sheep and wolves. The world likes to be considered strong and well able to defend themselves and their rights. On their escutcheons we never see a sheep portrayed. We see lions; we see the eagle, with its outspread wings and its sharp claws and beak; we see dragons and bears and serpents—everything to indicate ferocity, rapacity, cunning, desire for conquest. The Lord passes by all these strong, fierce nations—the lion, the eagle, the bear, etc., and has called out a new nation, altogether distinct from any of these.

God has chosen for the members of this nation those—few in number—who are sheeplike in disposition and who desire to come into his fold. For these he has provided a particular way in which to enter this fold. He does not have bears in his fold, nor tigers nor wolves nor birds of prey. God does not recognize such; they are not to be fed and cared for as he cares for his sheep. He is the Shepherd only of the sheep.

If, therefore, we would claim the promise of this beautiful Psalm, we must make sure that we are of sheeplike disposition and desirous of being led of the true shepherd. We are to be careful to note that there is only one Shepherd who is able to care for our interests and who can be safely entrusted with them. A strange shepherd would lead the sheep astray, would lead them into difficulties, dangers and disaster. For this reason we do not trust everybody who wears the garb of a shepherd. There is but one Shepherd that we can trust.

THE TENDER SHEPHERD'S CARE

The great Over-Shepherd is willing to receive all the straying sheep that long to come back to the fold. He has appointed as the Under-Shepherd the one who died for us, that he might fully deliver all the sheep from the evil one—the roaring lion who walketh about seeking whom he may devour. Our gracious Savior left the courts of glory and came down to earth, and for thirty-three years he traversed with weary feet this vale of tears. He mingled with the poor and lowly; he wept with the sorrowing and the sinful; he had no place to lay his head. He bore the griefs and sicknesses of those about him. He suffered and sorrowed; he bore shame and ignominy—and all this even unto death! And why? It was that he might save the "lost sheep." His blessed fellowship with the shining hosts of heaven was all relinquished during these years of earthly pilgrimage, that the wandering sheep might be found and brought back to the fold of God.

"There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold;
But one was out on the hills away,
Far off in the dark and cold—
Away on the mountains wild and bare,
Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

* * *

"But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed;
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through,
Eere he found his sheep that was lost.
Out in the desert he heard its cry—
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.

* * *

"Then all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
And up from the rocky steep,
There arose a glad cry to the gates of heaven,
'Rejoice! I have found my sheep!'
And the angels echoed around the throne,
'Rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own!'"

* * *

How grateful we should be for such a Shepherd! How can we sufficiently show forth his praise! Truly we can never know this side the veil, "how dark was the night that the Lord passed through," that he might redeem us to God. And from the time we become his sheep he tenderly cares for all our interests, shielding us from every foe and the dangerous pitfalls that lie in our path.

MANKIND THE STRAYING SHEEP

All of the race of Adam are this "lost sheep." Soon the great heavenly Shepherd will have gathered his sheep of the present age into the fold beyond the veil, and then he will have another flock—the world in general. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring," said the Master. Ultimately, all who become godly indeed will be glad to be counted among the Lord's sheep. They will understand God's great plan for the salvation of men, and will appreciate the marvelous blessing conferred upon the world by the great Over-Shepherd, in sending his Son to die for all mankind, that they through him might live.

All who will accept the gracious arrangements and obey the rules and regulations of the Lord's kingdom, doing their best, will be brought into the sheep-fold. In proportion as they

are obedient they will be raised out of degradation up to perfection. Thus all who become sheep in the next age will be cared for—nothing shall offend or injure them. The Lord will not permit anything to harm them. They shall feed in green pastures and drink of the pure, refreshing waters of truth. They shall have a goodly heritage.

But the sheep of the present age, who are to be exalted, and are to do a shepherding work for these sheep of the incoming age, are given a distinct and peculiar training, to fit them for their future great work. From the time they are accepted to this higher plane, they are dealt with accordingly. This means that they must have certain trials and afflictions, according to the flesh. And if these sheep recognize that these difficult experiences of the way are necessary, they can well rejoice. If they have full confidence in the Shepherd, they know that he will permit them to have no needless experiences, and none which will be to their injury; but that he will overrule all their affairs, and will cause all things to work together for their good, because they love him, because they are the called according to God's purpose.

These are the little flock, sheep of the highest order. They represent only a small portion of mankind—those who have the special qualities of earnestness, humility and love of righteousness. Having come into this fold of God, we have every reason for confidence in the great Shepherd, and should recognize his constant care over us, His supreme interest in our spiritual welfare. Let us be good sheep! Let us not stray from the fold, to the right hand or to the left, nor be attracted away from the green pastures and pure waters to go browsing on the thistles and poisonous weeds of some by-path, or to drink of the muddy, polluted waters of human speculation and delusive theories of men.

THE SHEEP CHARACTERISTICS

"My sheep hear my voice and follow me," said the Master. If we are the Lord's true sheep, we shall know his voice. We shall not make a mistake. A stranger will we not follow, but will flee from him; for we know not the voice of strangers. (John 10:27, 5) In designating his people "The sheep of my pasture" (Jeremiah 23:1), the heavenly Father chose a very significant and fitting emblem of the kind of characters he is now seeking. The special characteristics of the sheep are meekness, docility, lack of self-confidence, and the obedience to the shepherd in whom they fully trust. The true sheep will listen intently for the faintest sound of the shepherd's voice. It will respond quickly to his call; it will watch for his guidance. Let us manifest all these most desirable traits of character, and ever keep close to our heavenly Shepherd and Guide, dwelling under his loving care and watchful eye. Those who thus abide in Christ are safe.

"Trusting him, they cannot stray;
They can never, never lose their way."

"HE THAT IS BEGOTTEN OF GOD DOES NOT PRACTICE SIN"

"My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous."—1 John 2:1.

According to history the Apostle John at the time of writing this Epistle was quite an aged man. He was the last of the apostles to die, according to tradition. In his ripe age he had naturally a tender, fatherly feeling toward all the church; he had become very mellow in character through his experiences. According to the original, our text would more properly read: "My darlings, these things write I unto you." The translators have taken the liberty of saying "little children" instead. A little child is always considered a darling.

St. John was especially spoken of as "the disciple whom Jesus loved"; this is the Apostle's own testimony. He seemed to be of a peculiarly loving disposition, combined with great force of character. And now as his pilgrimage neared its close, his heart went out in loving solicitude toward God's "little children." He had, in the chapter preceding our text, been pointing out that sin is a trait or quality of perversity which affects all. The Apostle declared that if any man say that he has no sin, he deceives himself—he is a liar, and makes God a liar. We are all sinners, as facts and Scripture testify. St. John thus impresses upon us that if we say we have no sin, we are displeasing to God, who is pleased to have us acknowledge our sins and apply for cleansing, seeking to put away sin so far as possible.

The Apostle says: "These things I write unto you that ye sin not." He does not say: Yes, we are all sinners—we cannot help it—and must continue in sin. No! But he says: Realizing that you commit trespasses which are contrary to the desire of your heart, remember that there is a place to go, a mercy seat, where you may confess your sins and obtain forgiveness. Remember that "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." Remember that he gave himself a ransom-price for all, and that the merit of this price was applied by imputation on our behalf. Remember that all the sins of the flesh are forgivable through faith in his blood. Bear this in mind, too, that he knows that with our imperfect flesh we cannot as new creatures do perfectly, and it is because of this that God has constituted him our Advocate and Head over all things.

OUR HIGH PRIEST GRANTS ABSOLUTION

Our Father knows that we all come short on account of the weaknesses of the flesh. Jesus laid down his life to absolve us from sin and to restore us to the Father, and he has appeared in the presence of God as the Advocate for all those who, during this Gospel age, turn away from sin and consecrate their lives to his service. Thus we see that the righteousness of Christ, through the great offering for sin which he made (his own body of flesh), is the basis for the forgiveness of our sins. And the blessing and privilege of going to the throne of grace for mercy and pardon for daily shortcomings is ours because we are the children of God, because we have come into the relationship of sons. We have a standing with the Father through the imputed merit of Jesus. Jesus does not advocate for others than the people of God. It is not the Father's purpose that he shall advocate for the world; God's dealing with the world will be quite different.

The one who is now our Advocate will soon take the church class to himself. As the great Priest after the order of Melchizedek, He will then reign over the world for a thousand years—not as Advocate, but as Mediator between God and fallen man. He will do a work of restitution for the world during this reign of a thousand years, and will bring up to perfection all who will avail themselves of the privileges and blessings granted during that period. At the close of the Millennium, when mankind are perfected, Messiah will turn them over to the Father: they will not need a Mediator after they have become perfect. So we see the difference between the advocacy of Christ for the church and his future work as Mediator for the world for mankind.

SEEMING CONTRADICTIONS HARMONIZED

The Apostle John in this same Epistle says: "He that is begotten of God sinneth not." How can this be true? Is the Apostle contradicting himself? Does he here say that "he that is begotten of God sinneth not," and does he say in our text that there is danger of our sinning? And again, that we would be lying if we denied that we have sin? What does he mean by the statement, "He that is begotten of God sinneth not"?

We reply that that which is begotten of God is the new creature—the holy will, the new soul. But this new creature has only the mortal body in which to operate; God promises to give a new body to the new creature in the resurrection. In the meantime, however, he is required to live under the present imperfections of the human body, and by his good fight against the weaknesses and sins which are entrenched in his flesh he will show either his loyalty to God and to the principles of righteousness or his disloyalty. If he be overtaken in a fault, either through ignorance or through temptation which he cannot control, it will not be sin on the part of the new creature, but an infirmity of the flesh. Nevertheless, he must go to God for forgiveness for these trespasses.

But the new creature sinneth not—he "does not practise sin"—as the Emphatic Diaglott translates this passage. He who loves sin will sin; he who does not love sin will not sin wilfully. He might be entrapped through his weak flesh, or fall into a snare of the adversary, but this would be unintentional on his part. And Jesus, our Advocate, will intercede for such sins, but not for deliberate sin. Jesus did not die for wilful sins of the new creature, but for sins due to the fall—Adamic sin. So if any sin wilfully as a new creature, he perishes thereby. Our first life was in Adam; our first death was the Adamic death. When we accepted Christ and the new creature was begotten, our second life was begun. Now if such a one should be guilty of wilful sin, he would no longer have any standing whatever before God; he would again come under the sentence of death—the second death.

SLACKNESS IN THE NEW CREATURE

We might remark here, incidentally, that sometimes there is a kind of mixed condition; the new creature has been slack in guarding against temptation, and has yielded with some degree of culpability. To the extent that the new creature has been derelict, neglected, the face of the Lord will be

darkened to him. If the flesh start to do wrong, the new will is not to consent to, or allow the wrong. The new creature is to mortify, put to death, the flesh. To whatever extent he is slack in this matter, to that extent it is sin. A full sin would be a full consent of the new will, a full turning away from God.

But the flesh might have certain desires and temptations, and there might occur a partially wilful sin. In such a case stripes would be administered in proportion to the wilfulness. Such an individual might get into a place where he would be spiritually sick, so that the Lord would entirely shut him off from the light of his countenance. The Apostle James points out that the only proper action then would be for the individual to apply to the elders of the church, the seniors of the church, the spiritually minded ones, that they go with him to the throne of grace in order that he might obtain mercy and be reinstated.

Seniors, spiritually minded ones not elders, might do this service for the one who is sick, but preferably it should be the chosen elders of the congregation. This course would be a very humiliating one for the sin-sick brother, but such action might save that soul from death by a proper humbling of self "under the mighty hand of God." Thus such a one might be recovered and become again a true child of God.

CHRISTIAN, WALK CAREFULLY!

If we realize that through lack of proper watchfulness, or through some infirmity of the flesh, we have taken a wrong step, contrary to the Lord's will and to our interests as new creatures in Christ, let us lose no time in retracing the step and in calling upon the Father for forgiveness. "We have an altar whereof they have no right to partake who serve the [typical] tabernacle"; an altar not sanctified by the blood of bulls and goats, but by the precious blood of Christ; and we are urged to "come boldly [with holy courage and confident faith] to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 13:10; 4:16) How blessed this throne of grace, this mercy seat, provided by our Father's love! How undone we should be without it! Yet, beloved, let us walk with great carefulness —let us never presume upon the mercy of our God by being careless of our steps. Let us, instead, with earnest prayer and watchfulness, "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," while our Father "worketh in us both to will and to do his good pleasure."—Philippians 2:12, 13.

"Christian, walk carefully! oft wilt thou fall,
If thou forget on thy Savior to call.
Safe shalt thou walk through each trial and snare,
If thou art clad in the armor of prayer!"

FAITHFULNESS TO OPPORTUNITIES

JULY 26.—Luke 19:11-27.

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—Matthew 25:21.

We are not to confound the parable of the pounds with the parable of the talents. They teach totally different lessons. In the case of the talents, the amount given to each of the servants differed. In the case of the pounds, it was the same —each servant received one pound—approximately sixteen dollars. This parable, therefore, deals with something that is common to all of the class to which reference is made.

The object in the giving of the parable is stated in the lesson. The Lord and his disciples were approaching Jerusalem, where shortly he was to be crucified. The disciples had supposed, on the contrary, that the Messianic kingdom would immediately be established in power and great honor. This parable was intended to inform them that a considerable period of time would elapse before the kingdom would be established.

The disciples knew that the kings of Palestine were appointed by the Roman Emperor, and they had recently had an experience along this line, when one of the Herods went to Rome, seeking an appointment to a kingdom. Some who hated him sent a message to Rome, discrediting him and declaring their preference for another king. Jesus seized this circumstance as an illustration in his own case. He was the appointee for the Messianic kingdom of the world; but he would go to heaven itself and there appear in the presence of the heavenly Father, the great Overlord or Emperor of the universe. He would be invested by the Father with the ruling authority, and later return to earth and exercise his dominion.

This is exactly the presentation of the matter given us prophetically. (Psalm 2:8) The divine regulation is that Messiah, after finishing his work, shall in heaven itself make application for a kingdom which divine providence has already arranged for and which divine prophecy has already foretold. "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

"OCCUPY TILL I COME"

During the interim of the Master's absence—in heaven, waiting for divine investiture with the government of earth—he has committed to his disciples, his servants, otherwise styled his brethren, one pound each. He has left them with full liberty to use their best judgment and to show their love and their zeal in his service. At his return, all these servants will be reckoned with, and the degree of their zeal and efficiency as servants will be manifested by the results; and the rewards given them will be proportionate.

The parable distinguishes between these consecrated servants of God and the masses of the people. It shows that nothing is committed to the masses of the people; and that no judgment, reward, is made in their case at the return of the Master as King. Only to his servants did he give the pounds—only his servants had the responsibility of those pounds, and only those servants will be reckoned with or held responsible, either for reward or for punishment in respect to the matter.

In considering what is signified, or symbolized, by the pound, we must keep in memory the fact that as the same amount was given to each, the fulfilment must show some blessing or responsibility given in each case alike to all of God's consecrated people—all who are his servants. There is but one thing that we can think of that is given to all of the Lord's people in exactly the same measure. They have not talents and opportunities alike, but, on the contrary, very unlike. Some have more and some less wealth; some more and some less mental capacity; some more and some less of favorable or unfavorable environment. None of these varied talents belong to this parable of the pounds.

The pound is the same to all; it represents justification. The one thing which the Redeemer does for all who become his followers is to justify them freely from all things. This leaves them all on exactly an even footing; for justification makes up to each individual in proportion as he is deficient—in proportion as he by nature is short of perfection, the divine standard.

"BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH"

All who in the present time become children of God, servants of God, followers of Christ, must receive from the Lord, as a basis for his relationship, the pound—the free forgiveness of sins—justification. On this basis he has a standing with God, and whatever he may do or endeavor to do will be to his credit. Because all are alike qualified by justification, the results will show the degree of loving zeal controlling each servant. Those who love much will serve much. Those who love little will neglect to use their opportunities. As one in the parable gained ten pounds, so such noble characters as St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John and others, sacrificed themselves over and over again in the divine service. In their zeal they counted all earthly things but as loss and dross, that they might be pleasing to their Master, the coming King.

These, and such as these, who have gladly spent themselves zealously in the service of the Lord, are to have the highest rewards, as represented by the Lord's words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant! Because thou wast faithful in a very little have thou authority over ten cities." In the parable another came, reporting a gain of five pounds. He had not done so well as did the first, but he had done well. He received the same commendation: he had been faithful, although less faithful than the first. He received his master's "Well done," however; but the reward was less—dominion over five cities. This will mean a less influential place in the Messianic kingdom.

Then came a servant saying, "Lord, here is the pound that you gave me; I have kept it carefully laid up in a napkin." This represents a class that say, "I endeavored to maintain my justification. I endeavored to live justly and honorably, but I did not sacrifice myself. I am glad to be able to say that I have lost nothing. I was really afraid to use my opportunity, to use my privilege; for I realized that

you would be expecting considerable return from the amount which you gave me."

The master in the parable addresses this one still as a servant, but a wicked servant, who knew his master's will, who had undertaken his service, but who had been found unfaithful in respect to it. Had he not professed to be a servant, he would have received no pound and would have had no responsibility for it. He should have made use of his privilege and opportunity. He should have lived for his master. If not so actively and so directly as did the others, he should have made at least some use of the pound entrusted to him, so that he would have had some results to show.

We may assume that this one represents a considerable class of those who have entered into a covenant with the Lord to be his servants, and who have received justification at his hands, but who have neglected to comply with their engagements for self-sacrifice in his service. This neglect indicates their lack of loving zeal; and all this means that they will not be fit for a share in the kingdom. This class is referred to on several occasions by the Lord; for instance, they are represented in the foolish virgins, who failed to enter in to the wedding; and so these will fail to become members of the bride, the Lamb's wife.

"SAVED SO AS BY FIRE"

The same class seems to be pictured by St. Paul when, speaking of the same testing of the church in the end of this age, he declares, "The fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." He proceeds to say that those who build with gold, silver and precious stones will suffer no loss, but will receive a full reward; while others building upon the same Rock, Christ Jesus—the same justification by faith—will suffer the loss of all their time and opportunity. He adds, however, that they themselves shall be saved, yet so as by fire.

This we understand to mean that this class of servants who maintain their justification, seeking to live harmless, honest lives, but who fail to sacrifice as they have covenanted to do, will not be lost, in the worst sense of that word. They will indeed lose the great prize—the highest blessing—the kingdom; but because they still remain servants and have a love for righteousness they will be saved so as by fire; that is, through tribulations. They will ultimately gain everlasting life on the spirit plane, but will be quite inferior to the bride class. They seem to be represented in the Scriptures as the virgins, the bride's companions, who follow her.—Psalm 45:14.

These seem again to be pictured in Revelation, Chapters 14 and 7. Here the elect church are referred to as 144,000, who will stand on Mount Zion, because they followed the Lamb whithersoever he went. Then a great multitude is pictured as coming through great tribulation, washing their robes and attaining a place before the throne, instead of on the throne. To these are given palm branches, instead of crowns. They are victors, but not "more than conquerors." In this respect they are not wholly copies of God's dear Son, and are not esteemed worthy of being members of his bride class, who are to share with him the honors and glories and services in his kingdom, as set forth in this parable.

The fear expressed by this servant, saying, "For I feared thee," reminds us of the Apostle's words respecting this same class. He declares that Christ at his second coming will deliver those who all their lifetime were subject to bondage through fear of death. The consecration of the Lord's servants is unto death, and those who fear death are fearful of performing their covenant vow. They will not be worthy of the Lord's approval as faithful servants. Nevertheless, there are many vessels in the house of the King—some to more honor and some to less honor.—2 Timothy 2:20, 21.

"THOSE MINE ENEMIES"

Not until first he shall have finished dealing with his own servants at his second coming will the glorious Messiah begin to deal with the world, and especially with his enemies. This is the statement of the parable, and it is borne out by numerous Scriptures. When Jesus prayed on the night before his crucifixion, he said: "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; . . . . for all those which shall believe on me through their word." (John 17:9, 20) Thus we see the work of the Gospel age outlined by our Lord. It is merely for the selection of his servants, and the testing and proving of these. It is with a view to determining which of them will be found worthy of association with himself in the great Millennial kingdom which God has decreed, and whose work will be for the blessing and uplifting of the whole world of mankind.

So the second Psalm points out that the Redeemer will not pray for, ask for, the world until, at his second advent, he is ready to establish his kingdom, his church having first been gathered to glory. Then he will ask for the heathen. By the term heathen, or Gentile, is signified all out of fellowship with God, "enemies through wicked works." The Psalm proceeds to say that Messiah will deal rudely with the heathen. "He will dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel," etc. This, interpreted by other Scriptures, means that the inauguration of Messiah's kingdom will bring a great time of trouble, symbolically styled fire, or fiery judgments. "He shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance." Everything appertaining to present institutions contrary to the divine standards of justice will be rudely shaken and eventually destroyed.

However, the Lord wounds that he may heal. The lessons of the time of trouble will be salutary; as we read, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." These judgments will not in any sense continue upon all throughout the thousand years of Messiah's kingdom, but will be inflicted only upon those deserving them. Hence the judgments will be especially severe at the beginning. All who learn righteousness will thereby deliver themselves; and as they come into harmony with the King of kings and Lord of lords, blessings will be their portion, uplifting them gradually to human perfection.

"SLAY THEM BEFORE ME"

At first thought, we might gather that these words signify that the King of Glory will be implacable, ferocious, unsympathetic, with his enemies. We might wonder how this shows sympathy! He admonishes us to love our enemies and to do good to them that despitefully use us. Gradually we come to see that this will indeed be the policy which the great King will pursue. He will be doing the greatest good for his enemies in bringing upon them punishments for their wrong course —shame, publicity, contempt. These things will be necessary to arouse them to an appreciation of their true condition and show them their privileges.

We are not to forget that during this age the Lord's dealings with his faithful servants has been in permitting fiery trials to try them and to instruct them. It should not be a wonder to us therefore that fiery judgments upon the world are the Master's design, not for the world's injury, but for its blessings. We read that as a result of St. Peter's preaching at Pentecost the truths struck home to the hearts of his hearers—"They were cut to the heart." But we realize that this was a great blessing, in that it prepared them for the message of divine mercy. So here we read of the Lord's slaying his enemies; they will be cut to the heart. A picture of this slaughter is given us in Revelation, where the Lord is represented in glorious majesty, with a sword proceeding out of his mouth, that with it he should smite the nations. (Revelation 19:15) Blessed smiting! The sooner it begins, the better for the world, we might say; and yet we remember that God's time is best for everything.

Another similar picture of the progress of Messiah's kingdom is given us in figurative language, as follows: "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. Thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows shall be sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies; whereby the people shall fall under thee."—Psalm 45:3-5.

Here the establishment of Messiah's kingdom with power, great glory and majesty, is presented in pictorial imagery; and the sharp arrows of divine truth are represented as slaughtering the hosts of error. This terrible carnage will mean a great blessing; for the Lord smites to heal, and when his Word cuts to the heart the effect is to destroy the enemy. Unless the enemies of the Lord be thus brought into subjection to him, nothing will remain for them but the final extinction mentioned by St. Peter: "It shall come to pass that the soul that will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from amongst the people."—Acts 3:23.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EXAMPLE

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity [love], in spirit, in faith, in purity."—1 Timothy 4:12.

We remember that Timothy was an elder in the church, though young in years. Therefore, it was appropriate that St. Paul should impress upon his mind that he should be an example of the believers, an example to all the church; and such instruction is implied in other parts of the Epistle. But note that the Apostle, in our text, does not say: Be thou an ex-

ample to the believers, but, "Be thou an example of the believers." How different!

Being an example of believers means that one should show forth not only to his fellow-workers in the Gospel, but especially to the world, what believers stand for—what they believe, what they teach, how they live. We should see to it that we are setting such an example in word, as the Apostle enjoins, in the character of our language when declaring the message of truth. We are not to be merely smooth-tongued and unctuous; we are not merely to use kind words; but the kindness and interest manifested should be genuine—from the heart. All of the Lord's people are thus to be examples, striving to show forth the praises of our Master.

St. Paul further urges: "Be thou an example in conversation." This word conversation does not refer merely to language, as it is now used: the original meaning of this word is conduct. Our conduct relates to our manner, to the way we walk, to the way we act, to our general deportment, and not to our words alone. We are to be an example in our gentleness of demeanor. We should not slam doors, nor be boisterous, nor uncouth, nor thoughtless of others. In every way we are to be gentle and kind and considerate, and not rude.

"LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE"

Those who are begotten to the new nature should strive to be examples to everybody of what Christians ought to be. The kind of work we are engaged in should be honest. It may be secular work, yet it should be done as unto the Lord, carefully, faithfully, not merely as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, as servants of God; "for we serve the Lord Christ." The walk of the Christian should be in charity—love—in sympathy, in benevolence, in kindness of word and conduct. A generally sympathetic spirit should pervade his words and deeds, his entire behavior. The heavenly Father loved mankind; while they were yet sinners he so loved the race that he gave the choicest treasure of his heart for man's recovery. And he still loves the world, and is fitting the church to be the blessers of the world in the future. So any begotten of the Lord's Spirit should have a transforming influence at work in life—an influence that will manifest itself even to those who are out of the way, those who have not yet been blessed with the light of God.

Our text also reads: "Be thou an example in spirit." This phrase, "in spirit," is not found in the original, but the thought seems proper enough: we are to show kindness of spirit, of disposition, to all. The spirit that animates us at all times should be the spirit, the mind of the Lord.

We are exhorted to be examples "in faith." The Apostle's exhortation applies to us all. The Christian's faith is also manifested to others in his conduct, his words, his course in life. If he is full of faith, he will not be murmuring against the experiences of life as they come, against the providences of the Lord. The Almighty has accepted us as his children; we should have continual and implicit confidence in him, and whoever has true faith has this confidence. If any of us lack faith in God we shall not manifest faith to others, nor inspire faith in them.

We are to be examples "in purity." There is a purity that goes with all that pertains to God and to His Word—a loftiness of standard, which is not to be found elsewhere. There are people in heathen lands who live more or less chaste lives, but there is nowhere so high a standard as in the Christian religion. Everything impure is contrary to God. Purity is one of the component elements of Christian character. As the Apostle said on another occasion, we are to be "first pure, then peaceable, gentle."

LIVING EPISTLES, KNOWN AND READ

In all these ways each of God's people should be living lessons, living epistles, wherever they go; they should be examples to the world. Whether the world believes what we preach or not, we should manifest these qualities which they cannot but approve and respect. This example will bear fruitage in due time, if not now. Every elder, like Timothy, should be especially careful of his conduct, his words, his example. The church has declared by choosing such a one elder that they believe him to be an example of the fruitage of the grace of God in the heart.

The Apostle's counsel to Timothy: "Let no man despise thy youth," should be looked upon as advice not only to Timothy, both to all elders of the church who are young in years, that they so conduct themselves as to be examples of the flock, that their deportment and ability to "rightly divide the Word of truth" be such that none will have cause to slight the message they bring, or to think of them as immature and unfit to lead the flock of God.

Let every child of God, the younger as well as the older, strive to be an example worthy of imitation—an example of earnest, faithful endeavor to copy the Master in his daily life, a pattern of active zeal in the service of our God. We shall not be able while in the flesh to be examples in the full sense of the ultimate glory and beauty of holiness which will be ours beyond the veil: we cannot expect this in the present life. Our Lord alone was such a pattern.

The Apostle Paul urged, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1) St. Paul was a noble example of earnest endeavor to attain the perfect likeness of Christ, and his love, his zeal, his intense earnestness in striving to copy the Master and to accomplish his will should be an inspiration to us all. Let each of the Lord's children, individually, realize his or her personal responsibility. We are as "a city set upon a hill." Let each ask himself the question: Am I "an example of the believers"?

CHRIST'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

AUGUST 2.—Mark 11:1-11.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee."—Zechariah 9:9.

The message of John the Baptist was, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." This same message Jesus bade his disciples carry from village to village throughout Palestine. This same message was the burden of his preaching and the theme of his parables. Finally, at the close of his ministry, the kingdom came to the Jewish nation in the sense that it was offered to them—it was theirs for the accepting. Today's lesson tells of the formal offer of the kingdom by Jesus and of the neglect of the Jews as a people to accept it. Thus "he came unto his own, and his own received him not"—except a few. His own nation rejected him, and five days later crucified him. A little later, at Pentecost, a few who received him were begotten of the holy Spirit and became the nucleus of Spiritual Israel, in preparation for the glorious kingdom and the work which is to be accomplished at his second advent.

On the evening preceding the story of this lesson, Jesus and his disciples were at Bethany, the guests of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, who had prepared a special feast for Jesus, whom they loved so dearly. This was the Lazarus whom he had awakened from the sleep of death but a short time before. The feast took place at the close of the Jewish Sabbath day. The next morning corresponded to our Sunday, the first day of the week.

THE CRISIS OF ISRAEL'S EXPERIENCE

In preparation for presenting himself as King, Jesus sent two of his disciples for an ass's colt, telling them where they would find it, and instructing them to say that it would be returned after the Master had used it. By the time the colt arrived, a considerable multitude had gathered—people of the village of Bethany and others who had come out from Jerusalem, about two miles distant, to see Jesus and to see Lazarus, upon whom the notable miracle had been wrought. It had long been the custom of the kings of Israel to ride to their coronation upon an ass; and the multitude seemed to enter into the spirit of this occasion and to realize what it meant that Jesus was about to ride into Jerusalem on this colt. It signified that finally he was ready to assume the office of King.

For some time the disciples had recognized him as the Messiah, the glories of whose reign they were to share; and the multitude in general had learned to so regard him, saying, "When Messiah cometh, will he do greater works than this man?"—could we expect anything more of Messiah than we see being accomplished by this man Jesus? But this was the first time Jesus had formally put himself forward. On previous occasions, when they had sought to take him by force to make him a king, he had withdrawn himself, realizing that the time was not yet come. Now, so far from withdrawing, he was taking the active part, sending for the colt, preparing for the triumphal ride to the capital of the nation as its King.

We may be sure that the hearts of the apostles thrilled with excitement as they thought of the nearness of their Master's glory and of their own share in it; for as yet they did not realize the full import of his words to the effect that he must be crucified and must depart to a "far country," even heaven itself, and be invested with authority, and later return to establish the kingdom which would bless the world.

Jesus, however, was fully aware that the presentation of himself as King was a formal matter, fulfilling the prophecy

and leaving the nation of Israel without excuse. If, when he entered the city, the people should rise en masse, acknowledge him and acclaim him, then indeed they would be in line with the divine requirements which would bring them the greatest of all blessings. But Jesus knew that prophecy had already declared that he would be despised and rejected, and that his own people would hide their faces from him in shame. (Isaiah 53:3) The journey and the preparation for it, therefore, meant something very different to Jesus from what it signified to the disciples and the multitudes.

"THE STONES WOULD CRY OUT"

When the ass arrived, some of the people put their garments upon it in lieu of a saddle; Jesus mounted, and the procession began. Some went before him, and some followed after. The people were familiar with the prophecy relating to Messiah's coming, which declared, "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass." They were familiar also with the "shout" the prophets had foretold and the responses—one party crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Again came the cry, "Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Then the response, "Hosanna in the highest!" These different expressions are recorded by the different evangelists.

But not all were enthusiastic acclaimers of Jesus; a discordant note was heard. Some of those who had come from the city through curiosity criticised the shouting, and wondered why Jesus did not rebuke the people for ascribing so great honor to him. They sent word to this effect to Jesus through his disciples. Jesus made answer that a great prophecy was being fulfilled. The Prophet Zechariah had by inspiration said, "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!" and such a shout must be made. Jesus declared that if the multitudes had failed to shout, the prophecy would still have been fulfilled—the very stones would have cried out.

THE FIRST PALM SUNDAY

It is customary with some Christians in various parts of the world to commemorate especially that Sunday of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jersualem. The record tells that on the journey many of the people strewed their garments in the way, as a mark of respect and honor, waiting until the little animal had passed over them, and then running on before and placing them again. Others brought ferns, flowers and grasses, and strewed them in the way. Still others, St. John's Gospel tells us, brought branches of palm trees.

It was a jubilant procession, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah. Yet to Jesus it had the sad feature, as indicated by the account. When they had reached the turn of the Mount of Olives, which brought Jerusalem into view, the Master halted the procession while he looked over the city and wept, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; and verily I say unto you, Ye shall see me no more, until that day [nearly nineteen centuries later] when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah!"

Jesus realized that that day was a turning point with the Jewish nation—that their rejection of him meant their rejection by the heavenly Father for a long time. It meant that they would be cast off from divine favor, except a few who would become his disciples. It meant that during those long centuries the highly favored people of Abraham's natural seed would be in distress. It meant that the favor of God, which had been with them for centuries, would instead be extended to the Gentiles, to gather out of the Gentiles a company of faithful, saintly ones to be associates and joint-heirs with Jesus and the faithful ones of the Jews in the heavenly kingdom. It meant that not until this elect, heavenly, spiritual kingdom class should be received to glory would the Jewish people be again received into fellowship with God.

St. Paul markedly calls our attention to this fact that the rejection of Israel is not permanent, but only for a time—only until the complete number of faithful saints be gathered out from amongst the Gentiles. Then God's favor will return to natural Israel, and subsequently extend to all the families of earth.—Romans 11:25-32.

JESUS, THE PRINCE OF PEACE

How different was this entry of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, from the triumphal marches of earthly conquerors and kings! In the excitement of human passion and the prejudice of human minds a special halo of glory has surrounded the world's conquerors. Heroic deeds, valiant conquests, as pictured by historians have a charm. The rising generation reads with thrilling interest of the prowess of Alexander the Great, of the Spartans of Greece, of the Cæsars of Rome, and in more modern times of Robert Bruce, of Napoleon and Wellington, of Generals Grant and Lee, Sherman and Johnson, Sheridan and Stewart. The home-comings of all of these were triumphal marches, in many cases rendering honor to whom honor was due.

Nevertheless, in every instance the mind's eye necessarily closes against scenes which led up to such triumphs. We try to forget the millions of slain and wounded, and other millions of mourning widows and orphans. We try to forget the smoking ruins of homes behind those victorious armies. However necessary war at times may seem to be for the maintenance of justice, nevertheless all must concede that the blessings purchased by the sword are procured at a terrible cost.

From this viewpoint Jesus, the Prince of Peace, followed by an army of saints who are walking in his foot-steps, presents a beautiful picture—even to the worldly. These victors —Leader and followers—conquer by dying. Thus Jesus said to his followers, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's shall find it." Thus viewed, all the followers of the Lamb are self-sacrificers, as the Bible declares: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God—your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1) Such a victory—victory through death—is difficult for the majority of people to understand! What is the philosophy of it? Where is the victory?

VICTOR-KINGS THROUGH DYING

Well may it be asked, Wherein is the victory of Christ and his followers in laying down their lives for the brethren and in support of truth and righteousness? Only the Bible answers the question, and only those who exercise faith can understand the Bible answer. The Bible declares that the real victory of Christ and the church is over self. Their crowning day is future—their triumph will be then.

The triumphal entry of Jesus on the ass was only typical. The antitype will be glorious—beyond the veil. As Jesus after his resurrection was "received up into glory," so also he has promised his church that their resurrection shall change them from imperfect human beings to perfect spirit beings, joint-heirs with their Master, their Redeemer, in the glorious Millennial kingdom which is to bless the world.

After Jesus had risen from the dead, he explained to his perplexed disciples what his death signified, saying, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things [death] and to enter into his glory?" (Luke 24:26) So St. Paul has declared in respect to all who will be Jesus' associates in the kingdom—they must suffer with him if they would reign with him; they must be dead with him if they would live with him. (2 Timothy 2:12) Christ and his church die to human hopes and interests, present and everlasting—laying down their lives, suffering for righteousness' sake. Their reward is two-fold: (1) Their own personal exaltation to a heavenly, spirit glory, like unto the angels, and yet more glorious—"far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named." (2) The kingdom glory—the joy of being the divine agents for human restoration.

From this, the Bible viewpoint, the Christian warfare is different from every other warfare known to the world. It is a fight against sin, a fight against self-will, a full submission to the divine will, a victory through death. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation 2:10) "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Revelation 3:21) No wonder that a proposition of this kind is but imperfectly understood by the world! "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not." And this is one of the requirements of the Gospel, that Jesus and his followers shall submit themselves to be misunderstood by the world. We are counted fools for Christ's sake.—1 Corinthians 4:10.

It requires some stamina to be a loyal follower in the footsteps of Jesus, misunderstood as he was misunderstood by those of his day, reviled as he was reviled. "They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." It is only when we understand through God's promises that in these trying experiences of Christ and his followers there is a glorious purpose, that we are able to endure them with any measure of rejoicing. Only these are granted of the Lord the eye of faith which can clearly discern things beyond the veil—the glory, honor and immortality, and the kingdom which the Lord has promised to his faithful followers.

"THE WRATH OF THE LAMB"

Since Jesus is the Prince of Peace, how shall we understand various passages of Scripture which refer to him as a mighty Conqueror in blood-stained garments, taking venge-

ance on his foes? But especially, how shall we understand the declaration that, at his coming in the clouds of heaven, all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of him?

Of this Prince of Peace it may be said that he will wound to heal, that whatever disasters he may bring or permit to come upon the world will be so overruled as to make of them blessings in disguise. Undoubtedly much that is said respecting our Lord is highly symbolic. For instance, he is to smite the nations with the sword that proceedeth out of his mouth—the Word, or message, of truth. Such a smiting is in full conformity with the declaration that when St. Peter preached the Gospel at Pentecost, some of his hearers were "cut to the heart"—not with St. Peter's literal sword, but with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." Eventually, that sword will smite all opponents of righteousness for their good. Only the wilfully wicked will eventually be destroyed in the second death.

We are not to forget, however, that the inauguration of the Messianic kingdom is to be in the midst of the time of trouble, and that Christ will have to do with the bringing, or at least the permitting, of that trouble. Apparently mankind will be permitted to bring the great trouble at the end of this age upon themselves. There are forces of evil, Satan and his angels, ready to do us harm and, through human forces, sin-forces entrenched in human nature, ready to do harm to the social fabric. The Bible represents that divine power holds these in check—the four angels holding the four winds—that they shall not blow upon the earth to its injury until the ap pointed time, until all of God's elect church shall have been sealed in their foreheads—their intellect—with the truth.

At the appropriate time those "winds" of strife will be let loose, and great will be the trouble, until in due time the King of kings and Lord of lords shall intervene to rescue the race from itself and from the adversary. Then Satan shall be bound for a thousand years, and Messiah's kingdom shall be established for the blessings of all the families of the earth.

Arm me with thy whole armor, Lord;
Support my weakness with thy might;
Gird on thy thigh thy conquering sword,
And shield me in the threatening fight.

From faith to faith, from grace to grace,
So in thy strength shall I go on,
Till I appear before thy face,
And glory end what grace begun.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

QUERIES OF A COLPORTEUR

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

How shall we do respecting the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES after October, 1914? Will the Society continue to publish them? Will the colporteurs and others continue to circulate them? Is it right to circulate them now, since you have some doubt respecting the full accomplishment of all expected by or before October, 1914? With Christian love,

Your brother, M. F. C.

IN REPLY

MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:—

Yours of May 20th has reached me. Thanks! I think that you are not taking a right view of the matter treated in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. II. It is our thought that these books will be on sale and read for years in the future, provided the Gospel age and its work continue.

So far as the features are concerned, we have merely set forth the Scriptures and our view respecting their application and significance. We have not attempted to say that these views are infallible, but have stated the processes of reasoning and figuring, leaving to each reader the duty and privilege of reading, thinking and figuring for himself. That will be an interesting matter a hundred years from now; and if he can figure or reason better, he will still be interested in what we have presented. In any event, we think that the consummation cannot be long deferred.

To cease to print and circulate the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES because everything suggested therein has not been, apparently, fulfilled, would be like rejecting our Common Version of the Bible because the chronology given in the margin throughout is known to be incorrect to the extent of a number of years. Usher's chronology is used in our Common Version, and shows the birth of Christ in the year 4004. Scholars are agreed that the event varied at least two years from that date—some say four years. And STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES show from the Bible that the date was actually 4128. Nobody thinks of throwing away his Bible on this account. No more need any one think of throwing away his STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES or failing to circulate them on account of the fact that October, 1914, may not witness all that we had expected and in the manner expected. With much Christian love,

Your brother and servant in the Lord.

A SIGNIFICANT MESSAGE

DEAR FRIEND:—

As one who believes in "the present truth" as presented in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, I venture to write to you for a word of advice and comfort. I am in deep distress and have suffered intense mental agony during the last few months through being careless of the privileges connected with present truth.

I came, through God's favor, into touch with the truth ten years ago, and had great rejoicing in it. My fatal mistake was a lack of decisiveness and a consequent failure to act according to my conscience. I became timid and avoided my fellowmen because of my failure to speak out. Added to this I stumbled, time and again, through weakness of the flesh, and gradually settled down to the thought that success in the "narrow way" was not for me.

At the end of last year my interest in Volume One was revived and I argued that if it is true why should I fear to come out of Babylon? Acting upon this I sent for withdrawal letters. I had a talk with our minister here, but at the critical moment I gave way to fear. This plunged me into a blackness which I cannot describe; I imagined all sorts of things, chief amongst which was that I had committed the sin unto death. The thought of this made me worse, and I gave way to careless living.

Dear friend, I would give anything for a word of comfort! I have striven hard to find peace of mind. I would not trouble you, as I know you are fully occupied; but somehow my unhappiness compels me to write you, as I know you are in close fellowship with the Lord. I hope that you can help me. My soul is sadly diseased. I cannot express the gratitude I shall feel. God bless you! Yours sincerely,

T. H. HUGHES.—N. Wales.

OUR REPLY

DEAR BROTHER:—

Yours of the 28th ult, has come duly to hand and contents are noted. Frequently, "earth-born clouds arise" to obscure the Lord's face from us when we neglect to do those things which he indicates would be pleasing to him. Faithfulness to the Lord will restore a sense of his favor. My suggestion, therefore, is that you start anew, doing faithfully everything which you find to be his will for you.

The very fact that you are penitent and feel the separation is a good sign. Those who have sinned the sin unto death are not usually penitent. A rereading of the Six Volumes, laying hold upon the promise quoted therein, should be of help to you. May the Lord's guidance and blessing be with you as you seek to return to a condition of favor with him. With much Christian love, we remain,

Yours in the Master's service.

THE CORRESPONDENCY SEEMS CLEAR

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

Have often thought of writing you as to how far the type and antitype extend in the harvest of the Jewish and Gospel ages; particularly as to whether the time that the Roman army under Titus besieged Jerusalem and the length of the siege are types of the trouble coming on the world?

To my understanding the harvest of the Jewish age commenced in the fall of 29 A.D., and, being a period of forty years, ended in the fall of 69 A.D. In the spring of 70 A.D., at the time of the Passover, the Roman army besieged Jerusalem. The siege lasted about six months and ended in the fall of 70 A.D. Thus the great calamity that our Lord foretold to Jerusalem did not reach its worst until six months after the end of the Jewish harvest, and continued about six months thereafter, or one whole year after the end of the Jewish harvest. This same period in antitype, if antitype it is, would seem to be from April, 1915, to October, 1915. If there is any significance in this it would seem that the burning of the "tares" in the time of trouble will not take place until the harvest is entirely ended.

This may be reaching after types where none are intended. Will be thankful for any suggestion along this line.

Yours in the one hope, S. W. PENNOCK.

OUR HOPE—"AN ANCHOR TO THE SOUL"

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised."—Hebrews 10:23.

Nearly all that God has given us as new creatures is by faith or hope. When we become followers of Jesus and take up our cross to follow him, a sacrifice is involved, if the step be taken intelligently—along the lines of divine instruction and invitation. No one would voluntarily undertake to sacrifice unless he had a hope or a conviction of some blessing that would result or of some reward that would come to him as the outcome of that sacrifice. In every proper action there must be a motive or object. The fact that the church has been invited to follow Jesus indicates that there was something in his course which brought the blessing and favor of God—some special reward; and that if we will follow him, we shall share that same blessing and reward—glory, honor and immortality.

So when we take up our cross to walk in our Master's footsteps, it implies that we are inspired with the hope of thus sharing in the glory and honor conferred upon him. The character of our God assures us that any offer coming to us from him with rigid conditions attached, must be infinitely worthy of our acceptance; and the "exceeding great and precious promises" accompanying this offer assure us of his assistance and sustaining power. So by availing ourselves of his strength and of his aid, we shall be able to meet all the conditions and to attain the glorious reward set before us. Hence our faith has a strong and sure foundation upon which to rest; "faith can surely trust him, come what may."

INWARD FAITH—OUTWARD CONFESSION

We exercise faith in the heart before we make an outward profession—before we confess the Lord with our mouth. And we have no right to confess him with our mouth until we have believed "unto righteousness"; for "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10) So we have the declaration of the Lord that he will not consider that we have a proper faith or hope unless we confess it. He has declared that if we refuse or fail to confess him before men, he will account us unworthy to be confessed before the Father and the holy angels. There is, then, no salvation without a confession of the Lord; the two are inseparable.

It is in vain that any entertain a hope of being accepted of the Lord and of winning his final approval who hides his light under a bushel and shrinks from the reproach of the cross. "No cross, no crown," is the Lord's inflexible decision. All who have received the truth in the love of it will be glad to let their light shine to the glory of God and the blessing of others. If the glorious message of the Lord has filled our own hearts and blessed our lives, we shall rejoice to carry the living water to other thirsty souls. If the good seed has found our hearts fruitful soil, it will surely germinate and bring forth fruitage to the glory of our God.

In harmony with the terms of our consecration, we confess to men that we have a faith that reaches beyond the present life, a hope that "entereth into that within the veil," whither Christ, our Forerunner, has entered for us. We confess our hope that we shall have a part in his resurrection; that "we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," and like him be spirit beings, see him as he is and share his glory on the divine plane. We confess that we hope with him to be instruments in the Father's hands, bringing life and joy and blessing to all the world of mankind, the living and the dead; that we hope to uplift them from death, to raise them from all the sin and blight and sorrow and tears that have oppressed them for these six thousand years. Truly ours is a wonderful hope! Who would not rejoice to tell it!

If, then, we have this faith, this hope, and are properly confessing it before men, let us "hold fast." Tests of our loyalty will continually come. The flesh will be inclined to rebel strongly at times. The questions will present themselves: Are you willing to confess Christ? Are you ashamed to own his name before the world, or do you esteem this your chiefest honor? There will be temptations to become discouraged. Our weaknesses will rise up before us, and the adversary will take advantage of these circumstances to further dishearten us. And not only will there come these temptations along the line of our faith and hope, but there will come certain reproaches and persecutions, permitted for the purpose of proving our loyalty. Ours is a marvelous calling, and only heroic souls are wanted to fill the places in this elect class—only those who have the spirit of the Master.

DANGER OF WITHHOLDING THE LIGHT

If any are disloyal or weak, and fail to take a firm stand for the Lord and the truth, for fear that they will be disesteemed amongst their fellow-men, or for any other reason, it will prove that they are not worthy to share with Christ the glories of his throne as members of his body. All who hope to be of this number have professed his name; and they must be steadfast, must hold fast their confidence and the profession of their faith even unto the end.

The flesh needs to be dealt with rigorously, and be brought into subjection and held there. According to the inclinations of the flesh, the Lord's children would wish to refrain from what would bring contumely and adverse criticism. The flesh would prefer to keep quiet, where the speaking forth of the truth might bring reproach or persecution or ostracism. But the new creature would feel "a burning fire shut up in his bones" if he were to withhold the message of truth when a suitable opportunity was granted, and he would find that he must be faithful and let his light shine. Otherwise, the light would grow feeble and would finally die out altogether, and he would be in utter darkness. And "if the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness!"

Let us not grieve the holy Spirit of God which is within us. The Lord gives us a solid basis for our hope, for our faith. It is a hope which he has himself inspired. This hope is backed by all his sure promises and by his oath; and he reminds us that "he is faithful that promised." (Hebrews 10:23) It is as yet a promise only; it is all of faith. We have now but the begetting of the holy Spirit to this new nature, and the sealing of the same Spirit, "the earnest of our inheritance." (Ephesians 1:13, 14) But we have learned to know our God and to trust his faithful Word. We have proven his gracious promises in many a time of stress and danger, and we know that he will not fail us. And "he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

OUR ANCHOR SURE AND STEADFAST

If we were to let go this hope, this anchor to our souls, we should be adrift upon a shoreless sea, whose mighty billows would sweep us down to eternal death. A great time of trouble is now about to break upon the whole world, and any of the Lord's people whose faith and hope are not firmly anchored to the Rock of Ages, any who are fearful to trust his promises, will be overwhelmed in the storm. Shall this be our experience?

"The time of trouble nears, 'it hasteth greatly,'
E'en now its ripples span the world-wide sea;
Oh, when its waves are swoll'n to mountains stately,
Will the resistless billows sweep o'er me?"

Some of the Lord's real children will have their part in this great trouble-time; yet none who are faithful, who are obedient, will suffer thus. These will be kept in perfect safety to the end of their course, and will, we believe, be gathered "within the veil" before the great storm breaks in its fury. Because of our faith in the Master, because of our strong confidence in him, our knowledge that he has been an overcomer, and that the Father has rewarded him and that he is now our Advocate, our great High Priest, who "ever liveth to make intercession for us," therefore our hearts have good courage. We know that he will shortly "stand up" in power and great authority to establish his kingdom and to exalt all his faithful to reign with him in that kingdom; therefore our hope is firm; it is indeed an anchor to our souls. We are "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."—Ephesians 6:10.

We shall never lose our courage if we keep our eyes continually fixed on him, and our hand closely clasped in his. God's eternal promises are the foundation upon which all that we hope, either of character, or of coming glory, is built. And what a strong foundation! Let us be faithful to him who hath called us. Let us hold the glorious truth not only in the letter, but also in the spirit. Let us hold it in the love of it, because it is the truth, as well as because of its matchless beauty and grandeur.

Let us ever remember the importance of patient endurance, constancy, that we may develop the fruits of the holy Spirit, that we may take joyfully every trial, every persecution, every difficulty, which our God in his infinite wisdom and love may permit to come upon us for our testing and the ripening of that character which is of paramount importance, and without which we can never hope to see our Father's face, nor partake of the glory to which we have been called with Christ. Let us indeed "hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful who hath promised." Let us "hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end." Yea, "we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope" unto death.—Hebrews 3:6; 10:23; 6:11.

"Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,
When the clouds unfurl their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,
Will your anchor drift, or firm remain?"

"We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll;
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Savior's love!"

HOW AND WHERE SHALL I SERVE?

"Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God."—1 Corinthians 7:24.

In the context, the Apostle has been discussing marriage and its responsibilities. He has also been discussing slaves and their state. He asks, "Art thou called being a slave? Then seek not to be free." Nevertheless, he added that if freedom were to come to the slave, he should be glad to avail himself of the opportunity of having a wider field of service as a free man. But the slave should not say to his master: I have become a child of God, and therefore your regulations are nothing to me; you cannot longer hold me as a slave.

The Apostle gives the thought that the Lord's people are not to want an immediate change from the condition in which they were called. His thought is, You are not necessarily to think that you are to leave what you are now doing. Your business may be that of a servant, or a slave; therein abide—in the sense of having your mind at rest. If the Lord opens the door, then you are to look about. If your condition is one of great severity, it is right to ask the Lord that in his own due time he will make it less so, if it please him. He has promised us that with every temptation he will provide a way of escape or direct the issue, that we may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13) This would apply to our business relationships—to everything.

If one were single, he should consider very carefully the matter of taking on added responsibilities. He should think: "I was called when single. Does the Lord wish me to marry?" And if he comes to the conclusion that the Lord so desires, he should remember the Apostle's injunction, "Only in the Lord." If he were married when called, he should not say, "I wish I were not married. I could do so much more, so much better, if not married." He was married when called, and therefore there is a mortgage upon his time. He has this mortgage or contract to consider.

ENTER OPEN DOORS, BUT DO NOT FORCE THEM

Nevertheless, the Apostle, in previous verses of this same chapter points out that if the unbelieving husband or wife should depart, let them do so. Do not seek to oppose their going if they desire to go. The Lord is able to provide for your affairs. And if that is the Lord's providence for you, so accept it. As for the thought of our leaving our business to go into the colporteur work, or the pilgrim work, or the class extension work, or whatever it might be, the proper thing for us to consider would be, Is this an opening of the Lord? If we find that a better opportunity for service comes to us in this way, a wider opportunity for work in the harvest field, and that there is an open door, then we should rejoice and should enter the door.

But if we find that there is no open door and we would have to force one open, to violate some right principle to enter such work, that would alter the case. We must stand for principle. We shall never have to oppose any right principle to engage in the Lord's service; there is always some way to serve. The Apostle is here addressing brethren, and his words could not refer to any who were then engaged in a dishonorable avocation.

NO BROTHER IN DISREPUTABLE BUSINESS

But suppose that a man, before receiving the truth, had been the keeper of a gambling house, or were in some other disreputable business. Suppose he had been a saloon-keeper (several brethren have come from this business). After he had accepted the truth, he would say, Here! What am I doing? Am I dispensing to human beings that which is to their injury? I must quit this. And so he would have to get out of the saloon business before he could become a child of God at all; he would have to get out of the unprincipled condition of mind before he could become a child of God. The Apostle's words were addressed to the brethren: "Brethren, let every man so abide." He would not be a brother in Christ while in a business repugnant to his conscience and injurious to his fellow-creatures.

The whole matter was, of course, forceful to servants in the Apostle's day. In that time and in every time the humble classes, the servant classes, the slave classes, seem to have been ready to receive the message. Our Lord said unto the rich, as a class, "Woe unto you rich!" And to the poor he said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden." And we see that not many wise, not many rich, not many noble, come into the light.

BRETHREN IN PENAL INSTITUTIONS

A prisoner in a penal institution would do well to say to himself, "Well, in God's providence this message has reached me here in prison. Perhaps I should never have had it if I had not been here." If we were such a person, instead of hastening to try to pry open the doors by sending a paper to petition release, we would consider well before we started such a paper. We would think, "Perhaps I may have opportunities for serving the Lord amongst these fellow-prisoners. Perhaps I may have an opportunity of preaching to them." Or if there were an application made for release, and if the application resulted in refusal, we should bow to that refusal as being the Lord's word in the matter. We would try to be thoroughly content and thoroughly happy, and would say, "I will strive to show forth the praises of God, who has called me out of darkness into his marvelous light." We could not know but that a man would have just as good opportunity for service there as anywhere else. The Lord will give what is best to all his faithful ones.

ANOINTED—ESTABLISHED—SEALED

"Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us."—2 Cor. 1:21, 22.

The Apostle is here addressing the church at Corinth, recognizing that this congregation are co-laborers with him—accepted of God as members of Christ, the Anointed. Christ is the great One foretold prophetically as the antitypical Prophet, the antitypical Priest, the antitypical King, who is to bless the world by his work of healing, instructing, helping, uplifting. The Apostle says that the one who has brought us into the body of the Anointed, and has set, or established us, is God. This implies that God does the calling of those who come to him. It implies that there was a previous invitation—the Apostle says that no man taketh this honor to himself. Even Jesus could not have taken to himself the honor of being a priest and king; He could not say, I will be a Priest—I will be a King!

As God called Jesus to be the great Head over this ecclesia, or body, so through Jesus he has invited us to become its members. And as we conform to the terms and are made acceptable through our great Advocate, we are then set in the body—anointed. It is not a happen-so, but we are set. And we shall continue in this position unless, because of some unfaithfulness, we shall be blotted out and the crown appropriated to us be taken away.

He who sets us, establishes us, and has anointed us of the holy Spirit, and thus made us members of this holy company, is God, the heavenly Father. It is not the province of even our Redeemer to set us and anoint us. As the Apostle says, "God hath set every member in the body as it hath pleased him." All things are of the Father, and all things are by the Son; hence this anointing that we receive comes from the Father. Nevertheless, the Channel is the Lord Jesus. This holy Spirit which the Father has given to Jesus, he has shed forth upon us. The Father authorizes it, the Son sheds it forth.

SEALED IN THE MASTER'S LIKENESS

And God "hath also sealed us." It is not only important that we be begotten of the holy Spirit, and set in the body, but it is another precious thought that we are to be sealed, or impressed; we are to receive a stamp. As we would set a seal into wax to mould the wax into its likeness, so with us who are desirous of knowing and doing God's will; we are impressed by his holy Spirit into the image of our dear Master; and the channel through which we are sealed is the truth.

So those who are sealed by the holy Spirit have a considerable measure of appreciation of the truth. All the promises come through God's Word; it is a power that is now at work, so that all of God's people in all parts of the world are being impressed through the promises of God. God works in us to will and to do his good pleasure. This sealing is of the Father,

because it is through his promises; it is under the direction and care of the Head of the church, our Lord Jesus, that he may in due time present us blameless and unreprovable before the Father.

"If I in thy likeness, O Lord, may awake,
And shine a pure image of thee,
Then I shall be satisfied when I can break
The fetters of flesh and be free."

THE PURPOSE OF OUR TRIALS

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."—James 1:12.

The word blessed in this text may be understood to signify the condition of one in the favor of God. The state of such will be a happy one, a desirable one. The word blessed does not, of course, always suggest a happy condition as relates to the feelings, or emotions, but rather as relates to the outcome. It is used here in connection with the results of trial to the Christian. The child of God who wins the crown of life will be very highly favored or blessed of God; then whatever conduces to this end is a very great blessing, even though it cause much pain to the flesh.

Who will gain this crown of life? Of what character will he be? The Scriptures declare that it will be that man or that woman who endures temptation, trial. What is signified by enduring temptation? Evidently the thought is not the enduring of one temptation for one time or for many times. Even the world must endure trials. The reference is to the retaining permanently of the attitude of patient endurance and faithfulness when tempted, of remaining true to God under temptation and stress. Temptations come from a variety of sources. They may come from friends, who may tempt us to live a life of more or less self-indulgence, to relax in a measure our fidelity to the Lord. The enticements of wealth or worldly society, a natural love of ease and disinclination of the flesh to endure hardness—any or all of these may prove strong and subtle temptations to the Christian.

But if we love the Lord supremely, that love will become the chief impulse of our lives. Our one aim will be that we may glorify God in our spirit and in our body. We know that there are things which are displeasing to God, and if we love him we will seek to keep his commandments. The child of God might fail once, or he might fail repeatedly along the same line, until in deep humiliation and anguish of soul because of his continued manifestation of the same weakness, he would be led to cry out with strong crying and tears to the Lord; and his pain and distress of heart might so impress upon him his need of greater watchfulness along that line that he would become strengthened for further attacks of the same nature, and thus be enabled to gain the victory over his besetment, his special weakness.

THE CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

While we shall never reach the point of perfection in the flesh, nevertheless this power to endure temptation should become more marked day by day, as the new creature remains loyal, still resisting and striving still harder to resist and be true to the Lord in thought and word and deed. Blessed is the man who shall endure—time after time, day after day—thus proving his faithfulness and obedience to God. For when that man is tried, when the trial time is over, when God has seen that he has demonstrated fully his loyalty, then when God's "due time" has come, that tried and proven one shall receive the crown of life.

The expression, "the crown of life," is another way of saying the reward of life; and this life is on the highest plane. The Apostle Paul speaks of this same crown as the "crown of righteousness." The Apostle Peter calls it the "crown of glory." It is the crown of righteousness because it is the reward that comes as the result of righteousness, of obedience to God and the principles of his government, of faithfulness to our covenant. It is the crown of glory because it is the reward which brings glory, honor, immortality.

In the Grecian games certain rewards were given to those who endured successfully the trial of their skill, of their prowess and of their physical endurance. The reward given was usually a crown or wreath of laurel. That crown was valuable, not so much in itself, but especially as an outward token of appreciation of superior merit. The fact that it was evergreen would suggest to the Christian that our reward as "overcomers" will be a lasting reward, an eternal reward.

The Lord is to give us life in fullest measure. The penalty that came upon our race because of sin was death; but now there is an opportunity to regain life—life in perfection, untainted, unending. This life is in the Son of God. At the present time life can be gained only by being begotten to the spirit nature. The crown of life, to be given to the "more than conquerors," is a very special kind of life—immortality, the highest form of life possible, the crown, or pinnacle, of all life. This is to be the reward of the class called in Scripture the bride of Christ, when they shall have demonstrated their faithfulness, when they shall have been proven worthy to be members of that exalted class.

There will be a crown of life in the next age—perfect human life—as the result of obedience to the tests and trials of that time. These tests will differ in many respects from the trials and difficulties of the church at the present time. They will be much less crucial; for then temptations to sin from without will be removed, and bodily and mental uplifting and assistance granted, which will make their trial a more favorable one. Righteousness, too, will immediately be rewarded in that day, and sin and disobedience of every kind will be promptly punished. But now righteousness often brings suffering, reproach, pain and loss, from the human standpoint; while sin often brings present advantage, popularity and pleasure to the flesh.

THE PROPER VIEW OF OUR TRIALS

There is a special love required by God of the Gospel church—this peculiar class now called of him. They are to have a love that is so unselfish that it will be willing, yea, glad, to lay down the earthly life in the service of God, that they may bring blessings to others. To these God has promised the special crown of life—immortality, his own nature. These are to be the blessers of their brethren, those of the nature formerly their own. As Isaac was the blesser of Ishmael and of the sons of Keturah, and as the first-born of Israel were the blessers of their brethren, so these will bless all the peoples of the earth, from among whom they were chosen. How thankful we should be for an honor so great!

If these favored children of the heavenly King could always keep in mind the fact that every trial and testing, every persecution and difficulty, permitted to come upon those who have made the covenant of sacrifice with the Lord, is designed to develop them, to prove and test their love, to demonstrate whether or not their characters are fixed, rooted and grounded in righteousness, it would set all their painful experiences and temptations in a new light, and would be a great assistance to them in fighting the good fight of faith successfully. For if by these trials and tribulations the Lord is proving our love and devotion to him, then whatever they may be, whether great or small, we should diligently use them as opportunities to demonstrate to our God the fulness of our love for him and his cause, and as means by which we may rise day by day to greater heights of spiritual attainment, being changed into the likeness of our Master.

Thus viewed and thus met, every trial and affliction would prove a blessing, a heavenly messenger, bearing us on wings of faith "Nearer, our God, to thee, nearer to thee." Then, beloved, "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations [trials, testings], knowing this, that the trial of your faith worketh patience [patient endurance]. But let patience perfect her work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Herein we "greatly rejoice—though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations [testings provings], that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold, which perisheth, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls!"—James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:6-8.

Truly, "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things that are seen [the things of the present order] are temporal, but the things which are not seen [the glories to come] are eternal."—2 Corinthians 4:17, 18.

"WILL YE ALSO GO AWAY?"

Thus we are assured in the infallible Word of God that those who love the Lord, and who are to receive the kingdom, will have their love tested by trials and temptations on the

way to that kingdom. Those who do not love the Lord with all their hearts, in whom self or some other idol has first place, will be seduced by the world, the flesh or the devil into some form of rebellion against the divine Word or the divine providences. They will have schemes and theories which they will prefer to the Lord's plan and the Lord's way; and their schemes when analyzed will usually be found to be based either upon selfishness or ambition or upon an evil spirit of envy, hatred, jealousy, etc.

The Lord's leading and the Lord's words lose their attraction to such, and they lose their interest correspondingly; and like those who turned away from the Master at his first advent, and said, "This is a hard saying," so these also go away and "walk no more with him." But some will continue to walk with the Lord; some will not be driven away nor decoyed from him by the arts and wiles of the evil one and his hosts. These are such as are at heart fully the Lord's, not their own; they will follow the Lamb of God, whithersoever he may lead, because they have no will except his will. They will follow him through all the narrow way of discipline and trial in this life; and by and by, as he has assured them, "They shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy."—Revelation 3:4.

OUR UNFAILING SHELTER

Nor will this choice company lack in number by reason of the falling away of some. It will be of the predestinated number which God arranged to constitute the bride, the Lamb's wife. The Father's foreknowledge made full allowance for all who would turn back, and he knew that the requisite number would follow on, to make their calling and election sure. These have learned that the call of the world, the promptings of the flesh, and the arts of the adversary, are all snares and traps and pitfalls to drag them down to death. They have learned the sound of the true Shepherd's voice, and cannot be enticed by the voice of strangers.

Precious children of the Lord, blessed are ye! Sheltered in the "secret place of the Most High" no evil shall befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. "He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." How safe and secure are these! Though a thousand fall at their side, and ten thousand at their right hand, yet the plague shall not come nigh them. They have "made the Most High their habitation," and he will keep them from all harm.

"Under his wings I am safely abiding,
Though the night deepens and tempests are wild;
Still I can trust him, I know he will keep me;
He has redeemed me, and I am his child.

"Under his wings! What a refuge in sorrow!
How the heart yearningly turns to his rest!
Often when earth has no balm for my healing,
Here I find comfort, and here I am blest.

"Under his wings! Oh, what precious enfolding!
Here will I hide till life's trials are o'er;
Sheltered, protected, no evil can harm me,
Resting in Jesus, I'm safe evermore!"

As the faithful disciples of the Master in the first harvest realized a meaning in his teachings which others of the professed children of God could not appreciate, so now, at the second advent of the Lord, his words have a precious significance to those who are in heart-harmony with him which none others can realize. And we see now, as at the first advent, that some are stumbling and going back, while others are being drawn more closely to the Lord than ever, by means of the knowledge of his plan which he is supplying.

FEASTING IN THE BANQUET HALL

As we draw nearer to the close of the harvest, we shall not be surprised if the way become still narrower, still more difficult, and if the temptations to stumble and to fall become still more frequent. Let us then, dear brethren, be more and more on our guard against the wiles of the great enemy of our souls, and against the deceptions of our own fallen nature. Let the perfect love of God rule in your hearts, driving out self-love and world-love, with their pride, ambition and folly. Let entire devotion to God bring into your hearts the promised fulness of joy and rest and peace. Be fruitful branches in the vine, abiding even in him, responding to all the prunings of the great Husbandman with more abundant fruitage.

If beguilement come to us, let us say with the apostles of old: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." There is life nowhere else, and we wish to go nowhere else. We are feasting in the banquet hall of our Father's house, "and his banner over us is love!" We have an abundant supply; our table is richly laden. So we eat and go on our way rejoicing. We are nearing home. We shall soon reach the last mile-stone in our journey! Then, with a song on our lips, let us press on!

"Tempted and tried, whatever betide,
In his secret pavilion his children shall hide.
'Neath the shadowing wing of eternity's King,
His children may trust, yea, his children may sing.

"Tempted and tried, yet the Lord will abide
Thy faithful Redeemer and Keeper and Guide,
Thy shield and thy sword, thine exceeding reward;
Then enough for the servant to be as his Lord.

"Tempter and tried, the Savior who died
Hath called thee to suffer—then reign by his side.
If his cross thou wilt bear, his crown thou shalt wear,
And forever and ever his glory shalt share."

"THE LORD THY GOD IS A FAITHFUL GOD"

"O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard; which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved."—Psalm 66:8, 9.

In this Psalm the Prophet David calls upon all the world to praise the Lord. In prophetic language he exclaims: "All the earth shall worship thee; they shall sing to thy name!" Then he recounts the wonderful manifestation of the power of God in his dealings with Israel; he calls upon the people to bless the Lord and sound his praises abroad. Taking a retrospective view of the dealings of Jehovah with his people, he continues: "For thou, O God, hast proved us, thou hast tried us as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins. Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place!"—vs. 10-12.

The Psalmist then declared that he would enter into the house of the Lord, and would pay unto the Lord the vows which he had made in the time of his trouble. He recounts the goodness of God to himself. He tells that he had cried unto the Lord and extolled his praises, that his prayers had been answered, and that he had been lifted up and blessed and delivered. He calls upon Israel to remember all the leadings of the Lord in their past history and all his goodness to them as a people, and exhorts them to sound forth the praises of his great name. God had brought the people of Israel up out of bondage to Egypt; he had protected them through all their wilderness journeyings and ever since.

King David reminds them that they had been kept alive, that God had not permitted them to be exterminated—he had "suffered not their feet to be moved." They were not vanquished by their enemies, so long as they had trusted and obeyed. Subsequently, because of their disobedience and perversity, God caused them to be carried away into captivity in Babylon. But this was for their good, that he might prove them, and afterwards bring them—all worthy ones—back into their own land.

LET SPIRITUAL ISRAEL SOUND HIS PRAISES!

But although this Psalm has a primary significance as relates to natural Israel, our thought is, in harmony with the applications made by our Lord and the apostles, that these words are even more appropriate in their application to spiritual Israel. The Lord has brought us up out of the world. He has delivered us from the great taskmaster, Satan. He has guided us through the wilderness journey; He has fed us with the manna from heaven; He has brought us forth the water of life from the great Rock of Ages smitten for us, that we might drink and live. He has washed our feet from the dust of our wilderness way. He has faithfully disciplined and chastened us as his sons; he has gone before us through all the toilsome march, and has been our rearward as well, to protect us from all danger and harm. If natural Israel had great cause for thankfulness and praise, what should be our attitude, for all the marvelous manifestations of his love and care for us, his spiritual Israel! Truly, as no other people on

earth, past or present, can we praise our God! With the poet we can say:

"He was better to me than all my hopes,
He was better than all my fears;
He made a bridge of my broken works,
And a rainbow of my tears!
The billows that guarded my sea-girt path
Carried my Lord on their crest;
When I dwell on the days of my wilderness march,
I can lean on his love for the rest.

"He emptied my hands of their treasured store,
And his covenant love revealed;
There was not a wound in my aching heart,
But the balm of his breath has healed.
Oh, tender and true was the chastening sore
In wisdom that taught and tried,
Till the soul he loved was trusting in him,
And in nothing on earth beside!

"He guided my steps where I could not see,
By ways that I had not known;
The crooked was straight and the rough made plain,
As I followed the Lord alone.
I praise him still for the pleasant palms,
For the water-springs by the way;
For the glowing pillar of flame by night,
And the guiding cloud by day.

"There is never a watch in the dreariest halt
But some promise of love endears;
I read from the past that the future shall be
Far better than all my fears.
Like the golden pot of the wilderness bread,
Laid up with the blossoming rod,
All safe in the Ark with the law of the Lord,
In the covenant care of my God!"

SOME FAITHFUL THROUGHOUT THE DARK AGES

Our God never fails his children: his name is Faithfulness! He has never permitted his church to be exterminated, notwithstanding all the assaults of error and of the powers of darkness. There are still true people of God in the world, and ever have been. Throughout the dark ages, the great fact of our Redeemer's sacrifice for sin was still held by some of the true saints of the Lord. This precious truth was never completely lost during those years of darkness and obscurity, and in God's due time his church emerged from the wilderness, "leaning upon the arm of her Beloved." The light has since grown brighter and brighter to the faithful, watching ones. And what a flood of glory now shines upon the path of the saints!

"Looking back, we praise the way
God has led us day by day!"

The saints of God during the past centuries did not need these additional blessings which are supplied to the faithful of today, but their every need was supplied. We are living in the days of the "cleansed sanctuary." More truth is now due than at any time in the history of the church. Truly, our Lord has "brought us into his banqueting house, and his banner over us is love!" (Cant. 2:4) Truly, "he holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved," despite all the thousand snares laid for our feet by the great adversary and his servants—many of them unwittingly serving him. We can see that long ago we might have been overcome by the adversary's attack had not our God been a wall of protection round about us.

HIS SAINTS SHALL NEVER BE MOVED

"Our lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places!" (Psalm 16:6) But it is only the faithful who are thus kept. We are not to understand that the Lord keeps any who do not themselves make the proper effort to know the will of God that they may do it; it is those who are following in the footsteps of Jesus, doing all in their power to please the Lord as they are able to discern the way wherein he would have them walk. These are today causing the voice of his praise to be heard, and grace sufficient is their portion. If the trials of faith, submission and trust shall be greater in the near future than they have yet been, these faithful ones will not fall. Their feet shall not be moved, even though a host encamped against them, and thousands fall at their side. "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." These will be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, even though they be required for a time to follow where they cannot see.

Let us therefore go forward with good courage, knowing that he who hath led us thus far will continue to lead. He who favored us first will favor us last; and "he that is on our side is greater than all they that be against us." Thanks be to God that his grace has preserved us, that he has kept us from falling, that so many of us are still of one heart and one mind to go forward unflinchingly, whatever the coming days may bring! If they shall bring hardship and persecution, pain and trial, his grace will uphold us still. If they shall bring us tests of faith and endurance, his promises will not fail. Let our entire trust be centered in God. Let us continue to rejoice in him. "Let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exerciseth loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth; for in these things do I delight, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah 9:24) Testings will be permitted to come upon the people of God for the very purpose of sifting out all who are not truly his. Then let us stand fast, knowing that he is faithful.

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY BASED ON PRINCIPLE

We must never forget that our authorization to meet as brethren is the Master's Word: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:20) As this is our charter-right for meeting as the Lord's people, we must concede an equal right under it to all of God's people who may choose to meet in his name at any place and at any time. We should remember the Bible illustration of this principle: On one occasion the twelve disciples had returned from a preaching tour, and St. John said to Jesus, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not; for he that is not against us is for us." (Luke 9:49, 50) This one forbidden by John would correspond well with some now holding meetings other than those which we attend. What did Jesus say? "Forbid him not; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me."—Mark 9:38-40.

Here is a general principle which will serve to guide, to instruct God's people of today respecting his will in similar matters. We, of course, think our arrangements most pleasing to the Lord, or we would not have them so. If others think differently, the responsibility is with them and with the Lord. It is not for us to forbid them, but it is for the Lord to bless them or not to bless them, according to his wisdom in the management of his work.

Some one may suggest, Would not this thought, acted upon, break up the meetings of the Lord's people into very small classes? We reply that this must depend upon the brethren themselves. They have the right to meet in twos and threes or in larger numbers. If they can find it to their advantage to meet in larger groups, no doubt they will be glad to do so. This means a great deal of liberty in the church within the lines of the word and spirit of Jesus' teaching, directly and through his apostles.

Brethren meeting as a class should understand that in so doing they properly waive, or make void, some of their personal liberties and privileges. Individual preferences are to be more or less subjected to class preferences. Even the majority of the class should be considerate of the wishes of the minority, and if possible, should moderate the arrangements, so that all can be accommodated and pleased in respect to speakers, and in respect to place and character of meetings. No one should selfishly consider merely his own preferences and welfare. The spirit of co-operation, the Golden Rule, the spirit of love, should prevail. And as this is true, all those filled with the spirit of the Master and living close to him will find fellowship one with another in yielding personal preferences in the interest of the whole number.

CONSCIENCE TO BE RESPECTED

The only things that may not be yielded to the will of the majority are matters of conscience. No one is to do what he believes to be sin, injustice, wrong, even though all the remainder of the brethren think it right. And no one is to leave undone what his conscience dictates, even though so directed by all the remainder of the brethren of the class.

Conscience is always to be respected—never to be throttled or violated. Nor is any one who stands faithful to his conscience to be disesteemed therefor by his brethren, even if their consciences view the matter differently. On the contrary, his

courage in standing by his convictions is to be considered estimable.

On these principles liberty may be maintained in the body of Christ; and we shall find blessing in proportion as those of one mind can fellowship with each other. Where fellowship is not maintained, the assembling is neither desirable nor in harmony with the divine arrangement. But where the brethren find it advantageous to meet in different classes, it will usually be found, we believe, that originally too great restraint of personal liberty was exercised, and that the majority were too careless of the sentiments of the brethren constituting the minority.

But even where it may be found necessary or desirable to have more than one gathering of the Lord's people in one city, it certainly still is true that they should have one heart and one mind, and be of one brotherhood under the anointed Head. They should consider each other's interests, and do all in their power "to provoke one another to love and to good works."

THREE GRAND CONVENTIONS

This year's arrangement of having our conventions early and in three central locations at the same time seems to have had the Lord's blessing. The Asbury Park, N. J., Convention was a convenient one for the friends residing in the East. Columbus, Ohio, was best of all as respects auditorium; but Clinton, Iowa, excelled in several respects. In each case our Association were the guests of the city by invitation of the local government. In each case the Photo-Drama of Creation was shown to appreciative thousands. In each case the attendance aggregated two thousand, some coming at the beginning of the convention and remaining a few days, and others coming toward the close, and some remaining the entire time.

We had many evidences of the Lord's favor and blessing. The total number attending was thus six thousand; the total number of baptisms three hundred and fifty-six; the total number of States represented thirty-six, besides four Canadian Provinces and one from Fiji Islands, and British representatives. Best of all, the Lord was with us by his holy Spirit, which was manifested in the faces, the words, the conduct—not only of the convention, but also of the audience. It was good to be there. As usual, the dear friends at the various conventions declared these the very best ever.

No doubt personal growth in grace and in knowledge and the spirit of the Lord has much to do with this greater appreciation of our opportunities as they are coming to us year by year and day by day. To the impure nothing is pure. To the discontented nothing is happifying. To those who have come into personal relationship with the Lord and who are resting in his promises there is a blessing, a refreshment, a strength, an encouragement, every time the precious things are touched, handled, mentioned. We thank God as we notice the various manifestations of growth in grace amongst his people. "What manner of persons ought we to be," in view of our glorious relationship, our grand hopes, our precious fellowship with the Lord and with his brethren!

Only one thing did the Editor fear in respect to the influences mentioned and the able addresses of the speakers. He fears that the dear friends in several instances were overstimulated by too positive assurance that the present year will witness the "change" of the church, establishment of the kingdom, etc. With all due respect for the opinions of the brethren, we believe that the present is a time for great soberness of mind, avoidance of speculation and waiting for whatever the Lord may be pleased to bring to pass. We greatly fear that some of the dear friends will experience sharp disappointments, if some of the confident statements made on the convention platform miscarry. At no time has the Editor ever spoken or written as positively as some of these dear brethren are speaking now. In the books, STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, as well as in THE WATCH TOWER, we have set forth the chronology, not as infallible, but nevertheless declared our confidence in it. However, we have always encouraged the friends to examine for themselves, to use their own judgment. To assist them in this we have given in detail the references, etc. In recent numbers of THE WATCH TOWER we have plainly stated that fulfilments of the prophecies, although marked and manifest, are not as far developed for the time as we had expected.

The Editor at all three of these conventions took occasion to reiterate the views already presented in THE WATCH TOWER:

(1) That the chronology and prophecies interwoven with it still seem as strong as ever—still seem to teach that Gentile times will end next October.

(2) He pointed out, however, that the ending of the Gentile times might not usher in the great time of trouble so quickly as has been expected. He pointed out that the lease expiring might not mean an instantaneous dispossession, but, possibly, might mean a gradual dispossession, or perhaps a sharp notice to quit, followed by eviction a little later on.

(3) He reminded the conventioners of his utterance in a recent number of THE WATCH TOWER, to the effect that it is possible that the Gentile times might close without world-wide trouble immediately, and that the church might be completed with some of the members this side the veil participating for a little season in the "judgments written."

(4) He especially sought to impress upon all that our consecration was unto death, and that if the Lord permits us to continue here awhile longer than we expected, our love and loyalty should be manifest in our joyful submission to his arrangements; and furthermore, that if the privileges and blessings of the present year be continued, our cup of joy will run over every way.

A beautiful spirit seemed to pervade the conventions, reminding us of the Scripture which declares, "By one spirit we were all baptized into one body." That one spirit is the holy Spirit of God—the spirit of love and loyalty to him, to his Word, to our brethren—the spirit of sympathy, love, helpfulness, which would do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto the household of faith. Invitations for a September convention were received from Los Angeles, San Francisco, Mountain Lake Park, Md., and Saratoga Springs, N. Y., but nothing has yet been determined in respect to any of them.

THE DRAMA IN EUROPE

In furtherance of plans for introducing the Photo-Drama in Europe, the Editor, accompanied by three trained operators, left New York on the S. S. Lusitania, May 19th, several friends joining the party. Our arrival in London was in good season for the London Convention at Whitsuntide. The three days at the convention proved very interesting and profitable. All the sessions were held in the London Opera House, the largest attendance being two thousand. The various features of God's great plan were set forth by seventeen speakers. The convention adjourned with a love feast, in which nearly two thousand participated. This was freely declared to be the most enjoyable convention ever held in Europe. The Lord was with his people, blessing, refreshing, strengthening us. One hundred and twenty-four witnessed by water immersion their full consecration to the Lord even unto death.

Meantime, preparations for the Drama were in progress. A school was started for giving finishing instructions to brethren who had already gained a considerable knowledge of cinematograph operation—to acquaint them with the special features appertaining to the Photo-Drama of Creation. A Scottish class and two English classes were promptly started, totaling fifteen fine young men consecrated and eager for service. A lesson or two demonstrated that they will speedily be very efficient. Meantime another class of five will be trained as soon as the work shall seem to call for their services. Delegations from France, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Finland came to London to arrange for the Drama in their several home lands and to gain information respecting its operation and the necessary steps of preparation. It is our hope that July will witness the presentation of the Drama in all those countries. The friends seem very keen and the prospects favorable.

A favorable start with the Drama was made at the Princess Theatre, London, on Sunday, June 14th, on which day about twenty-two hundred were in attendance. The Drama is to continue every afternoon and evening for a month. Further showings in London are probable, but what they will be depends considerably upon the Lord's providence and the zeal of the local friends. All seemed greatly pleased with the two parts of the Drama exhibited prior to our departure, June 20th. We believe that in Europe, as in the United States, the public will be greatly interested and profited by this, the latest method of writing the divine measurement, or plan, upon tables—the Gospel being pictured at the same time that it is explained by our very wonderful talking machine arrangements and our free Scenario.

Arrangements for various cities in Great Britain were in progress when we left. In Glasgow the Drama was to open on the very next day, June 21st, in St. Andrew's Hall, the largest auditorium of that city. We have no doubt that the Lord's blessing upon the energy of the brethren there will make the presentation a success—profitable to many.

Leaving the operators to install the Drama in Great Britain, Scandinavia, Germany, France and Switzerland, in co-operation with the Society's branches in those countries, we began our homeward journey June 20th, on the S. S. Aquitania. A remarkably quiet and pleasant journey brought us to the home land in good season for the conventions at Asbury Park, N. J.; Columbus, Ohio, and Clinton, Iowa.

The Editor was both encouraged and continually inspired and refreshed by his contact with the brethren in and from the various parts of the world. It is helpful to note the spirit of loyalty to the Lord and his Word—the spirit of devotion continuing for months and years. The spirit manifested is the same everywhere—the spirit of love and zeal—the holy Spirit. The reason for this manifestation is explained by the Apostle's words, "We are all baptized by the one spirit into one body" —Christ.

BARREN FIG TREE—DEFILED TEMPLE

AUGUST 9.—Mark 11:12-25.

"By their fruits ye shall know them."—Matthew 7:20.

The triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem was a past incident. After spending a portion of the day in the Holy City, Jesus returned to Bethany, which is merely a suburb. The next morning, going again to the city, Jesus noted a fig tree by the wayside, bearing plenty of leaves. He approached it, seeking figs, but found none. The good show of leaves was deceptive. Then Jesus put a ban, a curse, a blight, upon the tree, declaring that it should not bear fruit forever, or to a completion. What did this mean? Surely it was not an intimation that the followers of Jesus should place a curse upon every unfruitful tree or unfruitful field! There must have been some deeper lesson in it, not apparent on the surface.

Bible students believe that they now see the deeper significance of this carefully noted incident. They believe that that fig tree was used as a type, or picture, of the Jewish nation; and that that blight upon the tree because of its unfruitfulness corresponded exactly to the blight pronounced the day before upon the Jewish nation because of its unfruitfulness.

On the day previous Jesus had said to the Jewish nation, "Ye shall see me no more until that day." So he declared of this tree that it should be blighted to the end of the aion, or age. Again, when speaking to his disciples respecting the end of this age, Jesus declared, "When ye shall see the fig tree putting forth leaves, then know that summer is nigh"—that the winter time, the blight time of the nation of Israel and of the world, is at an end. In other words, one of the signs of a new dispensation would be the sprouting, or indication of life, hope, promise, amongst the Jews.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ZIONISM

These same Bible students are now pointing to the revival of hope amongst the Jewish people, as especially manifested by Zionism. It is being pointed out that this return of hope and faith to the Jews respecting their land and the divine promises of the past is opportune—exactly in line with prophecy. They point to Isaiah 40th chapter as now in process of fulfilment: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."

These Bible students are telling that Ezekiel's prophecy of the valley of dry bones which came together, were clothed with flesh and finally received the breath of life, is an allegory respecting the Jews. They hold that it does not refer to a literal resurrection, but to the revival of Israel's hopes in the divine promises. This is in harmony with the Prophet's declaration, "These bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off from our parts."—Ezekiel 37:11.

The same Bible students declare that St. Paul teaches that the Jewish nation was typically represented by Ishmael, the son of Hagar. (Galatians 4:22-31) As Hagar and her son were outcast for a time only, so the Law Covenant and the Jews have been cut off from divine favor only for a time. Ishmael had almost fainted for thirst in the wilderness, and then was revived by the angel of the Lord, who pointed out a spring of water. This is typical. Jewish hopes of God's favor had almost died. Zionism is the well-spring which is reviving them—rescuing them from death as a people. Under Messiah's kingdom, soon to be established on the spirit plane, the Jews will receive a great blessing—on the earthly plane.

We know of no other interpretation which seems to fit the facts of this lesson or to show a reason why Jesus should manifest displeasure against an inanimate object, which had no personal responsibility or accountability.

CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

After the fig tree incident, Jesus and his disciples proceeded to Jerusalem and went directly to the Temple. There, contrary to anything that he had previously done, Jesus assumed authority, and began to cast out the traders without ceremony, overturning the tables of the money-changers and the stalls where doves were sold to people who desired to offer them in sacrifice at the Temple. Another account of the same incident tells us that in this cleansing of the Temple Jesus used a scourge of small cords, and drove forth the traders. Today's lesson tells us that he would not permit even the carrying of vessels through the Temple. All this is of double significance:

(1) Primarily, it had to do with that time;

(2) Secondarily, it was typical of a cleansing of the antitypical temple due, we believe, in this our day.

According to the legal usages of our day, it would be quite improper for any one to enter any church edifice or temple in order to interfere with any of the rights of conscience or the procedure sanctioned by the congregation owning the edifice. If wrong were being done and he wished to rectify it, it would be his duty either to go and swear out a warrant before a magistrate or to call a policeman and have him take note of the infraction of the law and correct matters. But under the Jewish law it was different. Every Jew was privileged to enforce the divine law in respect to blasphemy or any sacrilege. Parents were even required by the law to stone their own children to death for blasphemy.

Jesus therefore did only what any Jew would have a right to do, in upsetting the trading apparatus of those who were defiling the Temple of the Lord, doing violence to its sanctity. It will be noticed that as much as their scribes and Pharisees desired to find some occasion against Jesus, they made no objection to the high-handed procedure here described. Jesus was within his rights. He was championing the cause, the honor, of God and his Temple, as he had a perfect right to do.

"MADE IT A DEN OF THIEVES"

In the declaration, "Ye have made it a den of thieves," Jesus intimated that responsibility for the prevailing condition of things rested upon those in authority—the scribes and the Pharisees. For graft and other considerations they had permitted the especially consecrated house of God to become a place of merchandise. Moreover, it is claimed by some that the Temple was frequently used as a place for barter on a larger scale. Here money-sharks found opportunity for meeting people in distress, who came to the Temple for prayer. Such were referred to by Jesus as those who robbed widows, while for pretense they made long prayers. In other words, Jesus judged that some in his day made a cloak, or pretense, of their religion in order to take advantage and to reap pecuniary benefit. Hence the Temple had become a "den of thieves."

In olden times, as with many at present, there was a literalness attached to the word theft which only partly covered its meaning. The loan-sharks infested the Temple, pretended sympathy for those in trouble, and loaned money on exacting terms which finally devoured the property of the widow and the orphan in a legal manner. We fear that the same is true today—that religion is still used as a cloak to cover selfishness. People who do not think of literally committing theft, robbery, often succumb to the arguments of warped consciences. The Master, who was especially indignant at such misuse of the house of God of old, holds the same sentiments today. It is in vain that any claim to be his followers, his disciples, his friends, members of the true church of Christ, who at the same time use religion hypocritically.

"THE HOUSE OF PRAYER"

While Jesus often went into the mountain to pray, or prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, while Pharisees sometimes prayed on the street corners, and while St. Peter went to the housetop to pray, nevertheless the Temple was recognized by all the Jews as especially a house of prayer. Thus we read that St. Peter and St. John went up to the Temple to pray. (Acts 3:1) It was the one place of all others in the world where the soul might feel that it could draw especially near to God.

In the Most Holy was the Mercy Seat, upon which rested the Shekinah light, representing divine presence.

The nearer to that Most Holy any one was able to draw, the more was he understood to be in communion with God. Thus the priests alone might enter the Holy and the Most Holy. The others of the nation of Israel were not permitted to come nearer than the Court. Of these courts there were three—first, the one for the Jews; second, the one for Jewish women; and third, an outer Court, where believing Gentiles might worship the true God, but separated by "a middle wall of partition," as St. Paul declares. (Ephesians 2:14) These courts represented different degrees of approach to God's favor. In the antitype, which is not yet complete, Christ and his church will be the temple proper; and all mankind desiring to approach God will approach through The Christ, the temple of God. And the nearer they come, the greater will be their blessing.

St. Peter and St. Paul both tell us of this antitypical temple: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy Spirit?" (1 Corinthians 6:19) "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (1 Corinthians 3:17) The church, making increase for years in the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit, "groweth unto a holy temple of the Lord." (Ephesians 2:21) "Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house." (1 Peter 2:5) "Ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the holy Spirit"—"built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."—Ephesians 2:20-22.

This antitypical temple may be viewed from four different standpoints. In harmony with the last text quoted, it is still under construction. The living stones are being quarried out of the world, and being shaped and polished for places in the glorious temple of which Christ is the Head. That temple will be spiritual, unseen of men, each member like unto the glorified Jesus, far above angels.

In that temple God by his holy Spirit will dwell in fullest measure. Through it all mankind, during the Millennium, will be privileged to draw near to God and to receive divine favors and uplift out of sin and death, back to the original image and likeness of God lost in Eden, redeemed for all at Calvary, and to be offered to all during Messiah's kingdom reign of a thousand years. Then in the largest sense of the world it will be God's holy place. Nothing defiling shall be brought into it. All merchandising and money-sharking will be far from it. It will be the house of prayer, the channel of prayer, the way of approach of mankind to draw near to God for forgiveness of sins and for the reception of all the blessings and mercies which God has provided in Christ for whosoever will.

It was because the Temple at Jerusalem was a type of that glorious temple of perfection that all business of every kind done in it was profanation—was spoiling the beautiful perfection of the type—was misrepresenting the future, the reality—God's intention in giving it.

"YOUR BODY IS THE TEMPLE"

But now let us take a still different view of the subject—not contradictory to the foregoing, but confirmatory. As in the future the church will be the temple of God, perfect on the heavenly plane, so each individual member of the church of Christ, who has been begotten of the holy Spirit as a new creature, has to that extent God dwelling in his mortal body. The world in general are not temples of the holy Spirit, however good or moral or kind or generous.

No one becomes a temple of the holy Spirit until begotten of the holy Spirit. That spirit-begetting constitutes him a new creature, a son of God, even though only the will, the mind, is begotten again—even though the body is still an imperfect body of flesh. The new mind, dwelling in the old body and using it, constitutes that old body thenceforth a temple of God, and gives to that body a holiness or sanctity which it did not have before.

Now, as the new creature dwells in this mortal body, it is styled a tabernacle rather than a temple, because through sin and degradation it is impaired, and not glorious. Besides, the word tabernacle signifies that which is temporary, not permanent, not eternal. Our heavenly house, our spiritual body, will be the temple, but none can enter that perfect temple condition except by a share in the first resurrection, as Jesus said: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."—Revelation 20:6.

None can know the character of the heart, whether it be a new heart or merely that of the natural man or woman who has learned politeness, morality, etc. The only way in which we are permitted to judge each other is by the outward fruitage. If the spirit of the Lord dwell within, the fruitage must be good, helpful to others. That human being must be a blessing in his home, in his community, even as Jesus was, whether his character, his goodness, be acknowledged by others in general or not. The fruits of these people of God are the fruits of holiness, meekness, gentleness, longsuffering, brotherly-kindness, self-sacrifice in the interest of others and especially in the service of God and his truth.

WICKED VINE-DRESSERS

AUGUST 16.—Matthew 21:33-46.

"The stone that the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner."—Matthew 21:42.

Not only did the Redeemer teach chiefly by parables, but additionally nearly all of those parables related directly or indirectly to the kingdom. The reason for this is plain. The divine plan calls for the setting up of the kingdom of righteousness by divine power for the overcoming of the prince of darkness and his reign, which for six thousand years has been a reign of sin and death. While not directly telling of the kingdom, the lesson of today points to it indirectly.

While the whole world was lying in darkness and sin and under divine sentence of unworthiness of life, God planted in the world a root of promise, a hope. This promise, made to Abraham, foretold that his seed, or posterity, would eventually become very great and powerful, and would cause the blessing of God to fill the earth, instead of the curse, which it would roll away. In due time this promise came to the nation of Israel, as the natural posterity of Abraham and the heirs of the promise. Thus God planted a vineyard in the world, the Jewish nation, a special and peculiar people bound to him, and he to them, by the Law Covenant negotiated through Moses. God set a hedge about this nation and gave them special provisions of divine favor "every way." (Romans 3:1, 2) The divine hedge was the divine promise that as long as the Israelites would be faithful and loyal to God, they would be thoroughly protected against their enemies.

The vineyard had a watch tower, as was common in those days, that from this tower watchmen might guard against robbers. So the Lord declared himself to be Israel's high tower. He placed watchmen, even the prophets, who cried aloud and warned the people from time to time in respect to any and every breaking down of the wall, or partition; for this protection could be broken down only by disloyalty, carelessness, sin, on the part of Israel. The statement that the Lord, after having made this arrangement with Abraham's seed, went into a far country implies that the arrangement was intended to stand for a long time.

THE ORIGINAL VINE-DRESSERS

While in this parable the entire nation of Israel is represented by the vineyard, the husbandmen, or caretakers of the vineyard, where the religious leaders, of whom Jesus said, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do." (Matthew 23:2, 3) These vine-dressers became conceited, got to feel a proprietary right in the vineyard, acted as though they were the real owners, and not merely the Owner's servants. Even in their speech they became accustomed to refer to the masses of Israel as the laity and to themselves as the clergy. They referred to the people as "our people," "my people," etc. In other words, they failed to glorify God properly, and therefore in thus taking honor to themselves felt themselves more than the servants of God, honored in being permitted to be vine-dressers in his vineyard.

As centuries rolled on, it was only proper to expect that the operation of the Law Covenant would produce good fruitage amongst the people—that through their inability to keep the law they would become stronger in character; that these united experiences would make them more reverential, more loyal to God, more earnestly desirous that the typical kingdom should give place to the antitypical one, when the Owner would be present, either directly or through some especially appointed representative. In due course of time, the Owner, Jehovah, sent his servants, the prophets, to Israel, sometimes with one message, sometimes with another. These servants and their messages became tests as respected the love, devotion and loyalty of the vine-dressers, and tests also relative to the character-development of the people of Israel.

But alas! the very ones who should have been glad to wel-

come the Owner's representatives, and glad to have manifested to them the fruits of holiness amongst the people, showed their own disloyalty by mistreating the servants. They reasoned that to acknowledge those servants and the reproofs which they gave would mean an acknowledgment that they themselves were merely vine-dressers, and not in any sense of the word owners of the vineyard or an especially preferred class not held responsible under the general law governing all. Therein their pride and their desire to show off before the people prompted the mistreatment of the Owner's special representatives, the prophets. As the parable shows, some of these were beaten, others killed, others stoned.

"IT BROUGHT FORTH WILD GRAPES"

Finally the Owner of the vineyard sent his Son, saying, Surely they should reverence my Son. As a matter of fact, the Bible informs us that God knew that the rulers of Israel would not reverence his Son, but would crucify him; and that he sent his Son with this foreknowledge of their intention.

But the parable is stating the matter from a different standpoint—as though the Owner had said, as he might well have said, "They will reverence my Son." Surely the rulers of the Jews should have reverenced the perfect one—"holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." Surely they should have recognized this one, of whom the people declared, "Never man spake like this man." Surely they should have hearkened to his message, should have repented of their sins, should have come back through him into harmony with the Father, and thus have obtained forgiveness and a blessing. Whatever reasons there might have seemed to be for their thinking that Isaiah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Malachi and others of the Prophets were deceivers, none of those arguments would hold against the Owner's Son, whose credentials were manifest in his holiness, in his miracles and mighty works, and in his mightier words of life.

However, the spirit of selfishness and self-conceit is powerful, and often leads those who possess it to monstrous acts which afterward appal even themselves. The Jewish Doctors, the clergy of that time, perceived that Jesus, the Son of God, the representative of the Owner of the vineyard, by his words and deeds was exerting a mighty influence over the people. His claim to be the Owner's Son was backed by numerous signs which the people were disposed to recognize. We read that he departed into a mountain alone, when the people would take him by force to make him a king. The clerical class reasoned that to whatever extent his cause should prevail, their power over the people, their influence, their titles, their honors of men, would diminish in importance.

"BEHOLD OPPRESSION—BEHOLD A CRY"

The rulers of the vineyard, shown by Jesus' description to be the Pharisees and the Sadducees, had become very unbelieving as respects the declaration of the prophets that the King would eventually send Messiah with great blessings and power for the glorification of that vineyard and the widening of its influence in the whole world. The Sadducees, including many of the scribes, as a class were agnostics—disbelievers in the inspiration of the promises and the prophecies. The same spirit affected the Pharisees to a considerable extent. All were self-seeking. Jesus styled them "money-lovers," and declared that they sought chiefly the honor of men rather than that honor which cometh alone from God.

In their exasperation against Jesus, in their realization that his victory meant their defeat and the defeat of all the institutions which represented their wisdom and teachings, they determined that it was necessary for him to die. By this they meant that his death was necessary for the success of their theories and plans, because his theories, his teachings, were so different from theirs. They could not endure the thought that the great institutions which they had so laboriously constructed out of human traditions which made void the Word of God should all fade away. To them it seemed that to surrender their plans to Jesus and for him to carry out the plans which he preached would mean the ruin of the vineyard, the nation. They did not realize that the course which they were taking was the very one which would lead to the destruction of that typical kingdom of God, that typical vineyard.

Jesus carried the parable up to his own time and foretold his own violent death at the hands of those wicked vine-dressers who treated the Lord's heritage as though it were their own. Then, in conclusion, Jesus asked his hearers what they would expect the Owner of that vineyard to do with those wicked husbandmen when he should come to take possession and to redress the wrongs. The answer was that he would miserably destroy those wicked vine-dressers, and would let out his vineyard to other husbandmen who would render him the proper fruits at the proper time.

Jesus did not himself give the answer, but his silence was confirmatory of the answer of the people. And so the parable was fulfilled. God's judgments came upon the Jewish nation, with the result that it was entirely overthrown in the year 70 A. D. Speaking of this, St. Paul says, "Wrath is come upon this people to the uttermost" (1 Thessalonians 2:16), that all things written in the Law and the Prophets concerning them should be fulfilled. Their nationality was utterly overthrown and has never since been restored—nor will it be until the time foretold by the prophets, when Messiah in glory shall establish his reign of righteousness and when under his kingdom those faithful servants, the prophets, who were slain, stoned to death, etc., will be made associates and given authority and power as Messiah's representatives in the earth.—Psalm 45:16.

THE NEW VINE-DRESSERS

The Lord said that those originally appointed were wicked vine-dressers. He appointed new ones; namely, the twelve apostles, St. Paul taking the place of Judas. Moreover, he started a new vineyard, putting into it only the true vine, inspired with faith and loyalty toward God. Those faithful servants, although they long ago fell asleep, continue through their words, their teachings, to influence, to guard, to keep, the true vine of the Lord—the church, the body of Christ. Of this vineyard our Lord declares, "I am the true vine; ye are the branches." Century after century these true branches of the true vine have been planted by baptism into death with their Master and have been bringing forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Ere long, we believe, this fruitage will all be gathered and, by the resurrection "change," be transplanted to the heavenly condition.

Meantime, however, the same spirit which was manifested by the vine-dressers of the Jewish age has manifested itself again. Other vineyards have been started. In numbers, wealth and influence these quite outrank and outshine the Lord's vineyard, which alone bears the precious fruit which he desires. The two vines are spoken of in the Bible. The one is said to be "the vine of my Father's right hand planting." The other is styled "the vine of the earth." The fruitage of the one is manifested in the character-likeness of Christ, faithfulness unto death. The fruitage of the other is manifested in boastfulness, pride, show—a form of godliness without the power thereof.

There is to be a gathering of the fruitage of the vine of the earth at the second coming of the Master. We read that it is to be dealt with in the vinepress of the wrath of God in the great time of trouble with which this age will pass away, giving place to the thousand years of Messiah's kingdom for the world's uplift.

THE CHIEF CORNER-STONE

The Scriptures give us the thought that the church of Christ is represented by a pyramid, which has five corner-stones, the chief one being the top-stone—a perfect pyramid in itself, the lines of which control the entire structure. Jesus, rejected by the Jews, crucified, is the chief corner-stone of this great temple of God which is the church. Already he is glorified. During this age his footstep followers, shaped in harmony with his character-likeness, are being prepared to be united with him in heavenly glory.

Thus, as our Lord declared, the kingdom of God was taken from Israel—the natural seed of Abraham—to be given to spiritual Israel. God is thus developing or creating the new nation, a holy nation, a peculiar people, separate and distinct from all others, gathered out from Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, from every nation and denomination.

Christ Jesus, the top-stone, is indeed "a stone of stumbling" to many. By stumbling over him they injure themselves; but if he should fall on them, in the sense of condemning them, it would signify their utter destruction; their cutting off in the second death.

The chief priests and the Pharisees heard the Master's parables, and perceived that he spoke of them as the wicked vine-dressers. They sought to lay hold of him and destroy him forthwith; but they feared the multitude, who, although they did not recognize him as the Son of God, did esteem him the great Prophet, or Teacher.

I, the Lord, am with thee, be thou not afraid;
I will help and strengthen, be thou not dismayed.
Yes, I will uphold thee with my own right hand;
Thou art called and chosen in my sight to stand.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the day;
For his word shall never, never pass away.

INTERESTING LETTER

A BAPTIST AND PRESENT TRUTH

Dear Brother Russell:—

Thinking that my experience in coming into the truth might be of interest to you, I am sending to you the following:

In 1886 my father saw your advertisement in the *Christian Herald,* that Volume I, MILLENNIAL DAWN, was in preparation. As soon as he saw the announcement that it was ready, he sent his $1 and got its teachings, accepting it as rapidly as he saw that it harmonized the Scriptures.

At that time I had joined the Baptist church. After making sure that the book contained nothing but the truth, my father endeavored to give the same truth to me. He spoke to me about the unscripturalness of the doctrine of eternal torment, the immediate going to heaven or hell at death and the doctrine of the natural immortality of man. I was fearful of doctrines which were so different from my Baptist belief; but as he quoted Scriptures, I did not feel that I should oppose them. It seemed to me that there were other Scriptures which taught the opposite; and I felt sure that he must be mistaken, though I did not say so. I quietly determined to read the Bible through, noting all the passages I could which bore on these subjects, so that I would be sure of what the teaching of the whole Scripture is. I felt sure that if I prayed to the Lord for guidance that I might know the truth, he would not let me go astray. I realized that there was no use in quoting a text here and there. When I spoke to my father, I would give him quotations from every portion of the Bible, and thus show him that the general teachings of the Bible were opposed to his newly found ideas.

Reading during my spare time, it took me six months to read the Bible, marking down the texts I noticed. At the end I had some 725 Scriptures cited:

(a) The first column contained texts which seemed very clearly to teach the old doctrine of eternal torment, the immediate reward after death, and the immortality of the soul. This collection contained about twenty-five texts.

(b) The second column contained texts which clearly supported my father's side. In this column I had about one hundred and twenty-five texts. This somewhat disturbed me.

(c) The third column contained texts which did not exactly favor my belief, but which, while they seemed to favor my father's side, I did not feel like conceding to him until I had further examined them.

I then went over these texts and found that those in column two all remained in that column; and the texts in column three also went into column two. With this new fund of Bible knowledge, I went over column one, and found that over one half of my texts had to go into column two also, leaving me only about twelve or fifteen Scriptures, nearly all of which were in figurative language. I then saw clearly that the doctrines I had been taught from the creeds are wrong; and I at once accepted the truth. In the last twenty-six years, through the Lord's grace, I have never had occasion to doubt the truth on these matters.

While I was reading the Scriptures, my father frequently tried to persuade me to read THE WATCH TOWER publications; but I felt that I was seeking in the right place for truth, and that if I were to read something of which I was already fearful, I might be taking my case out of the Lord's hands, and thus go into darkness. He grieved considerably that I would not talk with him or read anything he offered to me. I did not tell him that I was studying the matter all the time. He was greatly surprised when six months later, I showed him the results of my study.

I now see how much labor and time I might have saved had I gone prayerfully at once to THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES. That book today seems more wonderful and satisfying and Scriptural than when I first read it. It has proven itself more impregnable to assaults from all parties than Gibraltar. I praise the Lord for the whole series of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and have never heard any Bible expositions worthy of comparison with them. With much Christian love,

Your brother in Christ, A. I. RITCHIE.

PREPARED HEARTS

FRANCES DARDEN

Prepare our hearts to know thee, Lord,
And seek for wisdom in thy Word,
So, as our days, our strength may be,
To spread thy truth, o'er land and sea.
O'er all the earth this light must shine,
Restoring faith to all mankind.
Run swiftly, oh! ye angel "feet,"
Upon the mountains; tidings sweet
Send forth! Proclaim the Word,
So men shall know their reigning Lord.
Earnest watch, on Zion's wall,
Lift high his banner over all;
Loud sound the Seventh Trumpet call!
Let truth prevail, and error fall!

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THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

"If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—John 8:31, 32.

At his first Advent our Lord came to the Jewish nation, which was a house of servants in covenant relationship with God. To these was to be granted the first privilege of becoming sons of God, and their blessing would be in proportion as they were faithful to the light that would come to them. Before they could become sons of God, however, it was necessary that Jesus should be their Redeemer, should make reconciliation for iniquity, and thus open up the way. This he had come to do, but he had not done it as yet. Whoever would come to understand the divine purposes and arrangements, and act in harmony with them, should be made free, should be liberated from the condemnation resting upon them as Jews, from the results of the weaknesses of their flesh, and would be brought into full accord with God.

We can see that this great privilege also meant something more than all this. It meant something still higher—even joint-heirship with Messiah. But all these things were a hidden mystery as yet. They were known up to that time only by our Lord himself; they were made clear to him because he had been begotten of the holy Spirit. There were many things hard to be understood. Jesus spoke in parables, in dark sayings, for the very purpose of making the way of life then opened up a "narrow way." And so we read in the Scriptures that some said of the Master's words: "This is a hard saying! Who can hear it?" Who could believe it?

The particularly hard saying referred to was that his "flesh was meat indeed, and his blood was drink indeed," and that by eating and drinking of these they might gain eternal life. And so we read that after this many forsook him and abandoned the thought of being his disciples, so blinded were they to their own interests. Instead of following on patiently, they said, This is all foolishness! We do not understand it!

Jesus was anticipating this condition of things when he spoke these words to them. He would put them on their guard. It was as though he would say, You have declared that "never man spake like this man!" Already you have heard words very different from the words of the scribes and Pharisees. Now continue; hold on for a little while. If you will do this, you will grasp the situation in due time. Exercise faith—exercise patience. You have begun to have interest in these things, and as you fully become my disciples you will be granted a knowledge of the truth. And this truth will make you free; it will give you all the blessings and privileges that come to the children of God. Greatly blessed were the few who took heed to the Master's counsel!

BLESSINGS BEGUN AT PENTECOST

These words of Jesus were not addressed especially to the twelve apostles, but to the Jews in general who were sympathetically drawn. Nicodemus may have been one of these; he was inclined to stumble over the spiritual things; he could not see how one could be born again. The holy Spirit was not yet given, we read, "because Jesus was not yet glorified." St. Paul tells us that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Corinthians 2:14.

But some saw enough in Jesus to attract them to him. These, in honesty of heart, said, Surely his words are true,

and his criticisms of our nation are true. We do not see how he is going to fulfill these prophecies; but he says to us, Hold on and you will understand later. And some did hold on—"above five hundred brethren." As Jesus had promised, these were given the privilege of becoming disciples indeed.

When Pentecost came, the heavenly Father received all who had continued in Jesus' word, and they were begotten of the holy Spirit into the Lord's family. Then they began to see spiritual things—they were illuminated. All the light did not come at once, but they progressed as the days and years went by. They were indeed Christ's true disciples—such followers of Jesus as the Father was pleased to recognize. They were not only made free from the condemnation of the Law Covenant, but made free from sin and death. They received a new will, a new mind, and the holy Spirit showed "the deep things of God" unto them.

In his prayer to the Father, our Lord said, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth." By the word truth Jesus was here referring to the Father's revealment of his divine plan through the holy Spirit; and the sanctifying influence would come through the knowledge of that truth, received into an honest heart. This sanctification, or setting apart, strictly speaking, began with the Pentecostal blessing, and still continues to operate. And this sanctification progresses as long as the individual allows the truth to have its designed influence in his life. We see a difference between our text and the one just quoted. In the latter case it is the Word of Jehovah, and in the former it is the word of Jesus. Jesus says, If you continue in my word, you will become more and more acquainted with the heavenly Father, and will know his will, his way, his method; thus you will know his Word. All things are working out his will—the will of the Father—and seeing and doing the will of the Father, the sanctifying process will follow. Jesus says to all, "I am the way; I am the truth; I am the life." I am the only one through whom you can come to the Father and become his sons; and abiding in me will bring you the grand consummation.

THE CHANNEL OF ALL OUR BLESSINGS

We perceive, then, that Christ is the sufficiency which God has provided for us in all respects. "He of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness [justification], and sanctification, and redemption [deliverance]." (1 Corinthians 1:30) We first received, through learning of his sacrificial work on our behalf, necessary wisdom, instruction and guidance, by which we may through his merit come to the Father. And he is our wisdom all along the way. The heavenly Father had a glorious plan before the foundation of the world; this was hinted in Eden, just after the fall. In due time he gave a further intimation of that plan through Enoch and through Abraham, and still later through Moses and the prophets. But how the world was to benefit from it was all hidden, all kept secret.

Not until Jesus came was the way of life opened up, made manifest. "He [Christ] hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." The essence of the Gospel was never even declared, much less known, before Jesus came. The Apostle Paul says that this salvation "at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." (Hebrews 2:3) Our Lord began to speak it; but the secret of the Gospel, its Mystery, was not fully revealed until after Pentecost. It was not until after Jesus was begotten of the holy Spirit that he himself began to comprehend it clearly—not until then did he begin to set before us the way of life and immortality. And even then his words were parabolic, and it was not until his followers were begotten of the holy Spirit that they were able to enter into "the deep things of God."

JESUS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

In addition to his being our wisdom, Jesus becomes our righteousness. He covers our sins. He imputes to us his own righteousness, the merit of his own sacrifice. And this imputation brings us to a condition of complete righteousness—not actual, but reckoned, which God is pleased to recognize in the way he has arranged.

Our Lord does not become the righteousness of everybody—not even of those who give some heed to his words—but to those alone who come to the point of full submission to the Father's will. And there is a good reason for this; for only those who offer themselves to become members of his body during this Gospel age, only the spirit-begotten, would be profited by a justification by faith. Others would be condemned to death by it now. In the next age, others will come to him. But only those who come to him now, to walk in his steps, have a faith-justification.

JESUS OUR SANCTIFICATION

The step of consecration on the part of those who become Jesus disciples is in the Scriptures called sanctification. But it is not the same sanctification which comes to us through him. God says, "Sanctify yourselves, and I will sanctify you"—that is, Set yourselves apart, and then I will set you apart; I will put you into this place where you desire to come. So, to all of us who come to the Father through him, Jesus not only becomes our justification, but through him we also have sanctification—the complete setting apart. We are accepted in him, and his grace and advocacy enables us to attain complete and final sanctification.

God sets us apart by begetting us of the holy Spirit to the new nature and making us prospective members of the royal priesthood—prospective members of the body of the anointed One. This is Scripturally called a foretaste, or "earnest," of our inheritance, which will be experienced to the full when we are changed from the human to the spirit nature—"changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." But this "earnest of our inheritance" is given us with the intention of our growing in the process of sanctification already begun in us until its completion. We attain this through Christ.

JESUS OUR DELIVERANCE

Those who make satisfactory progress will have in the resurrection full deliverance from sin, from all imperfections of the flesh, and from the flesh itself—full deliverance through the power of the first resurrection. Christ thus becomes our deliverance. We shall then attain the full completion of sons of God on the divine plane.

In all these things Christ is the center; through him alone can we obtain these blessings. While the Father gives them, they are given through his Son, who is the Father's representative. Jesus received the Spirit of the Father and has shed it forth upon us. This is pictured in the type, in the anointing of the high priest. The holy anointing-oil was poured upon his head, and it ran down over his body. So we are anointed through our Head as members of the great High Priest.

"He who raised up Jesus from the dead will raise us up also by Jesus"; that is to say, Jesus will be the active agent. But there are certain features of the divine plan which Jesus will accomplish in his own name; for instance, the world's blessing and uplifting. While the Father is the Author of the entire plan, yet this blessing comes to the world exclusively through the sacrifice of the Son. Christ will do the work of the Millennial age, and will then deliver mankind up to the Father.

But his work for the church is different: "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us." (1 Peter 1:3) It is not the Son who has begotten us, though it is through the Son that we receive this divine favor. The price, or cost, of obtaining this special divine favor is the sacrifice of our lives. The particular thing which the church receives more directly from the Son is justification. Yet this justification is of the Father, and it is not an actual justification, but an imputed justification. It is a special arrangement, on the Father's part for us that we may come into his favor now in advance of the world—the first-fruits unto God and the Lamb.

Ours is a wonderful God, and his great plan of the ages is marvelous beyond expression! Our hearts rejoice that our eyes have been anointed to see these glorious things hidden to the many during this Gospel age, knowing that all the blind eyes shall yet be opened, and all the deaf ears be made to hear!

"THEY TURN THEIR EARS FROM THE TRUTH"

The Lord's preaching always produced two opposite effects upon the promiscuous multitudes that heard him: He attracted one class and repelled the other. Those who were full of pride and conceit, and who preferred darkness to light because their deeds were evil and because they realized that if they admitted the light of Truth they must of necessity conform their characters to it—all such were repelled by the teachings of Christ. And if the Lord had undertaken the work of the ministry according to the methods pursued today, depending for support on the good will and contributions of the people, that support would often have been very meager, or at least, very fluctuating.

On some occasions multitudes received his testimony, but later deserted him, walking no more with him as he continued to enforce the lessons of divine truth. (Luke 4:14-29) Sometimes the multitudes hung upon his teachings, "wondering at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth"; yet again and again they forsook him, only the merest handful remaining.—John 6:60-69.

What consternation would follow in the various churches of today, if the professed ministers of the Gospel should follow the Master's example in similarly declaring the whole counsel of God! How quickly they would become unpopular and be charged with breaking up the churches! The congregations of the great temples of fashion ostensibly dedicated to the service of God and the teachings of Christ would not

stand it. They go there to be entertained with pleasing and eloquent discourses from titled gentlemen who presumably know the tastes and ideas of the congregation, and will preach to please them. They are quite willing to pay their money for *what they want, but they do not want the truth.*

Those who followed the Lord only for a little season and then forsook him, of course then ceased to be his disciples and were no longer so recognized; nor did they presume longer to claim to be his disciples. A disciple is a pupil, a learner; and when a man ceases to be a student and pupil of Christ, the great teacher, he is no longer his disciple. This was very manifest when the Lord was present, and when his name was one of reproach among men; but later, when his presence was withdrawn, and when his doctrines were unscrupulously mixed with human philosophies to such an extent as to divest them of reproach, and to make them really void, then men began to claim to be his disciples. This was long after his doctrines *had been utterly repudiated.*

THE REWARD OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

The Lord's expression, "Then are ye my disciples indeed," implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be Jesus' sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: "*If ye continue in my* word, then are ye my disciples indeed." The hypocrisy of merely nominal discipleship is an abomination to the Lord.

It is a blessed thing to take the first step in the Christian life—that of acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer and Lord and yielding ourselves fully to the Father through him. But the reward of this step depends entirely upon our continuance in his word, in the attitude of true disciples. The disposition *of human pride is to wander away from the simplicity of divine* truth and to seek out new theories and philosophies of our own, or to pry into those of others who desire to be considered wise and great according to this world's estimate.

The reward of continued discipleship is, "Ye shall know *the truth*"—not, Ye shall be "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Timothy 3:7) Here is the mistake many make; failing to continue in the Word of the Lord, they delve into various human philosophies, which ignore or pervert the Word of the Lord and set up opposing theories. To those who seek for truth among these human theories, there is no promise that they shall ever find it, and they never do.

Divine truth is found only in the divinely appointed channel—our Lord, the apostles and the prophets. To continue in the doctrines set forth in the inspired writings of the prophets and the apostles, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and to faithfully conform our *characters to them, is what is implied in "continuing in the* Word" of the Lord. And this is entirely compatible with the heeding of all the helps which the Lord raises up from among our brethren in the body of Christ, as enumerated by the Apostle Paul. (Ephesians 4:11-15; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14) The Lord always has raised up, and will to the end raise up, such helps for the edification of the body of Christ; but it is the duty of every member carefully to prove their teaching by the infallible Word.

If we thus continue in the Word of the Lord as earnest and sincere disciples, we shall indeed "know the truth," be "established in the present truth" [the truth due], and "be rooted and grounded in the truth"; we shall be "firm in the faith," and "able to give a reason for the hope that is in us"; to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered *to the saints*"; to "war a good warfare"; to "witness a good confession" and to firmly "endure hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," even unto the end of our conflict.

We do not come into the knowledge of the truth at a single bound; but gradually, step by step, we are led into the truth. Every step is one of sure and certain progress leading to a higher vantage ground for further attainments both in knowledge and in established character.

The truth thus acquired, step by step, becomes a sanctifying power, bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the holy Spirit, love, meekness, faith, patience and every virtue and every grace, which time and cultivation ripen to a glorious maturity.

Not only shall the true disciple thus know the truth and be sanctified by it, but the Lord also said, "The truth shall make you free." Those who have received the truth know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of it is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance, superstition and fear. Its health-restoring beams penetrate the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorate the whole being; it quickens our mortal bodies.

"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORDS GIVETH LIGHT"

Sin cannot endure the light of truth; and those who continue to live in sin when a sufficiency of light has been received to manifest its deformity must inevitably lose the light, because *they are unworthy of it. Ignorance and superstition* must vanish before this light. And what a blessed realization it is to be thus liberated! Millions, however, are still under the blinding influence of error. Under its delusions they fear and reverence some of the basest tools of Satan for their oppression and degradation, because these hypocritically claim divine appointment; and they have been made to fear God as a vengeful tyrant, consigning the vast majority of his creatures to an eternity of torment. Thank God! We who have received the truth have awakened from that horrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over us is broken. The light has scattered our darkness.

We are made free, too, from the fear that we now see *coming upon the whole world as the great civil and ecclesiastical* systems that have so long ruled the world are being terribly shaken. All thinking people are in dread of the possible outcome of anarchy and terror; the alarm of all is increasing as we near the awful crisis toward which we are rapidly hastening, and as the danger becomes more and more apparent. Yet, in the midst of it all, and with the fullest assurance of the infallible Word of God as to the terrors of the conflict through which the world will soon have to pass, the true disciples of Christ who abide in his word are not afraid, but rejoice; for they know that God's object in permitting this mighty storm is to clear the moral atmosphere of the world, and that after the storm, there shall come, by his providence, an abiding peace. *Instructed in the truth, they realize the necessities of the situa*tion, and have confidence in the divine providence that can make even the wrath of man to praise him, make all things work together for good.

Blessed promise!—"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Dearly beloved, having received this wondrous favor from the Lord, shall we not continue in *it, giving no heed to seducing doctrines* but bringing forth its blessed fruitage in our lives? And shall we not be faithful to it under all circumstances, defending it against every assault, and bearing its reproach? Let us prove our appreciation of the glorious light by our loyalty and faithfulness, working out our salvation with fear and trembling.

OUR GREAT BURDEN-BEARER

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."—1 Peter 5:7.

These comforting words of the Apostle Peter are addressed *to the church of Christ;* and all who are of the Lord's people surely realize that there are cares and difficulties of life which are our portion and which are perplexing. These cares of life come also to those who are of the world—to some more and to some less. But they surely come to all who are the Lord's children.

The word care is used in two different ways. Thinking of the word in the sense of exercising proper thought and giving proper attention to that which is entrusted to us, or concerning which we are responsible, we might be in danger of misunderstanding our text. The word care, however, very often has in it the thought of worry, trouble of mind; and this is its use by the Apostle in this place. The Apostle Paul also says, "Be careful for nothing"—be worried about nothing, have anxiety about nothing. So we might render the words of St. Peter, "Casting all your anxiety upon him; for he is taking thought for you."

IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE THINGS

The Apostle's advice is not that we shall throw off all sense of responsibility, and cease to exercise care in what we do and in respect to our duties and obligations. Surely we all agree that the man or the woman without care for anything, in this proper sense, would be totally unfit for any position in life. We often notice evidences of some one's not having been sufficiently careful. Perhaps the wall paper has been carelessly marred or the furniture scratched; doors are slammed or left swinging when they should be closed for warmth, etc. Some might say, Oh, these are very small matters! But one who is careless, thoughtless, and inattentive to these matters is very likely to be untrustworthy in larger matters.

Personally, it is painful to us to see these things; and undoubtedly it is so to all who exercise proper care. The children of God, his representatives before men, should not go blundering along through the world or needlessly annoying others, whether it be the brethren or people of the world. Our

influence for good may be greatly marred by inattention to what might be called little things, but what in reality are not so. There is a trite saying which is full of meaning: "Trifles make perfection; and perfection is no trifle." The Lord's people should be the most careful people in the world.

Our Lord said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much"; and the reverse of the statement would be equally true—that he that is unfaithful in that which is least is unfaithful also in much. (Luke 16:10) These little things of every-day life may prove to be more crucial tests of real character than will seemingly larger matters. Little courtesies, little acts of thoughtful consideration for others, how much they mean! How greatly they often affect the happiness of those around us and our own influence as ambassadors of Christ! So we need to exercise much care and thoughtfulness in regard to our words, our actions and everything with which we have to do. This is not the care that we are to cast upon the Lord for him to bear. This we are properly to bear ourselves.

OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED BY THE LORD

God is the most careful Being in the universe, we may be sure. He is not careful, in the sense in which the word is used in our text—in the sense of worry and unrest of mind—but he is care-full in the right and proper sense. There are cares that come to the Lord's people because they are harassed by the adversary. These experiences the Lord permits for the very purpose of leading his people to cast their care upon him, of bringing them closer to himself, of teaching them patient endurance, of showing them more fully their need of him, their utter helplessness and wretchedness without him.

But worries and frettings—anxieties that would hinder us in the Lord's service, that would rob us of our peace in the Lord—should be dropped, not carelessly, however, but intelligently, with the thought that Jesus, our great Burden-bearer, has invited us, yea, urged us, to cast all our care—all that would disturb our peace—upon him. He will make our burden light and ease our tribulations. This is a test of faith, and cannot be attained otherwise than through faith in his love, faith in his promises.

OUR FATHER'S CARE FOR HIS CHILDREN

Each day that a Christian lives he should be more reliant upon the Lord. He should realize more fully than before that our heavenly Father, who has provided for the grass of the field and for the birds of the air, cares far more for his children than for the flowers or for many sparrows, and that he has a plan also for the world—an arrangement for their blessing, in due time. But we have already entered into the blessing of the Lord; we have already become his children, and are his especial care. And "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him"—those that reverence him.

We cannot be faithful children of God if we are full of worry. Worry is one thing, but proper carefulness is another. We should be more careful every day, and thus be able to fulfil our obligations to the world in general, to our families, to ourselves, to the brethren, and to the Lord—to render our God more effective service.

We are not to be troubled and anxious as to where we are to get our next suit of clothes. We have a suit of clothing for the present, such as the Lord has seen fit to give; and we are to do our best to provide the things needed. If the Lord should never give us apparel as good as many others have, or as rich or dainty food, we should not worry, but be content with whatever his providence arranges for us, and accept it thankfully. He will give what is best—what is for our good as new creatures. We should not doubt, nor fear that he will not provide for our needs. He knows all about our affairs, and is not unmindful of our welfare. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

How needful this humility before God, and how consoling and precious this loving assurance! As we go on in this blessed way marked out by our Lord, let us learn more and more fully that we are not to ask anything according to our wills, but only that his will may be done in us and for us. His Wisdom is unerring. Let us tell the Lord all about our burdens, great and small, and let us appropriate to ourselves his love and sympathy, applying to our hearts the balm of his Word, of the precious promises which are the heritage of his own, trusting him that he is both able and willing to supply our every need—yea, that he delights thus to bless us, if we abide in his love.

"How strong and sweet my Father's care!
The words like music in the air,
Come answering to my whispered prayer—
'He cares for thee!'

"Then naught can hurt me, shade or shine,
Nor evil thing touch me or mine,
Since thou with tenderness divine
Dost care for me!"

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL'S ENEMIES

"Be thou strong and very courageous."—Joshua 1:7.

These words of Jehovah to Joshua upon his succession of Moses, as the leader of Israel, were used on the occasion of the entrance of the children of Israel upon their new life after they, as the people of God, had crossed the Jordan. They would still have battles, more now than before, and perhaps more than they realized, they needed strength—they needed courage. The basis for their strength and courage was the promise of God. God had declared to Abraham that he would bring his seed into the land of Canaan, and would give it to them for a possession. Those who believed this promise would need a large measure of strength and courage.

God had sent Moses his servant to deliver them from Egypt, and to bring them as his people to the land which he sware unto their fathers should be theirs. It required a good deal of courage to come up out of the land of Egypt; and God had manifested his favor to them in the wilderness, by the blessings which came to them when they were faithful and obedient, and by chastisements when they failed and were disobedient and rebellious. Now they were entering upon the realization of the promises whose fulfilment had been anticipated. "Be strong, be courageous," they were admonished by Jehovah through Joshua. They had come into the promised land, and now they must war a good warfare against their enemies. God had not promised to give them amicable possession; they were to fight and conquer their foes.

As Israel was a typical people, so theirs was a typical warfare. It would have been terrible if they had thought that all those people whom they were commanded to destroy were thus to drop into a hell of torture unending! If the Israelites were told to be strong and of good courage in sending their enemies into such a hell, it would be a horrible thought! But when we perceive that the penalty of sin is death and not eternal torment and that "hell" is the condition of death, we view the matter in a different light. Whether men die by the sword or by pestilence or by consumption or by accident, it is merely the fulfilment of the divine sentence upon the whole race, which will continue to be fulfilled in God's own time and way. This gives a different aspect to the whole matter.

HOPE FOR THE AMALEKITES, HITTITES, ETC.

The wickedness of the Amalekites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites, etc., had come to the full. They had had some opportunities, some light, and the sinful course they had pursued should now come to an end. They, and all others that have gone down to the grave in ignorance and sin will, when Messiah takes his kingdom, come forth to resurrection possibilities and better, more favorable conditions. And as they in the past have had an experience with sin, they will in the future have an experience with good, and an opportunity to decide then between right and wrong, good and evil. We hope that there will be some of those peoples who will have profited by their experiences in the past, and will choose the good when the contrast is before them and the blinding influences removed.

ISRAEL'S ENEMIES TYPICAL

The children of Israel represented spiritual Israel. The enemies which they destroyed represented the enemies of the church. In the case of the church, we have come from a state of sin and degradation into harmony with God. With some this may have been a very prolonged journey, and with others it may have been shorter, because of greater faith and obedience. We reached the place of special blessing when we made a full consecration to God—we there entered into rest. "We who have believed do enter into rest," says the Apostle Paul. And this rest which we enter seems to have been typified by this "promised land" of Canaan.

But when we enter into this rest of faith we find certain powerful enemies that must be conquered. These enemies we find entrenched in our own bodies. In the typical peoples who were the enemies of Israel, those who were entrenched in strong fastnesses the Israelites found it very difficult to dis-

lodge and destroy; it was much easier to destroy others. So far as we know, the Israelites were long, long years—centuries perhaps—in thoroughly conquering the land and their enemies. It was not until the time of King David that these enemies were thoroughly subjugated. And so it is with the enemies in our flesh—we should war a good warfare against them. We must make no concessions to the flesh; all these enemies are to be exterminated—fought to the death.

The result of this warfare is death; either the death of the new creature or the death of the old creature. If the new creature fail to overcome, he will be exterminated—he will die the second death. Jehovah, in using the words of our text, is speaking more to us—the spiritual Israelites—than to Joshua and the natural Israelites; that is to say, we may make a still deeper application of his words than could fleshly Israel. But we cannot conquer in this fight alone. The Apostle Paul exclaims, "When I am weak, then am I strong," meaning, When I realize my own weakness and cannot successfully battle alone against the flesh and its infirmities, then am I strong in the Lord. I could not fight a good fight of mine own self. He realized the fulfilment of the promise of the Lord: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in [thy] weakness."

Surely this is the experience of all of God's "little ones." And the realization of this leads us to look to the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord, in order to strengthen our heart and to renew our endeavors, that we may be strong and of a good courage, and that finally by God's grace we may come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loves us and bought us with his own precious blood.

TRUE COURAGE VS. SPIRIT OF BRAVADO

Let us be of a good courage! There are various kinds of courage: One kind is born of egotism and self-reliance, another kind results from a spirit of recklessness, which fails to take a proper estimate of the difficulties to be encountered. But true courage, the courage which the Lord's Word enjoins upon his people, and which all spiritual Israelites are to seek to possess, is a courage which, while carefully noting and realizing the trials and difficulties before them, and recognizing their own insufficiency, looks to the Lord in faith for the needed assistance, trusting in his precious promises. This enables them to be strong and courageous in the presence of difficulties, dangers and obstacles which would appal those who are trusting merely in their own strength.

It will be noted that our Motto-text for this year—1914—is along this same line, and is a part of verse 9 of the chapter from which the text at the head of this article is taken. This will be a momentous year—a glorious year! Then let us all "be strong and very courageous"—strong in the Lord and in the power of his might! Greater is he who is on our part than all they that be against us! Let us put on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand in this evil day.

THE WEDDING FEAST

AUGUST 23.—Matthew 22:1-14.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not!"—Luke 13:34.

Here we have another parable of the kingdom. Today's lesson shows that the promises of God and his providences toward Israel under the Law Covenant were all designed to fit and prepare the Israelites to be God's holy nation, and especially to provide at the coming of Christ a sufficient number to constitute the elect church, Messiah's joint-heirs in the kingdom—his bride. The parable shows that only a few were "Israelites indeed," in whom was no guile—not enough to constitute the kingdom class; hence the call of this Gospel age, selecting from the Gentiles a sufficient number of saintly characters to be joint-heirs with the Jewish remnant in the Messianic kingdom.

The kingdom of heaven, otherwise styled the kingdom of God, is not to be an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly one, whose ruler, the glorified Christ, will not be an earthly king, but a heavenly being of the highest rank—of the divine nature. This kingdom, representing God and the heavenly rule, or dominion, is to be established amongst men for the eradication of sin. Its first work will be the binding of Satan, the "Prince of this world." Afterward all the works of darkness will be overthrown. The overthrow will at first cause a great time of trouble, following which, as the reign of righteousness progresses, the curse in its every form will give way before the blessings of Messiah's kingdom—until there shall be no more curse, no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying.

But before this heavenly kingdom can be established, it is a part of the divine decree and arrangement that there shall be a bride class selected from amongst men. These are begotten of the holy Spirit and are God's workmanship, in whom he works by the exceeding great and precious promises of the Scriptures and by the providences of life. Thus they are being transformed in mind and made ready for the glorious birth-resurrection by which they will be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," from earthly nature to heavenly nature. Thus they will enter into the joys of their Lord by becoming his bride class, his joint-heirs in his kingdom.

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE

For the development of this kingdom class the world has now been waiting since the days of Jesus, when by his death he opened up a new way of life and became the Advocate before the Father for all those desirous of being his disciples, his joint-heirs, his bride.

Today's lesson takes up the kingdom project at the time of our Lord's earthly ministry. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power [liberty or privilege] to become sons of God."—John 1:12.

Jehovah himself is the King who made a marriage for his son—arranging before the foundation of the world that there should be certain joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom. This marriage, of course, could not take place until the King's Son had come into the world and had made the way for his followers and for the kingdom of which he is to be king.

At the appropriate time God sent his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding; but they would not come. John the Baptist and his disciples did this work of calling to the attention of the Jewish people the fact that the King's Son was in their midst. He said, "There standeth one among you whom ye know not." (John 1:26) Again he said, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled." (John 3:29) John rejoiced to hear the voice of the Bridegroom. Prophetically he foretold that the calling of the bride class had come, although he himself could not be a member of it.

MADE LIGHT OF THE MESSAGE

Again other servants were sent forth. Jesus sent his disciples to the Jews, saying, "Tell them that are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage" feast.

But was the message of Jesus and his disciples received? Nay! The people, under the guidance of the scribes and the Pharisees, the theologians of that time, made light of the message and went their way—one to his farm, another to his merchandise, saying, We do not believe this Message respecting the kingdom. Some did even worse than this. They entreated these servants shamefully, spitefully, and slew them. Not only was Jesus slain by the unbelieving ones who had been invited to the feast, but his faithful disciples also were evilly treated and slain.

Then, as seen in another parable, Jehovah was wroth with that people Israel, and sent forth his armies, destroyed those murderers and burned up their city. The fact that it was the Roman army under Titus which destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70 did not make it any less the army of Jehovah, for he is able to make the wrath of man praise him and able to use whom he may please as his messengers, or servants.

GENTILES CALLED TO THE WEDDING

Meantime God said to his servants, the apostles, and to others through them, The wedding is provided, but the Jewish nation, which was especially invited, have not been found worthy of the honor. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage feast. So those servants went into the highways and gathered together as many as they found, and brought them in. Thus the wedding was provided with guests.

Highways represent public concourse, the world over. The Lord's ambassadors were no longer to restrict themselves to Jews, but were to make known to every people, kindred and tongue, the fact that God is now calling out of the world a little company, lovers of righteousness, to be followers of the Lamb and eventually to become joint-heirs with the Redeemer in his

kingdom. Be it noted that these ambassadors were not to intercept all the people in the highways, but merely to urge upon all those whom they met in the concourse, the great privilege of the open door to the wedding feast.

These were not all saintly, good; some of them, on the contrary, were bad. The apostles explain this, saying that not many great, not many rich, not many noble, but chiefly the poor, the mean things of this world, hath God chosen. The apostles speak, along the lines of our lesson, of the class that God is selecting from the world. No matter how mean, no matter how degraded, no matter how ignoble by nature—all who are willing to receive the grace of God may be made suitable for the wedding by the covering of the wedding garment, the righteousness of Christ.

Indeed, however noble or worthy many are naturally, they are still not fit for the presence of the King. All who attend this wedding must have on the wedding garment—must be covered with the merit of Christ's righteousness. The wedding is thus furnished with guests—all that the King had intended—every place filled. Thus and otherwise does the Lord indicate that the number of the elect is a definitely fixed one; and that as soon as the special number has been found, the call will cease.

INSPECTING THE GUESTS

The custom of the Jews, arranged by divine providence doubtless, was that at every wedding feast each guest was to put on a white wedding garment, covering his own garments. Thus all at the wedding were on an equal footing as respects dignity, because they were the guests of the host. So all who come to God's great feast provided through Christ must come, not through any worthiness of their own in the flesh, but acknowledging that they have an insufficiency of merit to be acceptable to God, and must accept the merit of Christ as making them worthy of the honor to which they aspire in responding to this invitation.

Each guest entering the house was supplied with the robe, and was expected to put it on immediately. For any one to appear without that wedding garment would be a mark of disrespect to the host who had provided it. Indeed, for any one to appear at the wedding without the robe would imply that he had taken it off; for no one was admitted without the robe. This is the picture given us in the parable. A guest was found there who had not on the wedding garment—one, therefore, who in disregard of his host had removed his wedding garment, the wearing of which was the condition of his admission.

The words, "When the king came in," signify an inspection just prior to the feast. Since the King of the parable is Jehovah himself, this would seem to mean that God takes note through the exhibition of divine justice in some manner of any one professing loyalty, yet disregarding the merit of Christ's death. Or, Christ might properly be understood to be referred to as the King in this instance; for at his coming he is to be invested with kingly authority and power by the heavenly Father, as our Lord himself indicates in the parables of the Pounds and the Talents. At his second advent, therefore, he tells us, he will himself inspect all those who pose as being his faithful servants—all those who are desirous of enjoying the wedding festival.

The man found without a wedding garment in the presence of the king we should understand to represent a class, and not merely one individual. So we might find just such a class today, professing to be followers of Christ, professing to be waiting for the marriage of the Lamb, professing to hope to enter into the joys of their Lord, yet telling us that they are no longer trusting in the merit of Christ's sacrifice for their standing with the Father. These have rejected Jesus as their Savior, their Redeemer, the Atoner for their sins. They merely retain him as their Teacher, and then, apparently, accept only a part of his teachings.

These are manifestly unfit to be members of the bride of Christ. Only the loyal, only the faithful, are to be of that class. The parable shows that all those who reject the merit of Christ's sacrifice will be rejected from the kingdom class. They are unable to say how they came in without a "wedding garment"; for they did not come in without it. No one was ever admitted into the fellowship of the spirit in the church which is the bride of Christ without first having on the wedding garment of Christ's merit, covering his imperfection. Those admitting thus that they have taken off the wedding garment are cast out summarily. The king said to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

THE OUTER DARKNESS

When our minds were filled with hallucinations of the dark ages, we read into this and into other Scriptures what they do not contain. We assumed that the class represented by the man without the wedding garment would be cast into eternal torment, and there suffer to all eternity. But now, examining the Scriptures more carefully, we have perceived that as all of these guests at the wedding came into the light of the wedding chamber from the darkness of the outside world, so the casting of one of them out of the light into the outer darkness would merely mean the taking from such a one the knowledge and the joys represented by the wedding-chamber light.

As for the outside world, we know that the Apostle John declares that the whole world lieth in darkness, "in the wicked one." We know also that as soon as the bride class shall have been completed, a great time of trouble will prepare the world for the blessings of Messiah's kingdom later on. During that trouble all those who are in the darkness will have weeping and gnashing of teeth—discontent, anguish, disappointment, etc., connected with the overthrow of many of their wrongly based human hopes and expectations.

Our Lord concluded the parable with the statement, "For many are called, but few are chosen." This does not mean, as we once supposed, that only an elect few will get any favor from God in the future, and that all the remainder of mankind will be eternally tortured. We must read it in harmony with the context. The Jewish nation was called, or invited, to the wedding—and failed, except the few "Israelites indeed." For eighteen hundred years the message has gone out into the highways, to one nation after another of the Gentiles, until many have more or less heard the call of the Gospel age. Yet only a few have accepted and have therefore come into the elect condition. And of those who come into this elect condition there will still be a class not properly appreciative which will be cast away, or rejected.

Again the Master drew attention to the matter, saying, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The little flock, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, will through their faithfulness become God's chosen people, his elect church, the bride of Christ. Then, later on, they with their Lord will be the heavenly Father's agency for blessing all the non-elect with the glorious opportunities of restitution to all the earthly blessings and good things lost through Father Adam's disobedience and fall. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs."

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GOD'S WORKMEN

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." —2 Timothy 2:15.

God's approval should be the highest aim of every one who professes to believe in him as the Creator, and especially of those who accept him as their Father and who claim to hold the precious relationship to him of children. His will should be their highest law, and it should be a part of their daily and hourly pleasure, as it is their privilege, to seek to know his will and to do it. This implies study, consideration—not a mere formality of thoughtless reading, or perfunctory worship, but the diligent use of every available means to learn what is his will.

The Apostle Paul gives Timothy the advice contained in our text, and urges him to be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." And the intimation is that the ability rightly to divide the Word of God is to be gained by the study of his Word. The truth of astronomy might give us some knowledge; yet we see that some who have devoted their entire lives to astronomy have lost sight of God, and have become atheists. Guided by the Word of God, any study may be helpful. But it must be viewed, considered, received, from the standpoint of the revelation of God.

The word workman suggests the thought of being engaged in service. This injunction of the Apostle applies to all who belong to the church of Christ. We are God's servants. A great work is going on; this work is the calling out of the church class from the world. The church that is called out is said to be the temple of God, whose "living stones" are being chiseled and polished and made ready for their places

in the building. We are the workmen. We are seeking to prepare ourselves for God's presence, for God's kingdom. This preparation is our first duty; we are to prepare ourselves and to help to prepare others.

TRUE CAUSE OF MUCH FAILURE

The fashioning of these "living stones" is the development of their characters. Each one thus engaged is working out his own salvation. We are God's laborers in doing this work in ourselves. But if we would have divine approval, we must have the divine wisdom—"which cometh down from above," and which we learn from the Word of God.—James 3:17.

Apparently a great many professing Christians, after they have given much time to the cultivation of their brain—spending years in seminaries—will eventually find that they have failed both to have the Lord's ideal accomplished in themselves and to do much good to others. This seems to be the result of a failure rightly to divide the Word of truth. In that day many shall say, Lord, Lord, we have prayed and taught and done many marvelous things in thy name! Some of these the Lord says he will not recognize as his elect. He may have a place in which he will use some of them, some day, yet for this special place he wishes those who are anxious to know and to do his will rather than to know how they may please men, or how they may receive large emoluments or honor of men. Those who are anxious to know his will are most sure to have his will done in them.

MISAPPLICATION OF SCRIPTURES

The expression, "rightly dividing the Word of truth," implies that the Word of truth may be studied, may be handled. We see many ways of handling, or dividing, the Scriptures. Many Scriptures applicable long ago are quoted as appropriately due now, and vice versa; and those which belong to the future are quoted as applicable now, or in the past. There is a general liability to error in not discerning how to divide them aright.

Rightly to divide the Word of truth, then, is to make such a prayerful study of it as will enable us to place things where they belong. For instance, if we fail to distinguish between the begetting of the holy Spirit, and the quickening of the holy Spirit, and our spirit birth, and get these all confused, we shall do harm. It is not merely the seeking to show a variety of doctrines, but the seeking to make clear what we give to others, that is the part of wisdom. The Apostle was showing Timothy that, as an elder of the church of Christ, he might present the different features of the truth in such a way as to confuse his hearers, who then would not know what they believed. Thus they would be in just the condition to accept whatever teaching any one brought them, especially if that one should happen to ridicule their belief.

This seems to be the condition of many today. Evidently there are many who have been serving or attempting to serve God, who have not been giving out "meat in due season," but who have been giving out truths in a very confused way. It is for us, then, to be on guard and seek carefully to follow the instruction of the Apostle, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." Do not mind so much what men may say or think, but seek the approval of God first.

It is proper for us to seek the approval of the holy, of the saintly; but God's approval should have the precedence. We must be workmen, not idlers and drones; for these will not have any place in the kingdom. God is calling to service now those who are willing to serve under disadvantageous conditions. We are, therefore, to remember that we are to be servants; and that unless we find the proper service, we cannot have a place in this company which God is training. If we wish his approval, as expressed in his Word, we are to see that the conditions as there outlined are fulfilled in our case. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." We are told to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." (1 John 2:15) We are not to set our hearts upon these things. Our hearts are to be set upon the doing of the Lord's will.

The Lord intimates that those who will be faithful to him will have the opposition of the world. "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." Therefore, if we have no opposition, we lack this evidence of acceptability with him. We are to rightly divide the Word of truth, and to see that our lives are in harmony with it. At the same time we are to seek to present God's Word to others, that they may enjoy the same privileges and blessings.

A DAY OF QUESTIONS

AUGUST 30.—Matthew 22:15-22.

"Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."—Verse 21.

Today's study shows us that the wicked vine-dressers, the unready guests, were so enamored of their own methods and theories as to make them really blind to the beauty of the divine plan as expressed by Jesus. We are not speculating about this. St. Peter, explaining to the Pentecostal inquirers, "I wot that in ignorance ye did it [crucified Christ], as did also your rulers." (Acts 3:17) St. Paul declared, "For had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." (1 Corinthians 2:8) Error, fostered by self-will and by plans and schemes not of God, always has a blinding effect, so much so that the Apostle declares that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not" the true message of God when it reaches them.

Even Christians, in proportion as they are influenced by error or selfishness and not filled with the holy Spirit, are blinded. Some see more, and some less, of the length, the breadth, the height and the depth of the love of God, which passeth all understanding. No wonder St. Paul prayed for us the opening of the eyes of our understanding wider and wider!—Ephesians 1:18.

Perceiving that the teachings of Jesus were influencing the masses, the worldly-wise (and spirit-blind) scribes and Pharisees, who knew the inconsistencies of their own teachings, thought that they could show up as inconsistent the teachings of Jesus. To this end they sent amongst the multitude some of their followers, to ask questions and to seek to entrap Jesus, to show the inconsistency of the hopes which he was inspiring in the people, and thus to discredit him with the multitude. The first of these was to seek to entrap him into saying something that would prove his disloyalty to the government and thus lead to his arrest as a seditious person, teaching contrary to Cæsar's law of taxation. On the other hand, if he advocated Cæsar's law, they thought that thus he would antagonize the public sentiment.

Jesus had a wisdom from above. In answer to their query, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?" He replied, "Why do ye tempt me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money." And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." No wonder they marveled at such an answer, and left him! Truly, "Never man spake like this man!"

THE THINGS THAT ARE CAESAR'S

Nor can we say that the Master merely dodged the question shrewdly. Some very rascally men are able to dodge questions and to have a laugh at the questioner's expense. But in this case the answer was complete—the truth, and the whole truth, in every sense of the word fully in harmony with all the teachings of the Master. His followers were instructed not to be seditious, not to be quarrelsome, faultfinding, but to be thankful, holy, happy, subject to "the powers that be." They were to recognize that the powers that be of the kingdoms of the present time are ordained of God, and not merely of men.

True, indeed, earthly kingdoms are not God's kingdoms, as they sometimes claim. True, indeed, they frequently are usurped empires and powers. True, indeed, they sometimes foster sin, iniquity, unrighteousness, and are largely, from outward appearances, the result of human scheming and wickedness. Nevertheless, the people of God are to recognize that Jehovah is the great Over-Lord; and that although it is a part of his program for the present to permit a reign of sin and death at the hands of sinful men, nevertheless he still exercises such a supervision—of hindering one or advancing the cause of another ruler—as justifies the statement that he ordains, authorizes or permits these kingdoms. Whatever, therefore, the heavenly Father has authorized or permitted, not one of his obedient children should for a moment think of resisting or overturning.

The Scriptures declare that God raiseth up and God casteth down; that he has at his disposal myriads who, filled with the spirit of anger, hatred, malice, strife, are ready, whenever an opportune moment comes, to exercise their power and to advance their own selfish interests. Whenever, therefore, the Lord wishes to make a change in earth's rulership and arrangements, he needs only to remove the restraining hand of

his providence, and forthwith evil influences will work the change. As for the people of God, they are all exhorted to be peace-makers, promoters of righteousness, living peaceably with all men, fully subject to "the powers that be," and recognizing them as of divine ordination, permission.

In the case of the Roman Empire, of which Cæsar was head, we note that God had prophetically foretold, centuries before, through the prophecy of Daniel, its rise to universal dominion. It was not, therefore, for Jesus or for any of his disciples to speak against representatives of that Roman power. If Rome ruled, Rome needed to be supported; and the method of support was, properly enough, through taxation. How just, then, were the words of Jesus, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's"! We remember that the Master himself paid tribute, instructing St. Peter, when they had no money, to catch a fish, from whose mouth he obtained the coin necessary for his taxation and that of Jesus.

RENDER UNTO GOD HIS DUE

Had the questioners been intent upon rendering to God their obligations due to him, they would have been in so different a frame of mind that, instead of seeking to entrap Jesus in his words, they would have been glad to be his disciples. What things, then, are God's? What do we owe to him? We answer that as his creatures we are his. Every talent and power we possess ought by right of justice to be used in the service of our Creator and for his praise.

Additionally, we who recognize the fact that we were sinners by nature, and that God's mercy has provided a redemption through Christ, should gladly present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, our reasonable service. This reasonable service is accentuated when we realize the goodness of God; namely, that he purposes to bless the whole world with the privilege of restitution to all that was lost by Adam and redeemed at Calvary. When we learn that the call of this Gospel age is with a view to permitting the followers of Jesus to be associated with him in his Messianic kingdom, we should be filled with reverence, as well as with astonishment. Realizing the possibilities of such a high calling, such a change of nature and attainment of glory, honor and immortality, we should render to God our little all, and realize that it is unworthy of divine acceptance, except as being worthy through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice. We are accepted only in the Beloved One.

RESISTING UNTO BLOOD

In full accord with all that has been said foregoing is the thought that we must not render unto Cæsar the things of God. Here lies the snare for many of God's people. They perceive that the friendship of the world can be bought only at the price of the sacrifice of truth. Increasingly they are convinced of the truth of the words of Scripture, "Marvel not if the world hate you"; "The darkness hateth the light"; etc. Even though they render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to every man his due—"honor to whom honor is due," etc.—nevertheless their standard is so different from that of the world, and their viewpoint of everything so different, that it breeds an antagonism, a conflict of interests.

So Jesus said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:18, 19) Increasingly they have impressed upon them the force of the Apostle John's words, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."—1 John 2:15.

All this signifies that the world's standards, customs, ambitions, views, etc., are so different from those inculcated by the spirit of the truth that it is impossible for these to fully harmonize the one with the other. "No man can serve two masters." Hence to serve the Lord with all our mind, soul and strength, to render him his dues, means to put ourselves crosswise with the views and sentiments of the world. This is the real test of Christian character. Only such as stand this test of "God first," loyalty to the principles which he inculcates, can hope to be members of the kingdom class which is now being selected.

In other words, rendering to God the things that are God's, will eventually cost us every earthly interest and prospect. But to the loyal, the faithful, God provides compensation. Instead of the world's smile which they lose, they receive the smile of the heavenly Father and the favor of their Redeemer. They have also the Master's promise of a hundredfold more in this present life in compensation for everything which they sacrifice for his cause, the cause of God, the cause of truth divine! And with this abundant compensation in the present life comes the assurance of everlasting life in the coming age, under its favorable conditions.

PHOTO-DRAMA TRIALS AND BLESSINGS

The DRAMA is sweeping over the country at a wonderful rate, being shown every day in approximately sixty cities. The audiences vary from one hundred to three thousand and more—usually, perhaps, averaging five hundred. Surely a great witness in defense of the Bible is going forth! We are having some excellent responses from the public. Many are being turned back from coldness, indifference, infidelity, atheism, to a faith in God and in his Word superior to anything ever before enjoyed.

The opening of the DRAMA in seven new places each day necessitates our using the telegraph freely. We notify the friends at each place as to what days are available, and inquire whether or not the local friends are able and willing to present the DRAMA to the public in their city free. A noble response is met with everywhere. Those who cannot participate express regrets.

Thus will be seen the importance of having a DRAMA Committee in each class and of knowing just what the class is financially able and desirous of doing toward the presentation of the DRAMA. Then, when an offer of dates is received from the I.B.S.A. DRAMA Office the committee, having already looked into the matter of public auditoriums, is ready to make inquiry, and, if possible, to obtain the use free for the DRAMA as a public benefit, worth more than a year in college to each citizen. Not more than the cost of the light should be charged for any publicly-owned auditorium.

Theatre people properly approached see that the DRAMA will give their theatre wider publicity than anything else. It will draw a new audience of people of the better class, such as rarely attended the theatre. To secure this publicity, theatres will be glad, regardless of their regular rates, to give a very low price for a number of days, especially in the dull season, when there is no expense except for electric current and janitorage. Having determined your course, advise the I.B.S.A. DRAMA, Brooklyn, as quickly as possible, just what you wish to do.

We are no longer able to proffer assistance beyond the lectures, music, picture operator, superintendent, posters, window cards, publicity aids and free scenario. The immense expense the Association is under may be imagined when we say that forty thousand dollars worth of blank paper has already been used for the printing of the free Scenario; and the printing, folding, bundling and freighting has cost still more! Otherwise, how glad we would be to meet all the expenses!

USE THE SPIRIT OF A SOUND MIND

However, we are learning that God's way is the wiser way—that God's people are more blessed by the DRAMA when the cost for its local presentation falls on them, and when they serve it as ushers and phonograph operators. The self-sacrifice incidental to all this brings a rich blessing. So we have nothing of which to complain.

Our enemies endeavor to hinder the work by falsely reporting that the Association is very rich—thus hindering charitably disposed people from proffering aid. The fact that we never solicit money seems so strange, even to our friends, that some have gotten the same impression. One dear sister when ushering was asked by a visitor to the DRAMA how he could best give some money to the I.B.S.A. for the forwarding of this great work. The usher answered him that there was no way, and that the money was not needed. If our friends are thus foolish or misinformed, how can we blame our enemies for saying the same things, which they would like to have others believe to be true, so that, all gifts being cut off, our work would stop? However, we are leaving the matter in the Lord's hands. If the funds cease, the work must cease proportionately. Realizing divine supervision, we shall be thoroughly content to have it so.

While the DRAMA brings great blessings and privileges in conjunction with opportunities for service and self-denial, it also brings severe trials to the dear brethren. All are so anxious to serve, and all so independent in their feelings, that it sometimes means as many different plans and arrangements as there are members in the class. Meekness, patience, brotherly kindness, forbearance, love, are qualities which seem to be greatly needed, and many opportunities for their cultivation may be found. So far as we know, friends are passing through these little ordeals with a blessing—an enlargement of the heart and a broadening of their sympathies. It is a

time for putting into operation the Apostle's words, "Yea, all of you be subject one to another."—1 Peter 5:5.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Before the opening of the DRAMA the superintendent must expect to look out for the newspaper publicity, to see that the class has gotten out in good localities the posters sent them, that the DRAMA volunteer matter has arrived, that they have distributed it early in the week preceding the opening, and that the window cards are put out freely in every part of the city—all of the class participating in this work. He will also see the ushers selected by the class, and if any of them are too old or too young or are unsuitable, he may make some kind suggestions as to what to do. The very best, wisest, most intelligent members of the class should be the ushering committee. The class will also look out, amongst their number, for a suitable floor manager, or chief usher, and suggest one or two names, either brother or sister, for this service, according to circumstances. Frequently brethren are unobtainable on account of business requirements.

The duty of the chief usher, or floor manager, will be to see that the other ushers are well placed and understand their duties, that perfect order is kept, and that the public is being, not only kindly, but graciously met. They are for the moment your guests. In the superintendent's absence the moving picture operator will be his and our representative in your city, having charge of the DRAMA to see that it is put on exactly as arranged for, with not a single alteration or deviation. Any inefficiency or anything you think unwise may be called to the attention of these brethren and reported to us. But meantime trust them as the Society's representatives ,and co-operate. They in turn, are directed to show every consideration to the wishes of the class in anything that will not conflict with the positive rules governing the DRAMA.

In advance of the DRAMA expect a sister, whose stay will be only about one day. She will come to give instructions on the phonograph. Two, and only two, volunteer phonographers may learn; and they should be bright—not too nervous. The sister will remain long enough to show one performance and to see her pupils operate at one exhibition. This will be plenty of time, yet none too much. So have the pupils ready, and give them every opportunity to learn their work thoroughly.

So far as possible the ushering sisters will wear white dresses, to help distinguish them from the audience. Additionally they should make a little head-piece of uniform style.

One neat design consists of two connecting rosettes of white satin ribbon.

The ushers should, if possible, have little prayer meetings frequently, requesting divine blessings on their efforts to show forth, in their words, in their actions, in their looks, the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. They should co-operate thoroughly with the chief usher and with the whole spirit of the DRAMA.

Children under twelve years old should not be admitted, except when accompanied by parents, teachers or guardians. Even then they should be seated at the rear under surveillance of the ushers. Adults should have the less preference always. Children can get out for matinees; but some adults have evenings only. Babes in arms should never be admitted. If an exception to this rule were ever made, the mother should be asked to sit near the door and should be made to promise to take the child out immediately if it cries. Do everything to preserve quiet and order. Avoid frequent and excited calls for order. If any one is seen to be rude or boisterous, approach the person kindly and whisper a loving word in season respecting the Golden Rule and the rights of others.

RE THE FINALE

Following the fourth part of the DRAMA comes the finale sermon. On that occasion the speaker will call attention to the regular meetings of the I.B.S.A. in your city, giving the address; or, if you think worth while, cards bearing that address might be distributed to the people at the close of the service. It is not wise to discuss local meetings during the showing of the DRAMA.

No books are to be hawked, or sold, in the ordinary sense of the term. With the opening of each DRAMA a set of books is to be sent, merely for use as samples until the close of the DRAMA, when they may be sold and the money turned over to the chosen representative of the class, to whom they have been charged. Orders received meantime should be sent in promptly, directly to THE WATCH TOWER Office, through the representative of the class.

We avoid special effort to sell the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES lest any should get the impression that the sale of the books is the object of the DRAMA.

At the last, or finale meeting, the speaker will ask for addresses. Afterward he will take charge of those addresses, distributing them amongst those whom he deems best qualified for the calls. The matter is left entirely in his hands, but give him the best advice you can of the capability of those who desire to participate. The good of the Lord's cause alone is sought. Let us all sink any personal feeling. The Editor would be glad if his own personality did not come so much into the DRAMA, but it has seemed absolutely necessary for two reasons:

(1) The public would take comparatively little interest in anything gotten out by a religious society which they did not know—they would esteem it something "cheap" and not "worth while."

(2) If the personality were not made prominent, we would be charged with hypocrisy—deceiving the people. We want the people to see the DRAMA unprejudiced, that they may judge for themselves where the hypocrisy and misrepresentation come from.

The class will please introduce to the superintendent, the person whom they nominate to be the floor manager, or head usher, and two sisters to learn phonograph operating to relieve each other if necessary.

PHOTO-DRAMA CLASS EXTENSION

We are not yet ready to give full particulars, but we are planning how the brethren who have been engaged in class extension work can prosecute the same in conjunction with the PHOTO-DRAMA. In our next issue we hope to be able to outline this work fully. To operate a DRAMA properly there should be at least three brethren with each of the three parts—nine for the DRAMA complete—one to operate the stereopticon; one to operate the phonographic lectures, oratorios, hymns, etc.; one to serve as usher and general order-keeper. More could be used, but three will do.

Part I. would be presented in a town on Sunday, either in the morning, afternoon or evening; or, if the interest and the population justified, it could be presented all three of these times. But after it has been shown, it should go to the next town, and then to another and another—keeping on continuously from town to town, village to village, schoolhouse to schoolhouse, court house to court house, public hall to public hall. Following it the next day or the next Sunday or the next session, as the case might be, Part II. would be going on and on. Following this would be Part III. As soon as the three presentations have been made, another set of brethren should be ready to take up a series of chart talks on the Bible, and, later on, to invite the interested to regular Dawn Circles.

These DRAMAS for the smaller villages and country places will not have the finest pictures now shown in the regular presentation of the DRAMA; but those used will be elegant, nevertheless. The story will be just the same, and the value to each individual, we doubt not, just as great. We may be sure that country folk will attend the DRAMA, and talk about it and read about it, as much or more than do their city cousins.

We are preparing a special stereopticon, which can be used by attachment of a cord to an ordinary electric light fixture, and can be, if necessary, transformed quickly so as to use acetylene gas—obtainable from the reservior of an automobile.

We are giving all these particulars now so that you can think the matter over. Classes that have been carrying on class extension work and believe they are able to carry on this new work, financing the expenses connected with the small halls, schoolhouses, etc., will please discuss the matter, decide upon it and advise us at once. If not sure that you will be able to manage the matter, better wait awhile and make sure. Let those be served first who are sure that they are ready, willing, anxious to assist in this great work.

THE "EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFITS

Having perfected our arrangements, we stopped the printing in order to add the following:

"EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFIT NO. X

Any of our readers desiring to purchase for his own use the full set of 96 DRAMA lectures (three Parts, two hours each) with nine choice introductory, intermission and closing hymns and a portable phonograph, with a carrying case, can have the entire outfit for $38.50

"EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFIT NO. Y

This outfit is the one especially intended for the DRAMA EXTENSION described foregoing. Its three Parts require only the same number of lecture and music records as foregoing; but, because of public use, each Part must have its own Phonograph, each Part its own Stereopticon, etc. We therefore show each Part complete in itself, as follows:

Part I. includes one Primo Stereopticon for electric current—Oneida Lens (three for varying distances); special price $20.00

Variable Rheostat (five amp., ten amp., or fifteen amp.) may be effective for house current or for heavy current arc lights 6.00
Attachment for Acetylene Gas or Presto Light (useful in places where there is no electric current, but where gas can be taken from an automobile tank)..... 4.00
DRAMA stereopticon slides, beautifully tinted, with special carrying box and carrying case..... 38.00
One portable Phonograph, one Operator's Book, Lecture and Hymn Records for Part I., and carrying case.. 19.50
Total cost of Part I., "EUREKA DRAMA" No. Y.. $87.50
Additional would be the expressage from Brooklyn.

The Society would furnish posters, window-cards and free Scenario, and would supply the bound Scenario for sale in any quantity at one-half retail prices.

Parts II. and III. would cost exactly the same as the above, the entire three Parts amounting to.....$262.50
Needless to say, all the prices here quoted are extremely low. Nevertheless it runs into a great deal of money to provide these "EUREKA DRAMAS" in quantities. For instance, we are preparing for orders from at least one hundred classes, which would run the cost into $26,250, aside from packing, shipping, clerical work, free scenario, free PHOTO-DRAMA announcements, posters, etc. It would afford us great pleasure to announce this all free on demand, but expenses already depleting the treasury forbid such a course.

Those who desire to purchase the DRAMA outright may do so. Others may have the Parts on loan (subject to return to the Society on demand if not being used) if they will deposit $30 for each Part, $90 for the complete set of "EUREKA DRAMA" No. Y. On the return of the DRAMA this payment will be refunded, less a proper charge for broken slides, repairs, expressage, etc.

In writing to us on this subject of DRAMA EXTENSION, please address, I. B. S. A., "EUREKA DRAMA," 124 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N. Y.

INTERESTING LETTERS

RE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION

Dear Brother Russell:—

I want to thank you; oh, I want to thank you so much, for the privilege of seeing the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION! I had never thought to live to see the everlasting Gospel preached to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people!

Yet so it is. Our Boston audience is cosmopolitan. Some are not able to understand English; some cannot read; yet all are reached. All have the Gospel preached unto them. Words cannot tell you how my heart rejoices! How near, how blessed, how real, these things are to me!

Last Sunday as I was making my way to a box, an usher said to me, "We have strict orders to allow no one in the boxes." I said, "Oh dear! what shall I do? I cannot take a seat while strangers are being turned away!" She said, "But you cannot see the pictures there." I answered, "I can see fairly well, and I can hear splendidly, and best of all I can see that great audience having the everlasting Gospel preached to them."

Surely they are being prepared for the manifestation of the sons of God and the blessing of all the families of the earth! The Drama is put so wisely, so kindly, that no one can take offense. When some great truth is brought out, then always the view from the other side is taken, as some pleasing picture is thrown across the screen. Thus much wisdom, much love is shown.

Our ushers must find their work quite a physical strain, but all, I am sure, wish to show the politeness that comes from a heart fully consecrated to follow in the Master's steps—laying down life for the world. I love to think that we are dealing with our children of the next age! What privileges, what joys, are ours!

I love to think of that audience as one day catching up the mighty song begun in heaven, and extending to every creature on the earth, praising him who is worthy of every adoration! And so, dear Brother, we thank God most heartily, and are glad to co-operate even in the smallest way.

Your sister in the most blessed Faith, F. E. RILEY.

TOWER A PARTICULAR MEANS OF GRACE

My Dear Brother Russell:—

For some time I have been thinking of writing to tell you how much I have been helped and stimulated by THE WATCH TOWER, but have refrained from doing so, partly because I did not want to take up your time. Like the two disciples of old, however, my heart so burns within me that I feel I must express my deep gratitude for the "meat in due season" that is so bountifully served to the Lord's people by you.

Many of the articles seem to have been like a message direct from the Lord himself to me; and, in consequence, my heart goes out to him in loving gratitude, and to you also, as his faithful messenger.

Often, the Lord has, in response to prayer for guidance in various matters connected with the "daily round," shown me, through one of your articles in a current TOWER, quite clearly and definitely the course he would have me pursue. This has been so marked that I am convinced that the Lord, knowing the needs of his people, has made THE WATCH TOWER a very particular means of grace and help.

This thought has been confirmed to me in another way: Some time ago, under an extra pressure of work—harvest work—I allowed my regular morning reading of the VOLUMES and TOWERS to lapse, and I soon found, to my cost, that my rest of heart and trust in the Lord were being very easily disturbed, and for a little time I wondered why this should be. But a remark of yours to the effect that the first and most important work that every one of the Lord's people should engage in, is the making of his own calling and election sure, enabled me to view the matter of work for the Lord as he would have me see it. Since that time the regular, daily reading has brought me an ever-increasing peace and rest in the Lord and an ever-increasing joy, and, consequently, strength in his service.

Your untiring labor of love for the Lord and the brethren is a constant encouragement to me to serve in like manner; and I thank God upon every remembrance of you, and particularly as I remember you daily at the throne of grace. With much love, I am

Your brother by his grace, GEO. T. R. SWAIN.—*Eng.*

SURELY, USE EVERY OPPORTUNITY

Dear Brother Russell:—

I thought I would write you for information and advice. We had the pleasure of spending three days with our dear Brother T—— in our old haunts—Lima and Van Wert. There we met some of our old friends and they were surprised to see us. They all thought that I had long filled a drunkard's grave. But thanks be to our Lord for his mercy toward me!

While in Lima I called on a friend who is now one of the leading business men in that city. He had done all in his power to get me on the sober path, but he did no good. So we told him and his friends of our experience and how we had found the truth and how it had made me free from Satan's bondage.

Oh, how happy he was! Then he urged me to give a public talk to let them all know, in Mendon, Ohio, where we once lived. So this is what I would like to have some advice on. We thought that it would be good to use for our subject, "How I Became a Sober Man," telling all our experience, how we came to learn the truth, bringing in God's great plan of the ages, and after the meeting pass the literature.

This Lima man would go with us, also a former saloon keeper who is about to symbolize his consecration.

May the Lord bless and keep you! Pray for me.

In the service of our King, C. B. H.

CREDULITY FEEDS UPON LITTLE

Dear Brother Russell:—

Since reading Brother Baker's letter in a recent WATCH TOWER, "I feel it borne in upon me," as our Quaker friends say, to write you. Had the brother stopped to think he might, like many of us, have recalled how he had seen a crowd of children frightened at the suggestion that the "school-killer" or some other goblin, terrible to the childish imagination, was coming. The children of believers do not hear about the "bogey-man" perhaps, but they hear and read about demons, and their imaginations are as susceptible as those of less favored little people, and it does not require more than a shadow to start a wave of hysteria. But were it proven that demons did appear, what would they have to do? Can they touch the "Lord's anointed"?

Regarding the case of the brother mentioned, who knows that he was not already insane when he went to the meetings of the society named? It is a point that has come under my observation, that often persons "change their religion," as well as become over-zealous in attendance upon church serv-

ices, before their relatives or acquaintances discover their mental impairment; so they say "They have gone insane over religion." The source may be that in themselves they feel a loss, a sense of insufficiency, and in searching for help turn to any or all forms of faith. I am sure we do not wish to give the demons more glory, credit and notoriety than we can help! Only a week ago a bright, attractive woman was brought to the hospital, and to my usual question: "What do you think is the cause?" put to two of the family separately, the prompt reply from each was, "Russellism." They were shown that she had been insane seven years before she attended a meeting.

This is the third case in which this cause was given without any hesitation, and in each case the fallacy of the reasoning was made apparent to the relatives. Credulity is such a common weed! and it flourishes because it requires so little to feed upon. But "O, the blest morning already is here!"

Your sister in the glorious hope,

MARY CHRISTIANCY (M.D.).
Of State Hospital for Insane.

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VIEW FROM THE TOWER

The long expected shaking of the social earth is, we believe, already in progress. The great war for which Europe has been drilling its troops, preparing its treasuries and armaments, is shaking every nation of the world, financially, socially, politically. Strong as the nations feel themselves to be, all tremble in dread at the results of the conflict now in progress. Only the Bible can or does speak authoritatively respecting results. In the same breath it tells of disaster and of blessings—disaster to the nations, but ultimate blessings to the people through the new government of Messiah's kingdom.

St. Paul, referring to our day and to present conditions, declares the Lord's message, "Yet once more will I shake, not the earth only, but also the heavens." By inspiration the Apostle informs us that this will be the last great shaking which the world will ever have, because in this troubled time in the early dawn of the Millennium, everything shakable will be shaken and destroyed so thoroughly that nothing will remain except that which is unshakable—that which will fully have the divine approval. The Apostle says that the only thing remaining unshakable will be the kingdom of God in the hands of The Christ—Head and body.—Hebrews 12:18-27.

We should not get the thought that the shaking of the nations is just beginning, but rather that the shaking that has been in progress for some time is now reaching its violent stage. For years Europe has been trembling with occasional violent revolutionary shocks; but now it is preparing for the great shock, the great "earthquake," as the Bible symbolically styles it.—Revelation 16:18.

Knowledge is power. For the past fifty years in particular knowledge has been preparing the masses of humanity, and their power has been growing apace. Proportionately the errors, superstitions and serfdoms of the past have been obliged to yield. A social revolution has proportionately progressed, different in its kind from anything of the past. Socialism is a revolution based upon increase of knowledge, even though, as we shall seek to demonstrate, much of its reasoning is fallacious, and much of its work likely, in the future, to be terribly injurious; in fact, if not eventually overruled by Christ's kingdom, nothing would escape its misguided destructiveness.

NATIONS HURRYING TO ARMAGEDDON

Europe is honeycombed with Socialism, which, like yeast, is fermenting the entire social fabric. Kings and emperors dare not oppose it too openly, and all of their secret intrigues have failed to hinder its development. The general war now begun has inspiration from different quarters. Politics have to do with it—a desire to enlarge national boundaries. Religion has something to do with it—the Greek and the Roman Catholic churches being opponents, the sympathies and prejudices of the people are directed accordingly.

But Socialism is, we believe, the main factor in the war now raging and which will be earth's greatest and most terrible war—and probably the last. Socialism is related to the war by the fact that kings and emperors hope that patriotism and self-defense will cement the interests and sympathies of their peoples, now tending to disintegrate under the influence of Socialism. They would rather risk a general war than face a social revolution.

Already press reports tell us that in Russia patriotic enthusiasm is healing dissension. They tell us further that the differences between the Nationalists and the Ulsterites of Ireland are being forgotten in the presence of the war crisis, which has involved Great Britain. Doubtless the same is true in Germany to a considerable extent. The various political factions are ignoring their differences in the presence of a national danger. Austria-Hungary, four distinct peoples with varying interests and centrifugal tendencies, will doubtless be welded together in self-defense. Similarly, the discontented of France and Italy are having their attention diverted temporarily. For a time, at least, the peace propaganda and the determination of the internationals to oppose the war is drowned by public sentiment.

THE WAR CLOUD'S SILVER LINING

But after the shock of battle—What? Such a war as is now progressing will surely bring no great victory to any single nation or to any combination of nations. The winners in the war will surely pay a high price for every victory. Civilization, falsely styled Christendom (Christ's kingdom), drenched with blood and terribly impoverished at the end of the war, will have been only partially shaken. The great Armageddon battle of the Scriptures will have been only partially fought. The remnants of armies, returning to their homes sour and discouraged with defeat or costly victory, will be war-sick and mad against their rulers who led to the carnage. Then the great Armageddon of the Bible may be expected. Every man's hand will be against his neighbor. Various factions and parties will proclaim panaceas, and will endeavor to force them upon the public. As a result, foretold in prophecy, "there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation."—Daniel 12:1.

The shaking process will continue, the Apostle tells us, until Messiah's unshakable kingdom shall assert itself and take control of the world's affairs. The Lord through the Prophet Haggai tells us this, saying, "I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." (Chapter 2:7) All people really desire peace, joy, happiness, blessing, such as God purposes to provide through Messiah's kingdom. The world really wants what God purposes to give them; but they do not comprehend their needs, and are seriously misled as to the methods by which they might be obtained.

We as Bible students are coming more and more to appreciate the fact that the divine plan presented in the Bible is wonderful in its simplicity and its comprehensiveness. More and more we are coming to see that our error in the past has been that we studied not the Bible, but the creeds—and correspondingly had darkness instead of light.

SYMBOLIC SHAKING AND BURNING

Note again St. Paul's quotation of the Lord's words, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." (Hebrews 12:26) We have seen what the shaking of earth signifies as respects society, governments, social order. In the same symbolic language of prophecy the heavens represent the ecclesiastical systems, as the earth represents the social. The meaning of the Lord's words is, therefore, clear; the coming trouble is not to be merely one upon the world of mankind, but in a very special sense it is to signify a shaking of the church—the ecclesiastical, or spiritual, or heavenly powers.

There are doubtless saints in every church, in every sect, in every party. And these alone constitute the true church, the saints of God—"the church of the first-borns, whose names are written in heaven." (Hebrews 12:23) The masses of Christians of all denominations, according to this prophecy, will be shaken—shaken in faith, shaken from their self-conceit, superstitions and bigotries. Only the true church, only those who are in vital union with Christ, only the saints, will remain unshaken in the strenuous storm described by the Apostle.

While Socialism has been shaking the political earth for the past thirty years, other forces have been shaking with great severity the ecclesiastical heavens. Inquire where we may, we find that not only ignorance and superstition have been letting go their hold upon all Christians, but additionally many of God's professed people have been shaken loose from faith in a divine revelation—many even shaken loose from faith in a personal God. Indeed, it is the habit of Christian ministers to boast amongst themselves that they have lost faith in the Bible—under the influence of what is known as higher criticism, formerly styled infidelity.

Probably not more than one in ten of all the Protestant ministers of the world would today acknowledge that he still holds fast his faith and confidence in the Bible as God's inspired message. The other nine-tenths, if cross-questioned.

would privately admit that they had lost their hold, or been shaken loose, and perhaps would boast of it even in public. Others, through fear of loss of prestige or salary, would seek to dodge the question and give evasive answers.

The shaking has proceeded from the clergy and the college-bred, through the professors and the text-books, down to the high schools, and, to some extent, the grammar departments of the public schools. Everything that can shake the faith of the people in respect to the inspiration of the Bible seems to be at work, and extremely few anywhere are found lifting up their voices and their pens in defense of the divine revelation and a personal God.

Let no one think that the shaking of the ecclesiastical heavens is ended. The Bible pictures the culmination as a sudden catastrophe which will awaken and set free all in Babylon who are the Lord's people—"Israelites indeed," without guile.—John 1:47.

"THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS"

The shaking of the heavens and the earth mentioned by St. Paul, corresponding with the shaking mentioned by the Prophet (Haggai 2:7), is referred to under a different figure in St. Peter's writings. Following the style of some writers of today, who tell us of a general European conflagration, St. Peter describes the end of the nominal church systems of our day under the figure of a fire. The heavens being on fire shall pass away with a great noise—great disputation, confusion, etc.; "the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up," writes St. Peter. "The fire of that day shall try every man's work of what kind it is," writes St. Paul.—2 Peter 3:10; 1 Corinthians 3:13.

Those who have built with gold, silver and precious stones supplied by the divine message and its promises, will survive the conflagration, because their faith and hope and relationship to God are indestructible. But all those who have built with wood, hay and stubble of human tradition and churchianity will find their work utterly destroyed in the fire of that day. All their hopes, all their anticipations, will be utterly gone. "Yet themselves shall be saved, so as by fire." (1 Corinthians 3:11-15) Then he explains that God will save this class because they have been truly consecrated Christians, who have built their false hopes and wrong expectations upon the sure foundation—Christ and his redeeming work.

The passing away of the present symbolic heavens, or ecclesiastical powers, will leave the place of spiritual control to the "new heavens"—the church in glory. The passing away of the present social earth will give place to the new order of things styled "the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:13) The new earth will be this same planet, but under new conditions, new social arrangements, provided by the Messianic kingdom. At that time the prophecy of Haggai will begin to be fulfilled—the portion which declares "the desire of all nations shall come." That new earth condition is pictured by St. Peter most beautifully, saying:

"Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, as before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must receive [retain] until the Times of Restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-23.

"Soon shall restitution glory
Bring to earth a blessed rest;
And the poor, and faint, and weary
Shall be lifted up and blest.

"Just beyond the coming trouble
See the reigning Prince of Peace!
Lo! God's kingdom now is coming,
And oppression soon must cease.

"Tell how Eden's bloom and beauty
Once again shall be restored,
Making all man's wide dominion
As the Garden of the Lord.

"He's now gath'ring out his jewels,
Those who with him soon shall reign;
And earth's weeping and sad farewells
Soon shall change to joyous strain."

CONTROL OF THE TONGUE A NECESSITY

"I say unto you, that every idle [unprofitable or pernicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."—Matthew 12:36.

Our Lord was addressing some of the scribes and Pharisees who were trying to "catch him in his words"—to take advantage of technicalities of language. In their endeavor to oppose him, those scribes and Pharisees were doing everything they could to discomfit or vanquish him in his reasoning, even going to the extent of using arguments which they did not really believe. This is a very dangerous procedure. No matter how just we think our cause to be as a whole, we are not to resort to any misuse of language to uphold what we believe to be the truth.

Possibly those Pharisees might have said amongst themselves, "We must use strong arguments to keep ahead of that Nazarene. He uses strong language himself. We must hold up our end of the controversy, and not show the white feather." But this position did not justify their conduct. Since justice is the foundation of the throne of God, any attempt to take advantage of another in any manner whatever will surely bring its own punishment.

From our Lord's comments at various times on the subject of the tongue we realize that in his day there must have been some seriously wrong condition prevailing amongst those with whom he came in contact. The scribes and Pharisees attributed evil power to him, and declared that he was the tool of Satan—that Satan was speaking through him, etc. At first our Lord told them in a general way that they deceived themselves. Later, he reproved them severely and showed the fallacy of their arguments. In connection with our text he declared that by their words they should be condemned—be dealt with, corrected in righteousness and brought to true reformation, or else perish in the second death.

THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

Human beings are the only earthly creatures that can talk—whether orally or in writing or otherwise. More and more the people of God realize the wisdom of the Apostle James' statement that although the tongue is a little member, yet it is the most dangerous of all, because it has the widest influence. If a man sin not with his tongue, he is a perfect man. (James 3:2) We cannot estimate the possible results of our words. This influence may reach even to the ends of the earth. Therefore we are to consider carefully what we may say, in order to determine whether our words will glorify God or whether they will dishonor him—whether they will stir up good thoughts and impulses in the minds of others or whether they will stir up that which is evil.

In his wisdom God has seen fit so to create us that our conduct of today has much to do with our character of tomorrow. Thus we are either making or breaking character continually. It is well that all should know this fact. Not only worldly people, but Christians also, should understand this principle; for Christians are now on trial for glory, honor and immortality. Therefore by neglecting to weigh carefully their words they might lose the great prize for which they are striving.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

By way of emphasis our Lord declared that every idle word—every unprofitable utterance—must be accounted for in a day of reckoning. With the church, we understand the Scriptures to teach that this day of reckoning is this Gospel age. Daily are we to go to our heavenly Father and say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us." Not only must we render up our account daily, but at the end of our course there will be a general summing up. By this we do not understand that at the end of our race course we shall be lined up and questioned about every word of our experience, but that each one who comes into contact with the truth is either building up character or else breaking it down, and that his character at the end of his probation will determine his reward. As a pupil daily learns his lessons and prepares himself for the final examinations at the end of the year, when there is a general testing of his knowledge, so with the pupils in the school of Christ. Day by day our Master deals with us; but at the end of our course there is to be a summing up.

Doubtless there are in every one of us some things that are disapproved of the Lord; for we all have the treasure of the new mind in earthen vessels and therefore cannot do as we would. But we have pledged ourselves to serve the Lord and to be loyal in doing his will. Therefore he is dealing with us now. In so doing, he warns us that the tongue is a very important member of our body, and that we are to be careful how we use it; for it will have a bearing upon the final decision in the end of this Gospel age, when the returns are brought in. Then it will be determined whether we are worthy of the highest honor—joint-heirship with our Savior—or whether we shall

be servants to that class or whether we shall be unworthy of life upon any plane of existence.

OUR LORD'S ESTIMATE OF SLANDER

But there is also a reckoning with us now. Our Lord declares that the tongue is so important a member that it represents our hearts more accurately than does anything else. The hand might do a good deed, yet the heart might be very different from the hand. In fact, the hand might not express the real sentiment of the heart at all. But the tongue is sure to give utterance to what is really in the heart. Therefore by our words we are daily either building up or tearing down character.

There is a spirit which shoots out bitter words. From the standpoint of the Lord, this is murder. Thus at the end of the Jewish age the scribes and Pharisees criticised and slandered our Lord. Although from their knowledge of the law they knew that they would be accountable for their actions, yet they did not appreciate the fact that they would be judged by their words.

So will it be in the world's judgment day—the Millennium. Mankind will be held responsible for the work of their tongues. But they will have a more favorable opportunity then than if judged now; forces will then be at work which will give them a more prompt judgment; and therefore they will learn their lessons quickly. They will have a responsibility for their words. Those that "knew not will be beaten with few stripes"; but those who "knew and did not" act according to their knowledge, "will be beaten with many stripes."

SPECIAL BRIDLES FOR THE TONGUE

Under stress of sudden temptation the Lord's people, who are now on judgment, might impulsively say that which is not pleasing to the Master. But we must learn not to speak thoughtlessly; we must learn to weigh our utterances. Since we are servants of God, we should ever take heed to our ways, in order to render the best possible service. We are not merely to have a good will to do that which is right; we are to seek to bridle our tongues. Whatever vows or resolutions or restraints we may seek to put upon our tongues may be considered as bridles, by which we are determined to bring ourselves into full subjection to the will of God.

So long as Satan and his demon host are at large, the Lord's people will do well to take heed to their ways, that they sin not with their tongue. Satan and his angels are seeking to subvert those who have given themselves to the Lord and to catch them in their words. So while we are in their presence we must be especially on guard, that they may not entrap us. As the Psalmist says, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked [One] is before me."

AN IMPORTANT LESSON FOR ALL

Although our Lord declared that men should give account for every pernicious word, yet he referred to the thoughts behind the words. It was the attitude of heart that distressed him. He knew the attitude of heart displayed by the scribes and the Pharisees would bring injury upon them.

Amongst the Lord's people there is nothing more important than that they should learn to be very just. While it is right to be loving, kind, generous, yet justice is the very foundation of character. All love and kindness not based upon justice are neither satisfactory nor pleasing to the Lord. In dealing with others, a child of God will not think, What will my fellow-men let me take from them? but, What are the rights of others, and what would my heavenly Father have me do?

It is very natural for one to recognize his own rights in any matter, but the fallen nature does not so quickly perceive the rights of others. Therefore one of the most important lessons for the Lord's people to learn is to do unto others as they would have others do unto them—simple justice.

We fear that many of the Lord's dear people have not fully realized that obedience to the rules which govern the new nature means absolutely the "Golden Rule" on their part toward all others. They must not do to others what they would not have others do to them. It is the duty of the new creature to bring the body into such subjection that justice shall rule in every act and word, and so far as possible in every thought. One must be just in his thoughts before he can properly be just in his dealings. Whoever thinks unjustly will act unjustly in spite of endeavors to the contrary.

THE TREASURE STORED IN OUR HEARTS

As we reflect that the church is standing before the Bar of Divine Judgment, under the personal inspection of our Lord, and that in his estimation our words are a criterion of judgment, we cannot weigh too carefully the underlying principles upon which his decision will be made. Our Lord's words, as recorded in Matthew 12:34-36, indicate that both the heart and the mouth are under special scrutiny. How necessary therefore is a right condition of heart, in order that the words of our mouth may be acceptable to our Lord and Redeemer!

In our Lord's statement, the heart is representative of the character, and the mouth is the index of that character. The word heart is sometimes used in Scripture with the force of the word mind. Out of the abundance of the mind the mouth speaks. A good man brings forth good things out of the treasure of his mind. But all mankind are by nature sinners; therefore all are by nature evil to some extent. God does not approve of any who are under the sentence of death. Nevertheless there are those of the condemned race of Adam who are relatively good—those who, despite the imperfections under which they were born, the blemishes of their fallen nature, are desirous of being in harmony with the One who is all-good.

We find nothing in Scripture to support the doctrine of total depravity—to imply that there is nothing whatever of good in humanity. Even though no one is perfect, nevertheless, there are some who have at least a good will, good intentions. Such superior characters of past ages were represented in the ancient worthies—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the prophets of Israel, etc., who fully demonstrated their obedience to God and their loyalty to the principles of righteousness.

THE CLASS APPROVED OF GOD

During this Gospel age also there are some who are good. Amongst the heathen, as well as in Christian lands, there are those who are well-meaning, well-intentioned, those who are not malicious, not striving to do wrong, but endeavoring to do right. In order to have the divine approval in this age, however, one must be of those who come unto the Father through Jesus; for none others are accepted of God. The Father will not receive any one whose heart is not sincere, who does not have good intentions, who does not manifest loyalty to him and to the principles of righteousness.

Therefore any whom we have reason to believe are accepted of God, begotten of the holy Spirit, are no longer to be counted as "children of wrath, even as others," but as of the household of faith. Despite the frailties of their flesh, they are good at heart; else God would not accept them. With these there is a constant conflict between the new will and the desires of the flesh.

When we come to consider those who are good at heart, we find that all of them have imperfect bodies—some more so than others. Shall we give up the struggle for the prize because we cannot do perfectly? No! The Lord assures us that he looks at the heart, not at the flesh; that he has made a very gracious arrangement through our Lord Jesus by which the imperfections are cleansed away. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Therefore all his children may come with courage to the throne of heavenly grace, there to obtain mercy and help in every time of need.

CHIPS OR APPLES—WHICH?

The good things brought forth from the treasure of a good man's heart will be those things which he has stored up from time to time. As the Psalmist says of the godly man, "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." And of himself he declares, "Mine eyes prevent [anticipate] the night watches, that I may meditate in thy Word," law, precepts—the spirit, the purpose of that law, not merely the outward form. So should we meditate upon the spirit of the law of God. The sentiment of our heart should be the desire to get the divine mind as nearly as possible on every subject. All who are eager to be in harmony with God and to attain his character-likeness will think upon things that are good, pure, holy.—Psalm 1:2; 119:148; Philippians 4:8.

As one thinks upon things that are good, the mind becomes stored with good. Wherever there is a mouth disposed to speak upon things that are evil, there is an evil disposition—a mind in which evil has been stored. Whatever one has stored up in the mind will be topmost and sure to be spoken. An evil treasure will show itself, despite all endeavors to hide it; and likewise a good treasure will manifest itself; for the mind can hold only a certain amount.—Luke 6:45.

A father saw his son reading a novel. He knew that his son was in the habit of reading along this line. Calling the boy, he said, "John, I wish you to empty the apples out of that basket, and then take the basket to the woodshed and fill it with chips." The son did as he was directed. When he returned the father said, "Now put in the apples." The son replied that he could not do this, because there was not room enough in the basket for both chips and apples. Then the father said, "That is just what you are about to do with your mind. You have been filling your mind with chips; and when you try to put in apples, there will be no room." Thus it is with all of us. If we fill our minds with jokes, foolish sayings, etc., we shall not be able to fill them with the things of the holy Spirit.—Ephesians 5:1-7.

Many of the Lord's people find that, while their hearts are good, there is in their flesh a tendency for certain things that are not good. Thus there is a continual struggle between the flesh and the spirit as to whether the treasure stored up shall be chips or apples, so to speak. It is for each new creature to decide which shall fill his mind—what kind of society he will choose, where he will go, what he will read, what kind of influences he will come under, what kind he will resist, etc. If in the past he has to any extent treasured up evil things, he should now try to rid himself of them. If his mind has been filled with jokes and levity, things not proper to the child of God, he should seek to put these away.

HOW CHARACTER IS BUILT

Finally, there is a relationship between this laying up of a good treasure in our minds and that of which our Lord spoke when he said, "Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven." In laying up treasure in our minds and hearts, we are building character. Whoever goes into a man's house and sees what he has gathered in the way of treasures can easily perceive the direction in which that man's mind is bent. His preferences demonstrate his character. Thus it is with us all; the things which we cultivate are an index to our character.

When we come to render up our account as new creatures, character will decide whether we shall be esteemed worthy to be of the Lord's elect little flock. Only those who have laid up the treasure of a character like that of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Pattern, will be fit for an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. Our eternal destiny therefore will be decided by the way in which we now use our minds and the thoughts which we now accumulate. Whoever cultivates good thoughts will receive a blessing, not only in the present life, but throughout the future.

Our first concern, then, must be for the heart—that its affections and dispositions may be wholly under the control of grace divine; that every principle of truth and righteousness may be enthroned there; that justice, mercy, benevolence, meekness, self-control, faith, brotherly-kindness, love, supreme reverence for God and for Christ, and a fervent love for all the beauties of holiness, may be firmly fixed as the governing principles of life. If these principles are established in the heart, we shall have no difficulty in controlling our tongue; for out of the good treasure of our heart the mouth will speak forth words of truth, soberness, wisdom and grace.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DAILY SELF-SCRUTINY

"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."—1 Corinthians 11:31, 32.

In these words the Apostle seems to be saying that if we as Christians should properly criticize ourselves, examine ourselves, correct ourselves, the Lord would not find it necessary to take us in hand and give us judgments, or criticism. But if we fail to do this judging, or criticizing, of ourselves, then it will be necessary for the Lord to do it; for he has taken us into his family, he has made us sons, and we are in the school of his Son, our great Elder Brother, to be trained and instructed. This is our judgment day.

The object of this chastening on the part of the Lord is not to vent his displeasure upon us by causing us pain; but it is as the Apostle states, "that we may not be condemned with the world." We judge ourselves when we criticize our own conduct, our own words—our own thoughts, even—and try them by the principles laid down in the Word of God—justice, kindness, mercy, love. As our Master admonishes us, if we find that we have done wrong, we should leave our gift before the altar—we should first go and make apologies to the one whom we have injured or wounded by any word or act of unkindness or rudeness. Then we may come and offer our gift.

Such a course would be forcing one's self, obliging one's self to do the right thing. It is not enough that one should say, "I know that I was wrong; I should not have done as I did; but, then, I am imperfect; I cannot do just what is right in everything." This course would not be in harmony with the spirit of our text. Our text shows that if we do wrong we have a solemn duty to make it right, to the best of our ability. If we have had an uncharitable thought against another it is not necessary that we go to the person and tell him this; for we might make the matter worse by so doing. But we should judge ourselves in the matter and give ourselves a thorough setting-down. We ought to give ourselves a good lesson, a lasting one. Thus we would be right in heart, in intention, approved of the Lord.

THE PROPER COURSE TOWARD OTHERS

We understand that it is the Lord's will respecting us that we should carefully scrutinize our thoughts, words and actions. If we find that we have injured another with our tongue or in any manner, we should go to that person, and to any to whom we have spoken, and make it right, make proper apologies, putting a penalty upon ourselves—a penalty that we shall not forget. If the penalty requires considerable humility, so much the better. If we neglect to punish ourselves, this would show that we are not in the proper condition; and the best thing the Lord could do for us would be to give us a severe chastisement. This might not come in the same day or week or month. But we may be sure that if we do not do right in the matter, we shall come to the place where the Lord will take us in hand. If he does so, he will give us some trying experiences. It may be that some one will do something unkind to us or say something evil about us, and the Lord may permit this. Or he may allow us to get into a position that would bring upon us some kind of punishment.

The world will be on judgment, or trial, in the next age. If we were of the world, our special judgment would come then, instead of now. We would be making marks upon our character that would require stripes in the next dispensation. But so surely as we belong to the church class, we must receive our judgments and punishments in the present age. If we fail to give them to ourselves, our Master will give them to us.

There is another Scripture which says that we are to "judge nothing before the time." (1 Corinthians 4:5) This does not refer to our judging ourselves. We cannot judge ourselves in the sense of passing sentence in our own case; but we should carefully watch our conduct, our words and our thoughts, and deal with ourselves in regard to our own derelictions and our offenses against others. Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." This means that we are to notice this fruitage of life which we see both in our own case and also in that of others—in our brethren, in our neighbors. In our own minds we are to judge and disapprove of evil actions and words. We should say, Is this right or is it wrong? We should be judging such matters all the time.

NOT OUR PROVINCE TO PASS SENTENCE

Every day we see a great many things in life that are displeasing to the Lord. We hear others use vile language or improper language. We see acts of cruelty or injustice. So we can be judging these things as we go through life and getting lessons out of them. This does not mean that we should judge the people who do these things and decide what punishment they should receive. We are neither authorized nor competent so to do. We are not to sit in judgment as to the condition of the heart, except along lines where the Word of God plainly states that we are to judge. Appearances are very often deceptive, and things are not always what they seem to be.

The Lord tells us that the time will come when we shall be appointed judges of the world, but that this time is not now, and we are not to anticipate our work of the future either in our minds or in our words. Nor should we repeat to others what we may see or hear that would lower another in their eyes, save in a case when to do so would be a matter of duty. If we were to form judgments of others and go around telling what we think of this one or that one, we would have a hard time of it and would do an immense amount of harm. Thus we would come under the just condemnation of the Lord and surely bring upon ourselves his rebuke.

While we appreciate the truth of the Lord's words that a good tree will bring forth good fruit, and while we can see many times that there is something wrong in the conduct of certain ones, yet we are not able to judge of what would be the proper punishment for such conduct. We may know that the daily fruitage of a life indicates the condition of the heart, but we are not to pass sentence upon any. The Lord will make this decision. In the Master's words, "By their fruits ye shall know them," He gives us the thought that it is only in regard to that of which we have positive knowledge that we should render a decision in our own minds. We can know that the fruitage of a certain life proves that such a one is out of harmony with God. Yet we would have no right even then to pass sentence in the case. We cannot know what may have led to that unfavorable condition.

"I JUDGE NOT MINE OWN SELF"

In regard to judging in our own case, no one should be so well able as ourselves to know our heart. But St. Paul shows us that we should use a certain amount of leniency in judging even ourselves. He says, "Yea, I judge not mine own self; . . . but he that judgeth me is the Lord." This is not

a contradiction of the words of our text, but his thought seems to be that when we come to realize how high is God's standard, we might be inclined to judge ourselves too severely, not taking into account that we were shapen in iniquity. We might better think somewhat along this line: I realize that I have failed again today to live fully up to what I had hoped. I feel condemned before the bar of my own judgment because of it. But I hope the Lord will be able to make some allowance for me in this matter. I trust he can make some excuse for me that I do not see for myself. I am not sure how much allowance should be made; I am not able to judge myself accurately.

We should then go to our Father in earnest prayer, telling him of our sorrow that we have not succeeded better in glorifying his name. We should plead the merits of the blood of our dear Redeemer, promising the Lord that we will strive to do better, if possible, by his assisting grace.

There are some of the Lord's children who possess only a small amount of self-esteem and who therefore would be inclined to be too severe in their judgments of themselves, and hold themselves to the strictest account for every imperfection. Such should try to judge themselves justly. All judgment should be just, even when we ourselves are the culprits. Justice is the foundation of the Lord's throne. We should never lose sight of the fact that we have the covering of the robe of our Savior's righteousness and the Mercy-Seat, to which we should go every day for cleansing from every defilement. But it is not only proper, but indeed a duty that we daily scrutinize ourselves, and see that we keep the body in subjection to our new mind. Thus doing, and thus applying daily, nightly, for the application of our Redeemer's merit to cover our unwitting mistakes and faults, we shall be kept in our Father's love and approval, and shall not need so much chastening from the Lord.

This daily taking stock of ourselves, the discernment of our gains and losses as new creatures in Christ, and of how and where these came to us in our constant warfare with all our spiritual foes within and without, will surely prove profitable to each child of God who takes such account of himself in the fear of the Lord, desiring only to be pleasing to his Father in heaven, to become all that God would have him to be —a saint indeed.

LOYALTY PROVED BY PROMPT OBEDIENCE

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him."—John 14:21.

The words of our text are a part of our Lord's last discourse to the twelve before his crucifixion. The words, "He that hath my commandments," signify, He that hath received my commandments, and is willing to become my disciple. The mere hearing of the command, or the mere understanding of the command, is not the receiving it. People misunderstand this point. Many hear the command, and yield a partial obedience to it, but they do not receive it in the true sense of the word. This matter of a definite contract with the Lord is a very important one. Those who do not make it are not truly his disciples, have not really put themselves into his hands, and are in danger of shipwreck.

We may know about a certain blessing, but in dealing with the Lord we need to finish our contract. One who merely says, "I will try not to do anything contrary to the Lord's will; I will do whatever he forces upon me," is not in the right attitude to enter the school of Christ. There are certain steps by which we become Christ's disciples. A person may be a visitor at a school, but he has not become a member of the school unless he has met the terms—has accepted the rules and regulations under which the school is operated.

OUR LORD'S LAW OF LOVE

The Apostle Paul says, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace," and yet the Lord speaks of our keeping his commandments. How shall we harmonize these two thoughts? We are to recognize a distinction between the law, the commands which Christ gives, and the Law Covenant, to which the Apostle refers. We are not under the Law Covenant, which required that those who would have its blessings must keep its every requirement perfectly or suffer the curse, death. The arrangement under our Lord Jesus is that if his disciples, those already under his robe of righteousness, seek to do his commandments, strive with their whole heart to do his will, they shall have eternal life through him. The mediator of the Law Covenant was not competent to make any allowance for imperfections.

Our Lord here speaks of "commandments"—plural. We should, therefore, not understand these words to mean the same as when he said, "A new commandment I give unto you"; neither should we understand him to mean the epitomized statement of the law of the Ten Commandments—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." We understand our Lord to mean, Whoever receives my teachings, whoever will follow me, will thus be demonstrating that he has love for me; and such I will love. These "commandments" would seem to be the general teachings of the Lord as they bear on all the affairs of life. We do not understand them to be some set, particular statements, as in the 5th chapter of Matthew. He there designates a number of qualities that are necessary—meekness, righteousness, etc.; these are not commanded.

LOVE DELIGHTS TO SERVE

Our Lord's commands are not put in the form of compulsion, but whoever loves him will serve him. Speaking through the apostolic epistles, and in the Book of Revelation, Jesus has given us various expressions of what righteousness is, what love is. Whoever, therefore, desires to be with him, to reign with him, should wish to obey every hint coming from him. There is nothing put in the nature of an arbitrary command—merely the statement of principles. But these become to us commands. To know his will is a law to such as love him—they wish to serve him. This seems to be the divine arrangement for this age—that we should be left without a "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not," so as to prove the degree of our interest and loyalty.

Some of our friends say to us sometimes, Do you think the Lord will reject me if I do not leave the nominal church, or if I do not perform the symbol of water baptism? And we have to tell them they have misunderstood the whole matter. The Lord is merely showing us the line of duty and of privilege, and whoever does not take delight in doing the Lord's will would better not do it at all. The Lord seeks such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. In the Millennial age he will deal with the world through stripes and blessings; and obedience will be compelled. But now he says, Here is my will; you can read between the lines, if you desire. I do not put you under a Law Covenant, but I place before you a great opportunity. If you appreciate the privilege, become my disciple. You will not need to make any boast, but show your obedience, your appreciation—take a prompt and positive stand. I will not insist on anything, then, but will give you the opportunity.

The Lord will take note of those who appreciate his great offer, and when he comes to claim his bride these are the ones who shall reign with him.

SAYING, "GIVE US OF YOUR OIL"

Millions of people have had their attention drawn to the teachings of THE WATCH TOWER and the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES respecting our thought that the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation is due some time about October, 1914. Eight million volumes of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES are in the hands of the public. Some who scoffed, railed, laughed and talked about the impossibility of our expectations are startled by the suddenness with which the great European war has started. All admit that there never has been such a war before, and that there never again can be such a war. Ignoring the Bible, all admit that the consequences of this war will be so terrible, the impoverishment of the nations so great, that wiser counsels must prevail in the future. We see from the Bible viewpoint that the result of this war will lead up to the wrecking of our present civilization in a period of anarchy. Whatever way the war may eventuate, it will surely be unsatisfactory. Discontent will more than ever prevail amongst the masses. A reign of terror throughout the civilized world is to be expected as a result.

All these things we have presented in our publications, sermons, etc., also in the Photo-Drama of Creation, which already has been shown to audiences totaling more than four millions. This war is riveting conviction upon the minds of many respecting the correctness of our expectations. Their question is, "What next?" And they will not think of looking for an answer in the direction of the ministers of the nominal churches, who they now know have been keeping them in the dark and trying to prevent their obtaining the true light from God's Word, as it is now shining amongst the Bible students.

A WORD OF CAUTION

Now is the time for our moderation of thought, speech and manner. When our dear relatives, friends, neighbors and the public begin to inquire of us respecting the horoscope of God's Word, we should be very meek, gentle, patient in our replies. Any haughty manner, any spirit of "I told you so," would be a rebuff to those who are now inclined to look to us for assistance, guidance, instruction in the teachings of God's Word. Sympathetically we should put ourselves in their places and treat them most kindly, telling them that this war is probably connected with the great anarchy which is to follow; that it will probably weaken the nations as nothing else would have done, and thus give the discontented element of society, not only an excuse, but an opportunity, for overthrowing all governments and precipitating the world into the most terrible calamity ever known.

We recommend that the distresses of the time of trouble be not so much discussed as the grand outcome, the Messianic kingdom, to follow. We should help our friends and neighbors to look beyond the dark cloud to the silver lining, assuring them that God's Word implies that the time of trouble is necessary as a preparation for Messiah's kingdom. The plowshare of trouble must first prepare human hearts for the sowing of the good seed of the next dispensation. As we read, "When thy judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isaiah 26:9.

Let us always remember our ordination, or commission, or authority, to preach—as we read, "To bind up the brokenhearted, to declare the deliverance of the captives." Let the world, the flesh and the devil break men's hearts, if they will. Let the great time of trouble break them, if it will. Our commission is not to break hearts, but to heal them, to bind them up, to pour in the gracious promises of God's Word, sympathetically. The promises are represented symbolically as the oil. Thus shall we best show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:9) Thus shall we best assist those who sadly need our assistance. We must remember that we were equally in the dark but a short time ago, and that our neighbors and friends are no more responsible for being in the dark than we were. It should, therefore, be ours to excuse rather than to berate or faultfind.

THE FOOLISH VIRGIN CLASS

It is not for us to determine who will be of the foolish virgin class and fail to get into the marriage, and thus as a result pass into the great tribulation and get a lesser reward. Nevertheless, we must feel some interest and curiosity in respect to our Master's parabolic prophecy. While it has been true that Christian brethren charged with the cares of this life and therefore not filled with the Spirit, the oil, and lacking the light of the lamp, have repeatedly said to us, "I wish that I could see that as you do," or, "Show me that in a few words," nevertheless they have been unwilling to take the time necessary for proper investigation and the filling of the Spirit. All this is, we believe, still more abundantly true now.

Many of this overcharged class, neglecters of their Covenant of Sacrifice, will be stimulated by the outward signs of our time. Doubtless many of them will study and come clearly into the light and to a fulness of consecration to the Lord's service. Some of these may come in with such fervent zeal that they may be accounted of the Lord worthy of a place in the bride class. Others may come along so slowly that they will be of the great company class, the foolish virgins.

The conclusion of the parable shows us that by the time the foolish virgin class shall have become thoroughly awake, thoroughly convinced of the divine plan, etc., and fully awake to the privilege of their consecration vows—by that time the little flock class will have passed into the wedding, and the door to that glorious privilege and opportunity will be forever shut. The Master is to have but one bride class. The others, therefore, will be rejected and must pass through great tribulation, eventually to come to a glorious place on the spirit plane as the antitypes of the Levites, while the faithful little flock will be glorified as the royal priesthood, with their Master.

The point we would particularly impress is that we should all be praying and striving for an abundance of the fruits of the holy Spirit—manifestations of patience, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love—that thus we may be enabled to render any assistance to those who now will be inquiring. It is a special privilege for us to be the representatives of the Lord and his divine plan. But instead of making us haughty, proud, disdainful, it should make us very humble, gentle and loving, remembering that such honors are not deserved by any of us, but are of the Lord's grace.

THE GREAT COMMANDMENTS

SEPTEMBER 6.—Mark 12:28-44.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."—Luke 10:27.

On the question day when the Doctors of Divinity sought to entrap our Lord many questions were asked. A week ago we considered one. The final question constitutes today's Study. A scribe, a man of more than average education, had heard the various questions propounded and had perceived how well our Lord had answered them. Then he essayed a question—quite probably in all sincerity, and not with a view to entrap Jesus. He asked, "What is the chief commandment of all?"—doubtless referring to the Decalogue. Jesus replied that the first, the chief, of all the commandments is, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the chief commandment."

Our Lord here made a quotation from the Old Testament. (Deuteronomy 6:4, 5) How wonderfully comprehensive the statement! Who today, hundreds of years afterwards, could more completely epitomize the great truth of this text? Heavenly wisdom was manifested in its first statement. The same heavenly wisdom was manifested in our Lord's reference to it. He added nothing, because nothing could be added.

Moreover, we are daily seeing more clearly the force of this expression—love. Love is the principal thing! Many in times gone by, according to the creeds professed, might have changed this statement to read that we should dread, fear, tremble; for the Almighty God of the universe, we were told, had a great hell of torture prepared from before man's creation, in which he purposed that the great majority of humanity should be eternally tormented. But that was in the creeds. The Bible stands out distinctly separate from all human creeds and superstitions, and tells us that God is love, that he is the Father of light and mercy, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift.

The Bible, too, tells us of the divine forgiveness, divinely arranged for through the precious blood of Christ from before the foundation of the world. It tells us also that this forgiveness of sins is not merely for the church, the elect, the little handful now being called out from the world; but that eventually the love of God will be manifested to all of his creatures, to the intent that, coming to a knowledge of that love in due time, they may renounce sin and accept the divine provision—receiving in return under Messiah's kingdom the great blessing of restitution of mental, moral and physical perfection, lost through Father Adam's disobedience.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

Jesus proceeded beyond the question, and declared that the second commandment stands related to the first; namely, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Again we stand all astonished with wonder at how much is stated in very few words. Many a volume is written that contains far less. No other religion than that of the Bible reveals such a God of mercy and compassion, as manifested by his loving provision for the welfare of his creatures. No other religion even hints at love in return. No other religion suggests so high a standard of dealing with our fellow men.

This law of God, now nearly four thousand years old, was probably more or less made known through the Jews to other nations and peoples (Deuteronomy 4:6-8); but none of them grasped its true import. The closest approach to this sentiment is probably found in the writings of Confucius, to the effect that one should not do to others what he would not have others do to him. But oh, what a contrast! One is merely a negative statement; the other is a positive one—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Truly, there is something about the law of God which stamps it as divine. How beautiful the world would be, with all its thorns, thistles and difficulties, if men were only able and willing to live up to these two grand laws—each man loving the heavenly Father supremely, serving him with every power and talent, and loving his neighbor as himself, seeking to serve that neighbor as he might have opportunity! That would be Paradise. Thank God, this is just what we are assured the world will yet be, when the Messianic kingdom is established.

The divine arrangement which provided the death of Christ as an offset for Adam's sin has also provided the reign of Christ as the offset of the reign of sin and death. And the divine promise assures us that ultimately all who love and desire righteousness and truth shall be blessed and perfected, and shall have everlasting life. It assures us also that the earth, God's footstool, will be made glorious, during the thousand years of Messiah's reign; and that eventually all lovers of sin, refusing to make progress in righteousness, will be destroyed from amongst the people in the second death. Thus will the happy day be ushered in for which we have so long prayed: "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven." Then will be fulfilled the promise that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, and the whole earth be filled with the glory of God.

"NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM"

The Scribe was impressed, and conceded the truth of Jesus' answer. He said, "Master, thou hast said the truth; for there is one God; and there is none other but him; and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as himself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

"And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, Thou are not far from the kingdom of God!" By this the Master meant that the scribe was very near to the point where he might become one of his disciples—one of those waiting for the kingdom, hoping for it, striving for it, preparing for it. It was such "Israelites indeed," in whom was no guile, that Jesus especially sought to gather from amongst the Jewish people, preparatory to throwing open to the Gentiles the door to kingdom privileges. The Jews understood that at his coming Messiah would select a kingdom class, to which would be granted divine power. This is just what Jesus was doing. His words, his teachings, were drawing some and repelling others.

All the sincere, all the honest-hearted, are like this young scribe—not far from the kingdom. If their honesty, their sincerity, lead them to zeal to know and to do the will of the Father, then they will be blessed; for "the secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his covenant."

"GOD LOOKETH ON THE HEART"

The Temple at Jerusalem was still new, and money was needed for its maintenance, etc. The people were privileged to contribute, and apparently did so with willing hearts. However much misled by the traditions of the elders—otherwise the teachings of their forefathers—however confused they were by the misleadings of their blinded Doctors of Divinity, they had a desire to serve God and to worship him. This was manifested by their readiness to bring their money and to cast it into the treasure boxes of the Temple, which stood near its doorway.

Jesus was sitting opposite these treasure boxes, and took note how all classes contributed—the rich of their abundance, the poor of their penury. There came along a widow who put into the treasure box two mites—the smallest copper coins in circulation—each one worth about one-eighth of a cent. We need not assume that the poor widow put this in in an ostentatious manner; for the coins were too small to boast about. We shall assume that Jesus, by divine power, knew the woman, her circumstances and the amount of her gift. He made it a text for a little sermon to the apostles. He declared that yonder poor woman had made a larger contribution in the sight of God than had anybody else who had contributed. To their wonderment he explained that she had practically cast in all that she had—her living—while the others had merely contributed certain portions from their abundance—portions the loss of which they perhaps would not seriously feel.

This little incident shows us the Lord's appreciation of sacrifices and services. It is not the great things that any of us do, or attempt to do, that the Lord highly esteems. The very small affairs of our lives, the very small sacrifices, the very small self-denials, that in the world's sight would be nothing, in the Master's sight will be great, if they denote love, devotion and self-sacrifice to the Lord and his cause.

Moreover, the Lord knew that the woman was giving money to an institution which was repudiating him and which shortly would be destroyed because of being unworthy to continue. But whatever might be the condition of others, the Lord looked at the heart of this contributor and the motive for the gift—"She hath done what she could." For aught we know she became ultimately a disciple. It is of just such self-sacrificing material that the Lord makes disciples.

THE TEN VIRGINS

SEPTEMBER 13.—Matthew 25:1-13.

"Watch, therefore; for ye know not the day nor the hour."—Verse 13.

The parable of today's study is supposed to have been uttered by our Lord about three days before his crucifixion, as part of his response to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the age?" In the preceding chapter the Master traces various experiences of his people down to the time of his second coming—the time of the consummation of this Gospel age and of the inauguration of the Messianic age, the age immediately ahead of us.

In considering this parable, it is proper to notice, first of all, that it has not been applicable at all times and under all conditions. This is shown by the first word, "Then"—at that time—"the kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins." Furthermore, it should be noted that the parable does not describe the world in general, but merely the "virgin" class—the church class—the pure ones who have left the world, who have come to God through Christ, who have been justified by faith in his blood, and who have thus been made prospective members of the kingdom class, the bride class. This parable shows, then, that in the end of this age a separation, or division, will take place, in the true church of Christ, regardless of what may be the attitude of the world or of the nominal church.

With the Jews, betrothal took place between the bride and the bridegroom usually a year before they came together at the marriage feast. During that year the obligations of marriage applied, and any unfaithfulness to the bridegroom vitiated or annulled the contract, which was usually made, not by the bridegroom himself with the bride, but through others, intermediaries. So, during this Gospel age, a church is being betrothed to Christ, and covenant obligations are being entered into in behalf of the Bridegroom, Christ, who is "afar off" and who is now entering into a covenant with those who would be members of his bride class. These covenants and agreements are made through brethren, ministers, servants, of the Lord and of the church.

The Scriptures represent that during the long period between the time when our Lord went away and the time of his return there has been a serious unfaithfulness on the part of many professing to be of the church of Christ. In the Revelation these are charged with harlotry. We are assured that they will not be recognized, but will be fully repudiated, rejected, at his second coming. But although the mass of those professing to have entered into a covenant with the Lord were foreseen to be unfaithful, nevertheless the Lord just as distinctly declares that at his coming there will be a faithful "virgin" class—pure ones, separate from the world, uncontaminated. It is this class which the parable describes. It shows incidentally that not even all of the virgins will be accepted as members of the bride; but that, in addition to purity, a certain watchfulness and zeal will be considered essential.

PAROUSIA AND EPIPHANIA

Many Bible students hold that this parable began to have its fulfilment in the Millerite movement, which in 1844 culminated in a disappointment. For some fourteen years prior to that time a cry had gone forth throughout the church that the time of the second coming of Christ was at hand. History tells us that many noble characters of all denominations believed the message and, in the strength of their faith, went forth to meet the Bridegroom. But they were disappointed, in that the Bridegroom tarried.

Then all of the "virgins," both wise and foolish, slumbered and slept. A general stupor, uncertainty and drowsiness came over all. Some of them dreamed of strange knockings during that time, too. Later, at midnight, the Bridegroom came apparently, and announcements were made to that effect—"Behold the Bridegroom! Go ye forth to meet him!"

An increasing number of Bible students believe that this latter cry sounded forth just thirty years after the disappointment of the followers of William Miller; namely, in 1874. They do not claim that Jesus came in the flesh then; but, on the contrary, they hold that he is never to come in the flesh—that he is flesh no longer, that he has "ascended up where he was before"—to the spirit plane—far above angels.

These Bible students call our attention to the fact that the Bible distinctly differentiates between the parousia of Christ and his epiphania, at his second coming. The word parousia

signifies presence, without in any sense of the word indicating that the presence is visible. The word epiphania signifies the revealing of one who is already present. These Bible students claim that in the end of this Gospel age Christ will be present, invisible to men, during a period of forty years, doing a work especially in his church—rewarding the faithful, as shown in the parables of the Pounds and the Talents, and receiving the "wise virgins," as in the parable of our lesson.

With the conclusion of this work of separating the wise virgins, and after they shall have entered into the joys of their Lord by the glorious change of the first resurrection, then will come Immanuel's Epiphania, revealing, showing forth. "When he shall appear, ye also shall appear with him in glory." "He shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance." In other words, the revelation of Christ to the world will be subsequent to his revelation of himself to the "wise virgin" class. The world will know that he has taken his great power and begun his reign of righteousness, not by seeing Jesus in the flesh, but by seeing the great time of trouble which then will break upon the world—"a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."—Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21.

THE LAMPS AND THE OIL

The views of these Bible students are interesting to us. Whether all of their conclusions may be accepted or not, they are at least worthy of consideration, inasmuch as they furnish a new interpretation of some Scriptures not previously understood. Whether they have the times and seasons properly divided is another matter, upon which each individual Christian should use his own judgment. Let us follow the parable from this standpoint; for we know of no other to which the terms and conditions of the parable could be applied.

Let us note that all the "virgins" are to hear this message, "Behold the Bridegroom!"—the expected one has come. It does not follow that they will all hear at once—rather the contrary. During the period of the "cry," whether it be forty years or more or less, as long as the cry goes forth there will be opportunity to hear it. And all of the virgin class must hear it.

The "oil" of the parable evidently represents the Holy Spirit, while the "lamps" represent the Bible. All of these virgins had the Bible and some light therefrom; but only those possessing the Spirit of the truth in their hearts in good supply would be able to hold out. To the others the Lamp would cease to burn. They would cease to be able to appreciate and apply the Scriptural prophecies relative to Christ's second coming.

ONLY ONE WAY TO GET THE HOLY SPIRIT

The "wise virgins" trimmed their lamps in response to the message—they examined the Scriptures. Like the Bereans of old, they "searched the Scriptures daily to see whether these things be so." Thus they had light in their lamps, as well as "oil," the holy Spirit, in their hearts. Then it was that the "foolish virgins" said, "Give us of your oil." We wish that we could be as earnest at Bible study as you are, but these things are no longer interesting to us. Do give us some of your oil (spirit)!

However, there is but the one way to get the holy Spirit, and that is from the Lord himself and upon his own terms. In order to receive a fresh supply of oil we need to look well to our covenant with the Lord and to our zeal for him and the truth, to our loyalty to the principles of righteousness. This costs something of time and study. It costs something, perhaps, of neglect of the things of this life. It means to forego strife for wealth and fame. It means to live close to God.

This is the cost of the precious oil which is to give light to those who will have it. Hence the wise virgins declared, in no ungenerous spirit, that they had none too much of the oil of the holy Spirit for themselves. Then they advised their brethren who were deficient to go to God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, and to seek the oil by obedience to his Word, by the searching of the Scriptures and by close following of the Master's leading in the narrow way.

THE SHUTTING OF THE DOOR

Meantime, the "wise virgins" were going in, one after another—passing beyond the veil—until finally the last of the foreordained number had gone in and no more could enter. "Then the door was shut."

Once in our misunderstanding we thought that this shutting of the "door" after the wise virgin class had gone in represented that all the foolish virgins and all the remainder of mankind were shut out of God's favor—banished to eternal torment. Now, however, we notice that the "door" merely shuts in the kingdom class, the little flock, to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom. While others will never be able to enter into that kingdom, God has other blessings for them, all of which will come through the kingdom class—Christ and his bride.

The parable shows that later on the foolish virgin class get the oil, the holy Spirit, in proper measure and are able to get light from their lamps; that they recognize that the end of the age has come, and earnestly desire, and in prayer "knock," that the door of the kingdom may be opened to them. But the Lord's answer to them is, "I cannot recognize you. There is only one bride class, and they have already come in to me."

In view of this, all of the Lord's consecrated people should be earnestly on the watch, filled with the Spirit and having their Lamps "trimmed and burning." None might know the day and the hour when the Bridegroom would come, in the sense of his parousia; nevertheless, all of the virgins were to be aware of his presence after he had come. Any one who did not know of it would, to that extent, lack the evidence that he belonged to the bride class; even the foolish virgins knew of the Bridegroom's presence.

In the parable the Lord does not tell what may happen to the foolish virgins; but other Scriptures show that they pass through a portion, at least, of the great time of trouble coming upon the world; and that when finally they are received of the Lord, it will not be as his joint-heirs in the throne, but as honored servants of the bride. They are elsewhere spoken of as "the virgins, the bride's companions, who follow her" and who will ultimately be brought into the presence of the King and have an inferior share in the work of the kingdom. (Psalm 45:15, 16) Next in order will come the blessing of natural Israel and of all the families of the earth for a thousand years, for their uplifting from sin and death to righteousness and life eternal—or failing in this, the destruction of the incorrigible in the second death, from which there will be no recovery.

EUREKA DRAMA—CLASS EXTENSION

Read over several times our explanation of this proposition in August 1 WATCH TOWER. We have stated matters there carefully and as clearly as we know how. With each outfit goes an Instructor's Book and a letter giving general explanations of how the DRAMA should be presented. But we would not recommend any to undertake the operation of a stereopticon who has not already some conception of how it should be operated. No fewer than two could operate the DRAMA—one taking care of the phonograph, the other operating the stereopticon. A third person would be desirable as a general overseer, usher, helper, literature-distributer, etc. This EUREKA DRAMA preaching gives the sisters an exceptional opportunity. The Y Eureka might be a little too heavy for them to carry, but any could manage the X Eureka.

We regret the necessity for emphasizing the fact that the full amount stipulated must accompany your order. Only by purchasing for cash can we secure the prices named.

We describe One Part as follows:—

A box of tinted stereopticon slides, encased in a fibre carrying case with handle, 26 inches long, 7 inches wide, 7 inches high, weight, 35 lbs.

One carrying case, with handle, for phonograph and its records and two operator's books, 26 inches long, 9 inches wide, 13 inches high, weight 40 lbs.

One metal carrying case, with handle, containing stereopticon, 18 inches long, 7 inches wide, 12 inches high, weight, 22 lbs.

One fibre case, with handle, containing rheostat, 10 inches long, 9 inches wide, 7 inches high, weight, 12 lbs.

The screen on which the pictures would be shown you can prepare as cheaply as we. For a small room and small pictures a good, large bed-sheet will do. But it would be well to provide at the start a screen about 13½ feet by 15 feet. This will mean 10 yards of wide sheeting and would require only one seam lengthwise through the center and a hem at each end. We can supply these with the outfit for $3.50 extra.

Rarely would there be need for taking more than one section of the DRAMA (the above four cases) at one time. But if for any reason you desired to take two, it would mean twice the above. Or if you took the entire three sections, the packages would be three times as many.

When you send in your order with the Express or Post Office money order, there will be no mistake as to whether you wish the outfit on the loan plan or on the purchase plan. At the same time specify, please, the state in which you will be working, and the county whose small towns and villages you propose to thoroughly work.

Some inform us that they have stereopticons that will serve their purposes, and wish merely to purchase the remainder of the outfit. Such should indicate this in their order and deduct accordingly from the amount. See itemized statement in last issue.

You have never seen or heard our new portable phonograph. It is very small and light, but powerful. Our records will fill large court room. Some write us that they have suitable phonographs. We advise, however, that our portable phonograph is so cheap ($8.00) that you would best have it and leave the other for the family or sell it.

EUREKA DRAMAS sent out on the loan plan must go just as we are preparing them, so as to have uniformity. This means a phonograph and a stereopticon with each part and implies the promise that the three parts will be kept busy.

Those who purchase outright may, if they choose, take only one stereopticon and only one phonograph, deducting $8.00 each for the phonographs and $20.00 each for the stereopticons and $6.00 each for the rheostats and $4.00 each for the Acetylene burners not desired.

Some write us desiring the DRAMA records and musical records only. We are pleased to supply these at the prices mentioned in our last issue with the phonograph, or at $8.00 less if the phonograph is not desired. Any preferring can order their dises direct from the Columbia Graphophone Co.

You will have the privilege of giving away the free scenario, or of selling the paper-bound and cloth-bound scenario at regular prices—purchasing from us at half price, plus postage or freight. You may handle STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES similarly.

Nothing that we have written on this subject should be understood as intimating that this DRAMA EXTENSION would be a profitable business—nor that anybody should engage in it to the neglect of his or her family duties; nor would it be necessary for those engaging in this work to give it their entire time. Some might be able to give their Sundays, others some week nights, and some both. Of course, some may be so situated that they can give this work their entire time.

We are not recommending this DRAMA EXTENSION work to successful colporteurs. We believe that they already have and are using one of the best methods we know of for serving the truth, and feeding the hungry sheep.

Brethren not heretofore engaged in class extension, here have a chance. Also their wives or natural sisters. If unmarried sisters engage at all extreme care should be exercised that strict decorum and proper Christian dignity be always observed. Preferably only persons professing full consecration to God, and who have taken the Vow, should participate in any way.

We have not proposed furnishing moving pictures for five reasons: (1) Our films are too costly. (2) Only experienced persons can operate them. (3) We are arranging to have full DRAMA shown in the smallest places having Motion Picture theatres. (4) The Class Extension DRAMAS will be kept busy serving villages of under 1000 population. (5) These usually have school houses or union church houses obtainable free.

We hope to have reports from all these EUREKA DRAMAS weekly. Please make them out Mondays. Address I. B. S. A., EUREKA DRAMA, 17 Hicks Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

"EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFIT NO. X

Any of our readers desiring to purchase for his own use the full set of 96 DRAMA lectures (three Parts, two hours each) with nine choice introductory, intermission and closing hymns and a portable phonograph, with a carrying case, can have the entire outfit for $38.50

"EUREKA DRAMA" OUTFIT NO. Y

This outfit is the one especially intended for the DRAMA EXTENSION described foregoing. Its three Parts require only the same number of lecture and music records as foregoing; but, because of public use, each Part must have its own Phonograph, each Part its own Stereopticon, etc. We therefore show each Part complete in itself, as follows:

Part I. includes one Primo Stereopticon for electric current—Oneida Lens (three for varying distances); special price $20.00

Variable Rheostat (five amp., ten amp., or fifteen amp.) may be effective for house current or for heavy current arc lights 6.00

Attachment for Acetylene Gas or Presto Light (useful in places where there is no electric current, but where gas can be taken from an automobile tank)..... 4.00

DRAMA stereopticon slides, beautifully tinted, with special carrying box and carrying case..... 38.00

One portable Phonograph, one Operator's Book, Lecture and Hymn Records for Part I., and carrying case.. 19.50

Total cost of Part I., "EUREKA DRAMA," No. Y.. $87.50

Additional would be the expressage from Brooklyn.

The Society would furnish posters, window-cards, and free scenario, and would supply the bound scenario for sale in any quantity at one-half retail prices.

Parts II. and III. would cost exactly the same as the above, the entire Three Parts amounting to.....$262.50

With only one Stereopticon, one Rheostat, one Acetylene burner and one Phonograph, $185.00. Expressage from Brooklyn extra.

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

FIRST SOUTH AFRICAN CONVENTION

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

The first South African Convention of the International Bible Students Association has now gone down into history, leaving with those who were privileged to attend a glorious memory that will serve as a stimulus and an inspiration until we get to the greatest of all conventions, beyond the veil.

On Friday, April 10, the brethren gathered from all parts of the sub-Continent (one dear sister traveling nearly a thousand miles) to enjoy four whole days of blessed fellowship with the Lord and with one another. We were a very "little flock," indeed. Our largest attendance was 34; but whether in his providence he will ultimately bestow upon us the kingdom or not, the Lord did certainly on this occasion give us abundant manifestation of the sweetness of his presence and the fulness of his love. For four days, from the "Welcome" to the "Farewell," we were on the mountain top with the Lord, and we enjoyed the experience so much that we, too, would fain have built tabernacles to dwell there!

Amid such a plethora of blessings it is difficult to single out any for special mention, but the baptismal service on Friday afternoon was especially helpful. Although we were a small company, I think we made a record on this occasion; for we immersed almost half of the entire convention. Eight sisters and eight brothers symbolized their consecration in the Lord's appointed manner. The hearts of all present went out to them, and our prayers ascended for them, that he who has begun the good work in them, will enable them to finish their course.

In the evening this service was followed by the Memorial, when 32 symbolically appropriated the merit of the Lord's broken body, and, thoroughly furnished thereby, symbolically drank with him the cup which the Father had poured. Our hearts grew solemn as we realized that possibly this might be our last Memorial on this side the veil. We called to mind our Lord's words on a similar occasion: "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you." We remembered that the special sufferings followed hard upon "this" Passover, and sought grace to endure a similar experience, if it be his will.

Next morning we had a helpful Question meeting, when many interesting queries were satisfactorily answered. Saturday afternoon a praise and testimony meeting furnishing a general opportunity for witness-bearing to the Lord's goodness, of which the brethren were not slow to avail themselves. The day closed with an excellent address on "The Triumph of Love" by dear Brother Stubbs, of Durban.

Sunday morning we had a modern Berean Study in Volume I., Chapter 5, when the value of this method of Scripture study was amply demonstrated. The lesson was much enjoyed by all. In the afternoon seven brothers participated in a symposium on "The Graces of the Spirit." This stimulated us all, and we feel the need for greater diligence in seeking to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ, making no provision for the flesh." Sunday evening was given over to the public, but owing to a heavy rainstorm, only about fifty turned out to hear a lecture on "The Resurrection of the Dead, its Nature and Purpose," although at previous lectures the audiences numbered as many as five hundred.

Monday morning we talked about the harvest work, and considered how best it might be advanced in South Africa. This was followed in the afternoon by a splendid exposition of "The Benefits of Christian Fellowship," by dear Brother Howat, of Johannesburg. In the evening was the farewell meeting of the convention. On this occasion, following St. Paul's argument in Ephesians 6:10-19, we were exhorted to put on the whole armor of God and to fight the good fight of faith, that we might lay hold upon eternal life. Our hearts and our eyes both were full as we filed past brethren representing various classes, to the strains of that old, familiar hymn of hallowed memory, "God be with you till we meet

again,'' bidding each other farewell, and hoping to meet again in the kingdom, if not before.

What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward us? By his assisting grace we shall grasp more firmly the cup of salvation and, calling upon the name of the Lord, drink it to the dregs.

All the brethren at the convention were filled with a deep sense of gratitude to God for you, dear Brother, and in this I know that we represented the sentiment of all the brethren in Africa. They desired me to convey to you their hearty appreciation of your faithful ministry, and your noble example of fortitude and devotion to the Lord's cause. They wished me to assure you of their loving sympathy with you in the many besetments that necessarily fall to your lot in your exalted position in the harvest-field, and of their constant prayers that he who has brought you thus far will sustain you to the very end of the way and secure for you an abundant entrance into the kingdom. Our loving message finds happy expression in the following Scriptures, which I was instructed to forward to you: Philemon 7; Hebrews 6:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:11, 12.

The first South African Convention shall long remain a hallowed memory, by which all will be stimulated to more fervent zeal for God and to greater activity in the harvest service.

With Christian love to yourself and to all the dear ones of the Tabernacle, I am, dear Brother,

Your brother in his grace and service.

WM. W. JOHNSTON.

A VOICE FROM KOREA

BELOVED PASTOR AND BROTHER:—

I am a stranger to you in one sense; but I came to a knowledge of present truth through your writings just twenty-two months ago. For some time I have been anxious to write and tell you of my special appreciation of the truth, but circumstances did not permit until now.

You will be interested in knowing that I am a Korean. When the first missionaries landed here (in 1885) Korea was a hermit kingdom. Since then some Koreans became identified with Christianity to avoid severe punishment by officials who came under the influence of missionaries who were accustomed to using the rod.

In time some of our people began to read books from abroad that spoke of liberty, civilization, revolution, etc. The missionaries taught that in order to secure civilization and liberty the Koreans would have to become their friends and call themselves Christians.

Many did this; but during the past few years great changes have been taking place. The people have been learning that they cannot be punished unless guilty of wrong, and the sticks of the missionaries lost their power correspondingly.

About five years ago missionaries boasted of 500,000 Koreans who were Christians, but now the number is put down at 110,000. It is said that these are the cream.

For about eight years I drifted through the dangerous currents of what I now see was Spiritism—Satanic teaching. Now I thank God that he sent our beloved Brother R. R. Hollister here with the Glad Tidings and saved me out of these currents which were leading me to an unknown place. My senses were almost lost; it took about six months to have the eyes and ears of my understanding opened. Since then I have consecrated myself to the Lord and continue to praise him.

I felt quite at home up to March of this year—while Brother and Sister W. J. Hollister were with us; but now I am very lonesome, as there are but two of us, one assistant and myself. The snarling ''wolves'' are about and show their teeth, so to speak. Thank God that he accepts such weak ones as his workers in the harvest field! I pray you will be so good as to remember us at the throne of heavenly grace!

I want to see you—as well as dearly beloved Brothers R. R. and W. J. Hollister and wife—and other brothers and sisters in the truth on this side the veil.

Ever praying the rich blessing of our Lord upon you, and that the end of the way may be crowned with an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom, I am

Yours by his grace, P. S. KANG.—Korea.

SOME GOOD SUGGESTIONS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

I want to express to you my continued love, and to assure you how much I myself and our class appreciate the PHOTO-DRAMA. We are very thankful to the dear Lord for this added privilege of service. There were over 40,000 free admissions here. The DRAMA is certainly wonderful, especially the record Lectures; and the book form of Scenario does seem about the next best and most direct way imaginable of opening blind eyes. Praise the Lord!

For about a year it has seemed to me very strange that some of the friends are so inclined to question the accuracy of the chronology if certain events do not transpire by or about October of this year. It has seemed to me that the chronology should not be too closely associated with events; that the present Savior did not startle the world with the bright-shining of his presence suddenly in 1874, though he came at that date; that even the Jew was not aware of his favor in 1878, but it began; that Babylon did not feel its rejection, nor topple over in 1881, but was ''spewed out'' and is no longer recognized, just the same, while even yet, after 33 years, the world is not startled by the evidence, nor does Babylon believe it. Hence I feel that should the present order of things roll on for some time yet, we should not then doubt October, 1914, any more than we doubt 1874, 1878 or 1881. But we should be watchful, prayerful, and ''keep our garments,'' awake to the fact that the chronology may be accurate, while our ideas of how the Lord will order events may be wrong. The Lord may permit seeming inaccuracies to test whether our consecration is to chronology or to him, and he may be as apt to wind up matters very suddenly as to seem to prolong them. Therefore let us have faith, but await his enlightenment as to events.

Affectionately in Him, S. H. HUSTON.—Texas.

''A GREAT WASTER''

Dear Friends:—

A recent experience has caused me to write you in order that a word of caution may be given those distributing Volunteer literature.

I have just returned from the post-office, one mile distant, and am deeply grieved at finding this year's Volunteer literature scattered in the street, gutters, on the trolley track, run over by every kind of vehicle and soiled and torn. It was evidently thrown from an automobile without being properly folded.

(1) I had previously covered the town with the same literature myself. (2) The local by-law against scattering literature on the street was broken. (3) The Truth was cheapened and its cause apparently injured.

I suppose the distributer thought he was serving the Lord and the truth; but it seems to me that one should have a higher respect for the truth than to allow it to be trampled in the dust through his carelessness. I gathered the literature up as I came home, feeling very much grieved. What would people think of us, and what would the Lord think of us, if we should throw Bibles in the streets in order to instruct the people in righteousness? Our literature represents God's Word. Let us honor it!

Would it not be well for brethren using automobiles and distributing literature to properly fold the tracts and throw them well into the yard, as near to the house as possible? It would also be well to ascertain whether the towns they visit have not been already volunteered and thus avoid duplicating the work and wasting the literature which was made possible by the sacrifice of others.

Your Brother in the Lord, GEO. E. BLAKE, JR.—Mass.

''NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS''

Dear Brother Russell:—

I believe many of us would work with greater zeal if we could better realize the opportunities for presenting the truth among those we know. We are apt to think that many have no ear for the message.

Recently I resolved to be more diligent in searching for those who might be hungry for the truth. Accordingly I carried in my produce wagon a supply of BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY, No. 61, displayed more conspicuously than usual, so as to attract attention.

One thanked me very kindly for a copy. I had known him to be somewhat friendly to the truth. Another came to the wagon with Bible in hand, and when asked whether a Baptist or a Methodist replied Presbyterian, but had lately begun to read Pastor Russell's SCRIPTURE STUDIES and was greatly interested in them; adding, ''I have gone to my Pastor with some Bible questions that he has so far failed to answer.'' Another asked my purpose of displaying the papers, and said he had two little books which were very interesting that he wanted me to read. They were TABERNACLE SHADOWS and the HELL booklet. He asked me to bring him Vol. I on the next trip.

In our daily petitions we remember you and the harvest work. Pray for me that I may never look back.

Yours by His grace. F. M. MORRIS.—Florida.

THE PRESENT CRISIS

"Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet."—Matthew 24:6.

The Scriptures speak of a great time of trouble in the conclusion of this Gospel age. Our Lord in the prophecy recorded in Matthew 24 mentions this great time of trouble. Under a figure of the distress of earth and the shaking of the heavens, etc., he tells of the momentous events of our day. In connection with it he says, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads and rejoice; for your redemption draweth nigh"—linking this great climax to the deliverance of the church, their change from earthly nature to heavenly nature.

It is in this connection that our Lord says, "Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars; all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." These continued all through the age. We are not to think of wars as being the particular thing that the Master had in mind when he referred to the great trouble with which this age will close. That trouble is pictured in Daniel's prophecy as "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation."—Daniel 12:1.

Our Lord speaks of this same time of trouble and says that Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. (Luke 21:24) These "times of the Gentiles" represent a period during which the world was to be ruled by Gentile nations. The Gentiles were to show their skill in giving the world a government. This giving of the world into the hand of Gentile governments followed the taking away of the typical kingdom from typical Israel. With Zedekiah's fall and the taking away of the crown from him, the Lord declared an overturning of his government until the establishment of Messiah's kingdom.—Ezekiel 21:25-27.

Simultaneously, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, which portrayed the Gentile rule of earth during the interregnum of God's kingdom. Daniel showed the king the dream, which the monarch had forgotten, and gave him the interpretation. The king had dreamed of a great image, the head of which represented the Babylonian kingdom; the breast of silver, the Medo-Persian kingdom; the belly and thighs of brass, the Grecian kingdom; the legs of iron, the Roman Empire. The Holy Roman Empire was represented in the feet, part of clay and part of iron. A stone was to smite the image upon the feet, which were iron and clay, and break them to pieces. This crushing of the feet of the image was to come in the end of the age, and would be the preparatory step to the establishment of Messiah's kingdom.—Daniel 2:31-45.

So long as these governments would be here, they and Messiah's kingdom could not co-operate. The Gentile governments are based on selfishness and coercion; Christ's kingdom will be based on justice, love, mercy, under the Prince of Peace. The two could not rule at the same time. Hence it was foretold that Messiah at his second coming will first bind the "strong man" of Gentile supremacy, and on the ruins of earthly dominions establish a righteous Government.

The present terrible war is not the great time of trouble in the fullest sense of the word, but merely its forerunner. The great time of trouble of the Scriptures will be brought on by anarchy—the general uprising of the people; as the Prophet says, "every man's hand against his neighbor, no peace to him that goeth out or to him that cometh in."—Zechariah 8:10.

FRUIT OF THE VINE OF THE EARTH

The Lord declares that he has a hand in these matters that are a natural outcome of human selfishness, aggressiveness and greed. The Lord has to do with all this, in that at the appropriate time he granted to the world the knowledge which is stirring them up. In other words, men with sin and selfishness in their hearts are not in a position to use knowledge wisely, rightly. Without reflecting upon any person or class we can see that if the knowledge that is in the world should continue to increase, a certain few, by that increase of knowledge, would get far ahead of the others—until finally the wealth would be massed in the hands of the very few, and the whole world would become the serfs of these few. The money in the hands of the wealthy increases rapidly. On the other hand the population doubles in a century. Who cannot see that under present conditions there would eventually be nothing but slavery for the masses, governed by an autocracy?

As long as governments are strong, their overthrow will be impossible. Our thought, often presented in these columns, is that a great war will weaken the nations, preparatory to the period of anarchy. Such a great war, crippling the world financially and discrediting the rulers in the eyes of their peoples, will open the way for the anarchy. The people of former times looked upon their rulers as demi-gods. This veneration for authority still obtains to some extent, especially in Russia, where the people almost worship the Czar—except those who are anarchists. The present war is the one we have expected. It will drain the world of blood and treasure. Then the nations, sick, weak, faint, will fall a prey to Socialism, which will become anarchy. Thus in accord with the Bible predictions earth will be prepared to welcome Messiah's kingdom as "the desire of all peoples."—Hag. 2:7.

"Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until that day when I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may bring the nations together to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for the whole [social] earth shall be devoured by the fire of mine anger. And then will I turn unto the people a pure message."—Zephaniah 3:8, 9.

What did Jehovah mean by "wait ye?" He meant that we are to wait for his time. He told us of the general leveling of the things of this world; he declared that all the kingdoms will be submerged in general anarchy. There will be a fervency of heat, discussion, tumult, strife, and at this time the nations of the world will "melt"—go down quickly. We believe this. We are not thinking of Christians as contending with the sword; for those who take the sword are to perish by it, our Lord said. God's people are to stand aloof, recognizing that "the powers that be are ordained of God," in that he permits them, while he has full power to make changes. If he permits them, it is not for us to seek to overthrow them.

This symbolic burning of the world is sometimes referred to by secular writers. In the newspapers we frequently read about "the great conflagration"—speaking of this fire of trouble, strife, confusion. The elements that will "melt with fervent heat" will be the labor element, the artisan element, the capitalistic element, the religious element, etc. The Lord has been gathering the nations, as he said he would in this "day"—within the last forty years. This gathering means the drawing of the nations together. All the nations of Europe—and even China—are nearer to us today than Chicago was seventy years ago. The nations are drawn closely together by the Atlantic and Pacific cables, so that China and Japan are within a few hours' communication with us, and a financial panic affects the whole world within twenty-four hours.

While the Lord has been doing this work, we are not to think that he is pitting these nations against each other. He has permitted them to work out their selfish propensities, and the result is strife. Knowledge is doing this—bringing on the restless social condition.

THE FINAL OUTLOOK

We see that this war has been brought on by very peculiar circumstances. Russia and Austria have each long been anxious to have an opening to the Mediterranean; but they have been fearful that a great war would result from any attempt to secure it. They have more or less "egged on" the smaller states—the Balkan States. They have done everything that they could to weaken each other's influence in these states—the "Buffer States," as they are called. Paid agents have been sent into that region by one nation to create antagonism against the other.

Austria thought that she had a good excuse for war against Servia on account of the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne by a Servian. She hoped that this excuse would seem to be sufficient. She hoped that Russia would say nothing; or that, otherwise, Germany's shaken fist would deter her. But this time it did not work. Russia determined to support the Servians, who are her kinsfolk; and this has brought in the other nations.

Apparently the great European kings and emperors realize that their own thrones are tottering, and also that this war may unify their people. The willingness of the people is an important factor in connection with any war. A war with another nation is preferable to the civil strife of a social upheaval. Their judgment is approved by facts. A Socialist in Paris the other day said something against the war, and he was assassinated immediately.

Our thought is that this war will so weaken all the nations, so impoverish them, as to make them ready for the anarchy which the Bible portrays. The disbanding of the troops and the returning of them to their homes, disappointed, dissatisfied

and angry with the kings, rulers, nobles, will result in the anarchy which will doubtless prevail throughout Europe—and extend to every nation, as the Bible predicts. We understand that Christ's kingdom is associated with this in the sense that Christ is about to take to himself his great power and reign. The Lord speaks of the anarchists as "his great army" in a figurative way, just as he speaks of the caterpillars, which are used figuratively to represent his army. The saints will not be in that army at all. The Lord has used even the devil as his agent, and "the wrath of man to praise him." Anarchists may be part of the Lord's great army in that he will supervise their campaign.

Eventually, the United States will become involved, and so fall with the other nations; not necessarily because the United States will engage in this war, however. To do so would be very foolish indeed. Our government is strong because the people govern themselves; they have their own government and their own liberties, and can change their own laws. We believe that they are doing this more and more, and are preparing to do so still further, so that finally our Government will come down to a socialistic basis. But before this shall happen, the wealthy, seeking to protect themselves, will doubtless bring things to pass in violation of the laws, and will thus precipitate trouble, believing that they are resisting injustice. Wise would it be for all to accept as gracefully as possible the inevitable leveling; but will they be wise?

It is human nature to make the streets run with blood rather than to suffer defeat and surrender "vested rights." The people are being led on by hatred, and an appeal to unreason. While certain truths are presented, the presentation is not truthful. But many are being inoculated, and are preparing, as they think, for Socialism—we would say, for anarchism, here as easily as in Europe.

ARMAGEDDON STILL FUTURE

While it is possible that Armageddon may begin next Spring, yet it is purely speculation to attempt to say just when. We see, however, that there are parallels between the close of the Jewish age and this Gospel age. These parallels seem to point to the year just before us—particularly the early months.

The Scriptures indicate that the Gentile governments will receive from their own peoples their first notice that their lease of power has expired. The people will take note of the sign of the Son of Man in the heavens. The judgments of the Lord will begin to be manifest in the world, and will run counter to many of their interests. This manifestation of his presence is Scripturally called the epiphania, the shining forth, the revealment, of the King of Glory. "He shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10) As a result, the nations of earth will be broken to pieces like a potter's vessel.—Psalm 2:8, 9.

The prophetic forecast tells us that the trouble will begin in the ecclesiastical heavens, and later will proceed to the social element. The picture given of the end of Gentile times is that of a stone striking the image of Gentile supremacy in its feet. (Daniel 2:34, 35) The impact will be so sharp and so thorough as to leave nothing of them. Having had their day, they will cease to be—"become like the chaff of the summer threshing floor." The next event in order will be the Messianic kingdom, of which it is written, "The desire of all peoples shall come."

"MAN PROPOSES—GOD DISPOSES"

[Reprint from our issue of October 15, 1898, which please see.]

THE TRIED AND PROVEN PEOPLE

"The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."—Deut. 13:3.

God had entered into a covenant with the Children of Israel, in harmony with His promise made to Abraham their father. Four hundred and thirty years after his covenant with Abraham, the Lord had called Israel out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, and had made them a nation in the wilderness. He had proposed to them that if they would keep his law and his statutes he would make of them a great people, above all other peoples of the earth. They had entered into this covenant with the Lord, and had declared that they were very glad to accept this divine arrangement and to have the opportunity of carrying God's blessing eventually to all mankind. But now Israel was about to cross over Jordan and enter the land of promise. Before parting from them, Moses explained to them that it was not enough that they had accepted the conditions of the covenant and become the Lord's people: God would test them, would prove them.

Why should God prove them? As a people they had left Egypt under the leadership of the chosen servant of God. They had crossed the Red Sea, and sung their praises for deliverance. They had journeyed forty years in the wilderness. They had been refreshed with the water from the smitten rock. They had been fed with the bread from heaven. God knew all about them when he took them for his people. What more could he wish?

Ah! but their fathers had rebelled against God, and had fallen in the wilderness because of sin, because they had murmured against him whom they had covenanted to serve. And now Moses explained that God wished to prove to what extent the covenant would be kept by these their children. He said: You have entered into this agreement which God made with your fathers. You have made a consecration to be the servants of the Lord. Now, are you ready to perform the terms of your agreement? "The Lord your God doth prove you, to see whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."—Deuteronomy 13:3.

GOD'S WONDERFUL CARE OVER ISRAEL

Do you appreciate God? was the query. Do you realize the value of his kindness? Do you truly love him with all your being—with all your powers, your strength? Are you fully surrendered to the Lord? For "thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness—to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no. He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know, that he might make thee to know that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways and to fear him.

"For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness; thou shalt not lack anything in it. . . . When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments and his judgments and his statutes, which I command thee this day."—Deuteronomy 8:2-11.

SUPREME FAVORS TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

What an exhortation! What an incentive to faithfulness! Who would not worship and serve such a God! And what a wonderful application can spiritual Israel make of this Scripture! How marvelously has our God led us, his covenant people, through the wilderness of this world, and provided for our needs day by day! How the chastenings of his loving hand have kept our feet from wandering; or if we have turned at any time to the right hand, or to the left, how has his love drawn us back! And has he not brought us into a good and, a land of brooks of water, a land of fountains and depths, a land of oil olive and honey, a land wherein we eat bread, the bread of heaven, without scarceness? Truly, we have not lacked anything in it. If Israel of old had reason to prove their gratitude and love to God, how much more reason have we, spiritual Israel!

MOSES' DYING MESSAGE

After Moses has reminded Israel of all the loving kindnesses of the Lord on their behalf and of their solemn Covenant, he proclaimed to them the ordinances of the Lord by which they were to be governed, and then gave them most solemn warnings of the consequences of forgetting God and breaking their

covenant. This discourse, of which our text is a part, and which comprises the larger part of the book of Deuteronomy, was delivered to Israel just before Moses' death in Mount Nebo—the highest point of the ridge of Pisgah—whence the Lord showed him all the land of Canaan, and where he was buried. God had told Moses that he should not go over Jordan, because of his disobedience at the waters of Meribah, when he smote the rock contrary to the command of God. This discourse was his last message to Israel, and is very touching and impressive.

Moses finished his message with these words: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore choose life, that thou and thy seed mayest live, that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest cleave unto him; for he is thy life, and the length of thy days, that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them." Such words were very forceful at such a time; for Moses had told them that he was about to die, and that God would give them a new leader to go with them over Jordan.

ONLY "ISRAELITES INDEED" ARE SOUGHT

As a matter of fact, we know that Israel did not live up to their engagement, as God had assured Moses would be the case. They were like unto their fathers who died in the wilderness. During the centuries of their dwelling in Canaan, however, there were quite a large number who individually proved worthy of the blessing and favor of the Lord. St Paul refers to these in Hebrews 11, and declares their loyalty to God. These are to have a "better resurrection" than their brethren or than mankind in general. The Apostle mentions such characters as Moses, Samuel, David, and many of the prophets and others who were not so honored and prominent as these in an earthly way, but who had the honor of having pleased God.

Their serving the Lord with all their heart and soul could not justify them legally; for they were imperfect and blemished through the fall. But all the powers they had were devoted to the Lord. These became heirs of God—not heirs in the highest sense, because this opportunity was not open in their time. No one could gain this highest position until the Redeemer had come and opened the way. So all these worthy ones who live prior to the Christian era, died in faith, not having received the promise, i. e., its fulfilment. But "they looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." And soon these faithful servants of the Lord will "stand up for their portion."

But we, the church, must all first be perfected. In this class our Lord Jesus holds the highest place, and by the sacrifice of himself he opened the door of opportunity to his brethren of the elect class. "Israelites indeed" were honored with this invitation to become joint-heirs with Christ, sons of God. Only those who love God with all their heart and soul are "Israelites indeed." The average Israelite of our Lord's day was not fit to be of this select company; only "Israelites indeed" accepted the invitation. Throughout this Gospel age these true Israelites have been entering into this wonderful favor with all their heart and with all their soul.

It is not because we are more nearly perfect in the flesh that we have obtained this great favor, but because the Lord opened the way, and because we had a love for righteousness and an honesty of heart. Those who lived before our time, during the Law Covenant dispensation and prior to it, needed justification also; and the same Redeemer who has purchased us has through his sacrifice provided justification for them, that they too may ultimately come into the blessed relationship of sons of God.

IS GOD'S KNOWLEDGE LIMITED?

The way in which this expression of our text is put might give the impression that God does not know the hearts of men. The Scriptures assure us that God can fully read the heart, "that all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do"—no thought or purpose of our heart is hidden from him. But when we think of the Almighty—what he knows or what he does not know—we are at a loss to form an opinion. So far as our experience goes, there is no one who could know just what he himself would do under any given condition in the future. We may think what we would probably do, but we are not sure. And if we are not sure that we ourselves know what we would do, we cannot see how any one else could know what we would do. We cannot by any mental process understand how it would be possible for God to know what we might do tomorrow, unless he coerced our mind or hedged up our way, so that we could do only one certain thing.

In the matter of the Gentile times, God permitted various governments—Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Grecia and Rome—to rule the world successively. We can understand how he could say: "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." The tendency of sin in the fallen race would lead people to go to any length, if not restrained. In such ways, we can understand how God would know in advance. He knows, too, when the church will be selected, as he has a definite plan concerning this selection. He knew that Satan would have the disposition to raise up an anti-christ system—a counterfeit of the true church. He knew how many saints within a given time could be developed under those conditions, and how much time would thus be necessary to gather his predestinated number; for he purposed to permit Satan to operate within certain bounds for the testing of his professed people.

It would not be wise for us to say that there are some things that God could not know, that He does not know—or that there is anything that God does not know—but we can say that we are not able to understand how God could know what we shall think tomorrow, or next week. God made man a free moral agent; and he always respects this free agency, and gives us the opportunity of exercising our own wills. He is not pleased to have people who would work automatically. He permits us to make our own decisions. He has given us his Word, he gives us all needed assistance, and he will help all who are seeking to walk in his way. But these questions, we trust, will all be solved for us ere long. We know that God proves his professed people and demonstrates their heart attitude just as if he did not know—perhaps only as a proof to angels and men.

WHAT WILL THE ISSUE BE?

God is proving the church now. There are many of the professed church of Christ who have never made a covenant with God at all. But he is testing all those who have made a covenant, as to whether or not it is a heart-consecration—whether it is self first or God first—whether it is success in life or the honor of God and the doing of his will. He is trying us because he wishes to find out who will be worthy of a place with his Son on the throne, who will be worthy to reign with him in the kingdom, and who of the remainder will be worthy of a place in the company of antitypical Levites, and finally, who will be deserving of the second death.

Ours, therefore, is not only the high honor of being sons of God during this Gospel age, but also of being proved for the lasting rewards. The Jews that knowingly lived in violation of their law lost merely their temporal life, but did not forfeit their opportunity for the eternal life. But if any of us do likewise, we shall forfeit the life eternal. Therefore, the dealing of God with us goes beyond his dealing with natural Israel. Our responsibility, then, is so much the greater, and the issue is final.

The kingdom is designed only for those who by the grace of God shall in heart, in character, become like the Master, in that they will love the Lord with all their heart, with all their soul (all their present capacity), and be able to say: "Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done." No other heart condition than this of entire submission to God in Christ can make us acceptable for the kingdom; for no other condition represents full loyalty and full love to God. Let us not forget that all the heavenly glories and blessings, which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," God has prepared only for them who love him supremely—and who prove this love. But his grace will be sufficient for our every need.

"Then let us bid each doubt remove—
Those doubts that fain would rise—
And view the Canaan that we love
With unbeclouded eyes!
Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore!"

WHAT IS EVIL SPEAKING?

"Speak evil of no man."—Titus 3:2.

The Apostle's injunction is very positive; we are to speak evil of none. The question then arises, What does St. Paul mean here? Does he mean that we should speak nothing of any man with an evil intention toward him? Or does he mean, Speak no evil, whatever the intention? We answer, We surely know that to speak evil with a wrong motive, a wrong

intention, would be a heinous crime, especially in a child of God. But we think the Apostle meant, No matter what your motive, speak evil about nobody. If that be the Apostle's thought—and we believe it hardly controvertible—it places a very stringent requirement upon all of the Lord's people. If the motive for speaking evil were bad, all the worse; but good or bad, speak evil of no man.

Now another question comes up, What is evil-speaking? We answer, This subject has various sides. To speak evil is to speak that which is injurious; therefore one should say nothing that would injure any man. It is very easy to perceive the justice and the reasonableness of this requirement if we apply the Golden Rule. Would we wish any one to do us evil? Would we wish any to speak slightingly of us, to comment on our faults, or on what the speaker considered faults, and thus lower us in the eyes of others? If the Lord's people would learn to apply the Golden Rule to every affair of life, it would surely be very helpful.

Some of the most conscientious Christians have difficulty along this line. In considering this matter of evil-speaking, some think, Is my motive right? They forget that their motive in speaking derogatively of others has nothing to do with the Apostle's injunction. No matter what the motive, we are not to speak evil. The question is not, Did I have a good intention or a bad one? but, Am I speaking evil? Am I saying anything contrary to the Golden Rule—something that I would not wish to have said of me? We would that we could instil this thought into the hearts and minds of every reader of this journal.

IS REPORTING VIOLATION OF RULES EVIL-SPEAKING?

Now comes another question, How should we apply the injunction of our text in the case of the home, for instance, or the office? Suppose that we are connected with an office or a home where certain rules are laid down for the government of that office or home. Would it in such a case be evil-speaking on our part to report any violation of those rules? We do not consider this evil-speaking. If we were ourselves violating those rules, the person who would report us would be doing right—not doing us evil or wrong or injury. By not reporting the misdemeanor or violation of rules, the person would be encouraging in us a continuation of the wrong course.

God's people are supposed always to have no other than good motives for any course pursued. To have any but a good motive in dealing with others would be to have a murderous motive. We are not, therefore, to take the motive into consideration. But a person who accepts a position in an office, a home or an institution accepts also the conditions and sundry rules connected with such a position. Doubtless nearly all rules and regulations in an office or home are made, not with the view of injuring any one, but for the general welfare of the business or the family or whatever it may be. Hence the observance of all these obligations should be considered a serious responsibility. One should not report an infraction of rules in an evil way, but merely as a fact.

It is not necessary for the one who informs to judge the heart of the one reported. It is not a question of a bad heart. If one has a foolish brain, or is forgetful or inattentive and violates important rules, it is not judging the heart to report such a case—and esepecially where there is a rule that such cases be reported. It is merely a matter of duty—a thing that is required, and is both necessary and proper. We see this principle laid down in God's workmanship in our bodies. If something occurs in the body—for instance, if a finger is being pinched—the nerves immediately telegraph to the brain. If a foot is hurt, the fact is telegraphed to the brain at once. Suppose there were no means of communicating the injury of a member of the body to the brain. Suppose there were no nerves of sensation to convey the message. One might not know whether or not he had lost a finger or a toe. He would not know when he had lost a foot, until he stumbled and fell.

SUBJECT NOT TO BE DISCUSSED WITH THE OFFENDER

We should not be always looking to see if our own personal matters are being impinged. We know that we, as well as others, have imperfections. If others inadvertently tread upon our toes, we know that we are likely to sometimes tread on others' toes. But personal matters are different from those that belong to the family or to the office. It is not busybodying to report violations of the rules of the house or of the office. It is to be the interest of every member of a family or an institution that the interests of whole body be looked after, in a proper and reasonable way.

It would not be proper for any one in an office to attempt to set straight every one else in the office. It is not for any one to go around and correct others; this is not his business. But if another is breaking rules, it is his business to report the facts—the facts, without any coloring whatever. If we would do otherwise, if each one who notes an infraction would go to the one who violated the rules, and thus attempt to settle all the affairs of the office or the family, there would be continual confusion. The one who broke the rule would be disposed to defend himself and to say, "My course was all right, and it is none of your affair whether that gate was left open or shut." etc. But if that gate is left open, it is your duty to report the matter to the proper authority, and thus you are relieved of the responsibility of the affair. This is not a personal matter, such as to be dealt with according to Matthew 18:15-17. It would not be our duty to tell Tom, Dick, Harry, Mary or Jane about the matter. There is just one person to whom we should tell it; and the report should be made with all kindly feeling.

One would soon get himself into trouble if he were to try to run an entire house or office by going to various ones to endeavor to set them right. But if there were a newcomer, and he were unintentionally violating a rule, it might be well to say, It is a rule of the house to do thus and so. But it would not be proper to mention this fact to him more than once. A second violation should be reported, though in a loving spirit.

MISCELLANEOUS CASES

Applying the question to our proper course in the church, in matters relating to ourselves personally, we see where our individual responsibility lies. "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Our Lord does not refer to what he does against some one else, but against "thee." "Well," some one may object, "I think he was doing something against so-and-so." We have heard some one say: "I think Brother So-and-so does not treat his wife right." We reply, "That is his business and his wife's business; it is not your business. Your business is to look after your own wife or husband, your own parents, your own children, and let other people alone. We advise that you practise on yourself. Do your duty in respect to your own affairs, and refrain from comments on those of others."

But suppose we saw something radically wrong, suppose we were going along the street and saw a man cruelly beating a horse, should we say nothing? In such a case, if we saw a policeman, we might say, "Will you take notice of how that man is abusing that horse?" Or it might be reported to the Humane Society, if there were one in the locality. If a parent were brutally beating a child, or something of that kind, it would be proper to report the matter to the authorities. But it is not the business of every one to go about attempting to straighten out matters in general. The world is full of evil, and will be until the kingdom shall take control.

We think that as far as the church is concerned the number of difficulties we see in the world would better be let alone as a rule; for if we should start out to right everything that is wrong, we would not have any time left for serving the King of kings and Lord of lords. Our time is limited enough, at best. People already misjudge us; therefore we do well not to add unnecessarily to the opposition. If the time ever came when we were through with all our duties to the church and to our families, then we might see to some of these outside matters. But we have very little time, and it leaves us very small opportunity to attend to any other matters except our necessary duties and our service for the Lord and the brethren. And for this we should be very thankful; for then if there is opposition against us, it will be only because we have been faithful to our heavenly King.

Our King has not given us authority as yet to set the matters of the world straight. But we are instructed that we should, as we have opportunity, make known the principles of righteousness, without getting into any dispute. When our King comes in and begins his reign, and we are exalted with him, we will show the world what a government should be! But, indeed, it seems surprising how good the laws are even now. We are simply amazed as we think of the good laws of the State of New York, for instance. It is wonderful how the State tries to take care of the interests of the majority, and how much is done for the people; we are glad that the poor world has been able to do so well. We admire what they have done under such adverse conditions. What a grand time it will be, and what a grand world it will be, when everything is under the law of righteousness!

ANOTHER PHASE OF THE QUESTION

But coming back to this matter of evil-speaking in the church; suppose that a brother has been nominated for the position of elder or deacon, and suppose that in our judgment he is unfit for such an office, for certain reasons known to us, but not known to the rest of the Ecclesia. What should be our course in the matter? We are admonished to speak evil of no man. Should we then get up and say, "Brethren,

I consider Brother A. wholly unfit to be an elder; I know that he did thus-and-so; that he cheated a woman out of a sum of money''—or whatever the charge might be. Shall we say this? No, indeed! Is it our duty to speak evil in the interests of the church, to do evil that good may come? Certainly not! But the old creature always wants a chance to speak evil; give him half a chance and he will soon tell all that he knows!

Then what shall we do? Well, if we were ourself a member of that congregation, we think we would go over and speak to the brother thus nominated, and say, ''Brother A., there are certain matters which I have learned about you which I do not wish to mention to anybody. I would not wish to speak evil of you at all, dear brother. But I believe that this feature of your life is wrong, and that it would not be right for this congregation to elect you. I do not wish to tell them about this matter. I wish to ask you if you will refuse to serve. If you promise that you will decline to be elected, that is all that is necessary. Or if you think that my point is not well taken, just state the matter publicly to them. If you do not do this, and do not refuse to be elected, then I must state the matter publicly—I will have to tell what I know; for you know it is as I state it. I have come to you in kindness and have no desire to injure you.''

If the brother answers, ''Well, Brother ——, I will decline the nomination; and as regards the matter you mention, I am trying to get the better of it''—then we would tell him we are very glad. We believe that we would in this way do that brother good. We would also be preserving the class from what would be hurtful or contentious, and would be keeping the peace. If, on the other hand, the brother should be disputatious, we would say to him, ''You may be sure that I will explain this matter to the church, if you do not decline the nomination; for thereby you are saying that you approve your course in life and are standing by it.''

But if the matter were something that occurred in the brother's life long ago, he might be entirely changed by now—in the matter of a year, or two years, or five years, or whatever. We would be glad if he were changed from the old course. Then we might go to the brother and say, ''Brother, I notice that you stood for election. Is your life entirely changed?'' If he replied, ''Yes, Brother; it is changed entirely,'' then we would be glad. But if he got angry and told us it was none of our business, we would say, ''Now, Brother, I must make a report of this to the church. You are indicating by your manner that you are advocating the same course that you took before. If I had done such a wrong, and continued to do wrong, I would wish to have my course checked. So I shall report this matter, that the class may consider again whether they will have you for an elder (or a deacon).'' But suppose that the brother should not be nominated for office in the church? Then we would consider that his past was none of our affair.

A CONCLUDING WORD OF EXHORTATION

Anything injurious to the real interests of another should never be spoken. We cannot be too careful of our words concerning others. There seems to be a tendency with some of the Lord's children to indulge in confidences with others of the brethren and to relate incidents that reflect upon another brother or sister, show up certain manifestations of weakness in that one. The disposition that thus exposes the imperfections of the brethren is surely not the love that covers. (1 Peter 4:8) We know some who have been long in the narrow way, who do not seem even yet to have overcome this disposition. Do they forget that they themselves have weaknesses perhaps as pronounced as the brother or sister whom they criticize? The very fact that they ignore the Master's injunction along the line of our text proves their own lack of development. Yet these would probably resent the implication that they are guilty of evil-speaking.

The sooner every follower of Christ comes to see that all this is slander, that it is besmirching the good name of a brother or sister, that it is a direct violation of the repeated injunction of the Word of God, and that defamation is theft of another's reputation, the sooner they will see this subject as it really is, in all its hideousness—as it must appear in the sight of the Lord. Once seeing the matter from the divine standpoint, the only true standpoint, the child of God must surely awaken to the greatest possible energy in overcoming such works of the flesh and of the devil. Let each one who reads these words search his or her own heart and think over his or her own conduct, and then ask the question, ''Is it I?''

Let every one who hopes to be accounted worthy of a place in the kingdom, so soon to come, purge out the old leaven of malice, envy, backbiting and strife, if any yet remain, that he or she may become indeed a copy of God's dear Son. The flesh is very seductive, and is inclined to make all manner of excuses for itself. Let each one make this a matter of personal heart-searching. There is, we believe, only a very little while remaining in which to perfect our characters. Let us pray more earnestly than ever, ''Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth! Keep thou the door of my lips!''

JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS

SEPTEMBER 20.—Matthew 25:31-46.

''Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me.''—Verse 45.

Having given his disciples many parables illustrating the experiences of the church, the kingdom class, in their development and preparation for kingdom honor, it was eminently proper that Jesus should give the parable of this lesson to illustrate the work of this kingdom after its establishment—to show its purpose, and its effect upon the world of mankind.

Many of us have in the past read the Bible too carelessly. Our minds were sluggish respecting spiritual things. For instance, today's lesson was at one time applied to the church. We failed altogether to notice that it says not a word respecting the church, but is entirely applied to the world, to the nations, the heathen. For centuries the Jews had been accustomed to think of themselves as God's nation, God's people. All others they styled heathen. Gentiles, the people, the nations; and in the prophecies God treated the matter from this standpoint. So when spiritual Israel was received into divine favor as the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people, all the remainder of mankind were properly enough to be thought of and described as ''the nations,'' ''the Gentiles.''

In line with this, our Lord in this parable tells what is to befall after his kingdom shall have been set up—after the selection of the true church class to be the bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir in his kingdom, in his throne. This, we notice, is very clearly stated by the Master, saying ''When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.'' Who, after proper consideration, will say that this is a matter of the past? Who will dispute that this is a description of Messiah's kingdom following his parousia and his epiphania at his second advent?

APPLICATION OF THIS PARABLE

Then follows a description of the work of the Millennial age. ''Before him shall be gathered all nations.'' This means all the people of the world outside of the Lord's holy nation, his peculiar people, the church. Everybody except the church will be before his great white throne of justice, mercy and love; that will be their judgment time.

Six thousand years ago, Adam and his entire race were judged in Eden, and the sentence was death. None of the race are worthy of everlasting life. They are all sinners. In due time God sent his Son to die for Adam's sin, in order that, ''as by a man came death [of the entire race], by a man [Jesus] also will come the resurrection of the dead'' [the entire race]. ''For as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive''—''every man in his own order.''—1 Corinthians 15:21, 22.

The first order to be made alive in Christ is the church, called out of the world, separated, ''begotten again'' of the holy Spirit. These pass their judgment, their trial, for life everlasting or death everlasting in the present time. Hence the worthy ones, with characters formed pleasing and acceptable to God, will be quite ready to be Messiah's bride class, joint-heirs with him in his kingdom and in his work of judging the world. He has promised that all the faithful shall sit with him in his throne—the very throne pictured in the words of our text—the throne before which all the nations, all the people outside of the church, will be gathered.

The gathering of the world will be the result of knowledge. The time of trouble will lead on to great enlightenment, in which all the blind eyes will be opened, all the deaf ears will be unstopped, and the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth. Some there will be who, resisting this knowledge, will decline to accept Christ and will not come into this judgment; but after a hundred years of resistance these will be destroyed.

Those in the parable are such as have accepted Christ's terms and desire to be on judgment, or on trial, for everlasting life. This will include all in their graves, who, the

Master tells us, will come forth, not all at once, but gradually. Messiah's kingdom will exercise its power and disseminate the knowledge of God and of righteousness, with a view to encouraging, helping and uplifting all the willing and obedient. All such may rise more and more out of sin and death conditions—out of imperfection of mind and body and out of immoral conduct to the full image of God, as possessed by father Adam in the beginning.

It will be the work of the entire Millennial age to bring this about. Righteousness will reign then, as sin reigns now. That is to say, it will be in control, in the ascendency; and whosoever will sin then will suffer promptly. Hence all the nations will be avoiding sin. Then the world in general will be a grand place, where "nothing shall hurt or destroy"; where "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick"; where the curse shall be gradually rolled away, and there shall be no more crying, no more sighing, no more dying; and where the blessing of God, bringing perfection, will prevail. "O happy day!" we exclaim. And surely it will be such; for all who live through those thousand years will have a great blessing.

THE LAW OF RETRIBUTION OPERATIVE

But, some inquire, what about the sins of the world? Will there be no chastisements, no punishments, for these? We answer that it will be equally as just for God to forgive the sins of the world for Christ's sake as it has been just for him to forgive the sins of the church for Christ's sake. If the one is just, so will be the other; for God is no respecter of persons, and is equally as willing to forgive the sins of the world as the sins of the church, when the world, repenting of sin, will turn from it, accepting Christ as their Redeemer.

This does not mean, however, that justice is to be ignored. In the case of the church, note how the sins of youth may leave their scar and sting to the end of life. And so we may reasonably assume that certain strifes, or punishments, will be permitted to follow the world in just the same manner. It will be from these weaknesses and frailties that they will be gradually raised up to perfection during those blessed thousand years of Christ's kingdom, when Satan will be bound and not be permitted to deceive any during that period.

But what about heart condition? If conformity to the divine law in an outward way will bring blessings to all, will there not still be a difference between the people—some coming heartily into accord with the Father, and others merely outwardly into harmony, because this outward harmony will be the way to restitution, perfection?

Undoubtedly this is correct reasoning. It is along this line that the parable before us teaches; namely, that outwardly the "sheep" and the "goats" will have much the same appearance and demeanor, except to the Judge, the King, who will read the heart and ultimately will manifest to all that there has been a real heart-difference between the two classes, all of whom will have been on trial for a thousand years, receiving blessings from the kingdom.

THE BASIS OF JUDGMENT

All the while each individual will be making character. This character will be fully appreciated by the great Judge, and the individual will be rated either as a "sheep" or as a "goat." All the sheep-class will thus be received at the right hand of the great Jehovah; and all of the goat-class will be rated as out of favor with him, even though all the while they will be receiving the blessings of the Millennial kingdom and outwardly rendering obedience to its laws.

Not until the conclusion of the Millennium will the decision of the Judge be manifested. Then great surprise will be shown at his decision—by both parties. To the "sheep" at his right hand he will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father [the kind that my Father is pleased to bless and to grant everlasting life! Come,] inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." When God laid the foundation of the earth and planned its human habitation, it was his design to give it to you. Now the time has come for you to enter into this kingdom and to possess it.

This is not the same kingdom as the Messianic kingdom. On the contrary, it is the kingdom which God gave to Adam, which Adam lost through his disobedience and which Christ redeemed by the sacrifice of himself. It will be given only to those who will have developed the God-like character—those who will have become the Lord's "sheep" during the Millennium.

Then the other class, the goats of the parable, will be sentenced: "Depart, ye accursed ones [doomed ones], into everlasting punishment." Granted all the privileges, blessings and experiences of a thousand years of contact with righteousness, truth and the spirit of God, you indeed render an outward obedience, but at heart you have not come into harmony with God. I cannot recognize you as my sheep. I cannot present you to the Father blameless and irreprovable. You must be destroyed; the punishment is the second death, "everlasting destruction." The penalty upon you is an everlasting one because there will be no further provision made for your redemption or for your resurrection from the second death. You will be as though you had never been. You have failed utterly to appreciate the goodness of God and to copy his character-likeness. Eternal life is only for those who have God's likeness and God's spirit. "The Father seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth."

Both classes, the "sheep" and the "goats," were surprised at what the King, the Judge, declared to be the basis of his judgment. To the sheep he said, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me." To the goat-class he said, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not."

Both "sheep" and "goats" claimed that they had no knowledge of any such experiences. When did we minister unto thee? When did we fail to minister unto thee? The answer was, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of my brethren, or did it not unto him, ye did it, or did it not, unto me.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SHEEP CLASS

Now, who are these respecting whom there will be a test upon the sheep-class and upon the goat-class? Will there be people sick, hungry and in prison during the Millennium? Does the Lord wish us to understand that there will be such? We have, on the contrary, always assumed that sickness, poverty, hunger and prisons will then be gone forever. What does it all mean?

The meaning is plain. With the establishment of the Millennial kingdom all who come into harmony with it will have the great privilege of doing something to help others. The world is blind and starved now, for lack of spiritual food and the anointing eye-salve of the truth. While the Millennial blessings will be showered upon those who accept the Lord's terms, there will be others who will need assistance. Those who have the spirit of God, the spirit of love, will be glad to carry the heavenly message of reconciliation to all humanity, glad to apply the eye-salve to the blind, glad to unstop the ears of the deaf, glad to help the sin-sick back into harmony with God—to the blessings of Messiah's kingdom, to the way in which these may be obtained—helping them to cover their nakedness with the merit of Christ.

All who will take pleasure in this work will thus be manifesting that they have God's spirit and are co-laborers with him. All these will be the sheep. On the other hand, those who will be careless in respect to their vow, and merely enjoy the Millennial blessings themselves, will be of the goat-class and will thus be marking themselves as "goat," and correspondingly will be out of favor with the great King of kings, their Judge, the Lord of Glory.

THE WORLD'S RESURRECTION

The prison referred to in the parable is undoubtedly the great prison-house of death, into which approximately twenty thousand millions already have gone. All these are to come forth. But the Scriptures declare that they will not all come forth at once, but "every man in his own order." Only the church will be in the first resurrection.

During the Millennium the awakening from the sleep of death, the prison-house, will come about by divine power, of course, but we believe in answer to prayer. Each family circle, as it can prepare for another and another member, will be glad to do so, and will make request for his return. Thus the race will come out of the "prison-house" in reverse order to that in which they entered, and will be acquainted with, identified by, and prepared for by their friends, their relatives.

While the blessing of the Lord will provide an abundance for all, nevertheless we may safely assume that the provision will be in the hands of their fellows. It will be the "sheep" that will be especially interested in, praying for and preparing for, those who are in the great prison-house of death. And by so engaging their time and energy these "sheep" will be manifesting a purpose, a will, in harmony with that of the Creator. God has willed that all who are in their graves shall come forth at the command of Jesus (John 5:28, 29), and those in sympathy with God and Christ will be co-laborers with God in accomplishing the work for which Christ died. Any not interested in that work will be lacking in God's spirit; and this is exactly what is charged against the goat-class.

He who sits upon the throne, having redeemed the world of mankind and having provided for the resurrection of all these redeemed ones, counts them as in a certain sense representing himself—as he says in the parable: "I was an hungered, and ye fed me; I was sick and in prison, and ye visited me," ministered unto me and helped me.

Likewise the reproof to the goat-class: to these he said, You were not interested in the things of God. Your interest was merely personal, a selfish one. You have enjoyed the blessings of these glorious thousand years, and that is all that God has provided for you. You are not of the kind to whom he is pleased to grant everlasting life. You will therefore die. You have more or less of the selfish spirit, which is the spirit of Satan, and as God's provision for all who will not be in fellowship with him in spirit is destruction, this is to be your portion—the second death.

The eternal fire is the fire of God's jealousy or anger, which burns against and destroys everything antagonistic to his righteousness. (Zephaniah 1:18; 3:8) It is, of course, merely a figurative expression representing complete destruction.

NO CROSS, NO CROWN

"The purple grape must be crushed
To make the sweet, red wine,
And furnace fires must fiercely burn
The drossy gold to refine;
The wheel must cruelly grind,
Else where the jewel's light?
And the steel submit to the polishing,
Or how would the sword grow bright?

"How then, my soul, wilt thou
The Spirit's fruits possess,
Except thou lovingly yield thyself
To the Hand that wounds to bless?
Then patiently let the fire
Consume all earthly dross—
Thou canst not hope to wear the crown,
If thou refuse the cross!"

"LET NO ONE TAKE THY CROWN"

SEPTEMBER 27.—QUARTERLY REVIEW.

"I come quickly. Hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown."—Revelation 3:11.

The text of today's study is a prophecy by Jesus himself. Picturing the seven stages of his church, the Master used these words in addressing one of them. There is, nevertheless, an appropriateness in all of the Lord's counsel at any time. So we now, as well as those who were particularly addressed, may find instruction in our text.

It teaches, in harmony with the entire Bible, that there can be no remedy for the reign of sin and death, except that which God has provided, to be applied at the second coming of the Redeemer, when he will set up his kingdom. Meantime, the delay in the fulfilment of our prayer, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven," does not indicate any carelessness on the part of the Father or of the Redeemer in respect to the world and its terrible reign of sin and death. It does, however, indicate great composure on God's part and on the part of the Master. It indicates that the plan of God is working, and that it will ultimately bring a blessing to the whole world, the blessing which God has promised since the days of Abraham—the blessing of all the families of the earth.

God has from the beginning foreseen how the six great days of the reign of sin and death could be wisely permitted, in view of the power to be exercised by Messiah's kingdom. Messiah will be quite competent, backed by power divine, to cope with sin, sorrow, pain, death—everything that is now troubling humanity. The time appointed of the Father, a thousand years, will be abundantly long. And when the church shall have been selected from the world as the bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir in his kingdom, everything will be ready for the blessed work of restitution, restoration, resurrection, regeneration of mankind—to bring the willing and obedient back to the image and likeness of the Creator, lost through Adam's sin and gained through the willing obedience of Christ, even unto death—even the ignominious death of the cross.

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE CHURCH

Our text addresses not the world, not the nominal church—but the true church. The true church, having turned away from sin, having accepted Christ, having given their hearts to God, through Christ having been accepted of the Father and begotten of the holy Spirit, are children of God; and, as the Apostle says, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" our Lord. (Romans 8:17) A crown of glory is set apart for each son thus received of the Father, and the name of each is recorded in the Lamb's book of life.

So far as God is concerned, the whole matter is settled. But so far as the church is concerned, it still remains for them to fulfill their covenant. Having presented their bodies a living sacrifice to God, acceptable through Christ, they are to continue in that attitude—day by day gladly presenting their bodies, willing to endure, to suffer, to be anything and everything that God would be pleased to have them be. All who do this continue to grow in character-likeness to the Lord Jesus; and all such will thereby make their calling and election sure.

But should any of these neglect this covenant of sacrifice, and through fear of death be subject to bondage either to sin or to sectarian errors, or in any other manner fail to be responsive and loyal to their covenant, they will thereby fail to maintain their election and make it sure. After a time of testing they will be relegated to a secondary place; they will be no longer counted part of the royal priesthood, even though they might still maintain their standing as Levites, servants of the priests.

This is the thought of the text; namely, Be of good courage. It will not be long until I will come to receive you to myself. Let the thought of the kingdom and of the divine blessing connected with it cheer, strengthen, comfort you, and make you strong to do God's will faithfully, nobly, courageously, loyally. "Hold fast that which thou hast." Do not let slip from you the blessed relationship which was entered into, which was established for you by me, your Master, when I made you acceptable on the basis of your covenant to be dead with me, to suffer with me, to give up all earthly ambitions and to strive daily for the great prize which I set before you—a joint-heirship in my kingdom.

'The crown is yours now, by virtue of the arrangement which I have made with you as your Advocate, and by virtue of the covenant of sacrifice which you have made with me. Hold fast your crown! Do not allow it to pass to another. If any one of you is unfaithful, God will not permit you to have a share in that kingdom, but will enroll another name than yours, will apportion another name instead of yours as a new covenanter.'

THE NUMBER OF THE ELECT

This Scripture, with others, shows us definitely that the church is to be composed of a definite, fixed number—not one more, not one less. This is also illustrated in the body of the Jewish high priest. The head of the priest represented Jesus; the body of the priest represented the church. As the Apostle says, "Now are ye the body of Christ, and members in particular." "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." "God hath set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." "There are many members, but one body."—1 Corinthians 12:27, 12, 18, 20.

According to the Law, no one could serve in the office of high priest unless he had the full number of members—fingers, toes, etc. (Leviticus 21:17-21) No one could serve who had a superfluous member—an extra finger, an extra toe. Thus the Lord indicated the completeness of the antitypical priesthood, The Christ.

In Revelation, Chapter 7, we have a picture of the church, the antitypical royal priesthood. Then following that picture we have one of the antitype of the Levite class. The first shows a definite number, one hundred and forty-four thousand—twelve thousand for each of the tribes of Israel. Thus God indicates that he is following out a definite purpose. Israel was first invited to be this royal priesthood. (Exodus 19:5, 6) At Pentecost a few out of the different tribes responded, and became the nucleus, or earliest members, of the church. Then the door of opportunity was opened to the Gentiles; and all coming in are assigned to places in the twelve tribes to fill up the vacancies. This the Apostle Paul pictures in Romans 11—the wild olive branches being grafted into the olive tree to take the places of the branches broken off because of unbelief.

Those loyal to the Lord, yet not sufficiently loyal to be of the bride class, after having been tested as to their loyalty

and proven worthy, will constitute a great company, an innumerable company, a company whose number no man knows—a company whose number is not fore-ordained. The discipline through which these will be put is pictorially stated. They will come through great tribulation, and wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. They must in the end be faithful; else they will not have any part or lot with Christ in his work.

But since this testing needed to come upon them as a judgment, because they did not voluntarily and full-souledly keep their covenant of sacrifice, therefore they cannot be of the elect body of Christ. They will miss the throne. They miss the glorious crown of the divine nature—immortality. But they receive palm branches, signifying victory, and we have the assurance that they will be permitted to serve God in and through his temple, the church, which is the body of Christ.

GOD'S MUCH DIVERSIFIED WISDOM AND MERCY

"For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches."—Romans 11:15, 16.

The Jewish nation was reconciled to God in a typical way, and thus became his peculiar people. All his promises belonged to them—no such promises were made to the Gentiles. The relationship of the Jews to God was through their covenant. But after eighteen hundred and forty-five years of special favor, their rejection of Messiah demonstrated their unworthiness of a continuance of their special privileges. In the time of testing they were found wanting, and were given over to blindness and disruption until their "double"—eighteen hundred and forty-five years of disfavor—should be accomplished.

All, however, were not thus rejected from favor. A faithful remnant were gathered into the Gospel fold, while the remainder were "scattered and peeled." This faithful remnant were the first-fruits class of the church of Christ. God then sent his message out to the whole world. Romans, Greeks, British, French, Germans, Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, etc.—all nations—have had the same opportunity. This does not mean that all individuals of all nations have been given this opportunity; but that the Lord has selected here and there one of suitable character, who gladly responded to the message—those who, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, had the hearing ear. God gave to these the message of reconciliation, and sent them forth to bear the glad tidings to others of the same class.

All who believed that message were reconciled to God through the death of his Son. They have been a company of sacrificers, gladly laying down their lives as followers in the Master's steps. The message of this great salvation has gone forth through all the years of this present age, and some from every nation have responded and come into the Body of Christ. This could not have been if the Jews had not proven unfaithful as a nation and been turned aside from favor. The Gentiles have known this. They saw that the favor of God, the blessing of God, turned to them at the same time that it was withdrawn from the Jews.

"LIFE FROM THE DEAD"

The natural Israelites, even after their rejection from favor as a people, had still an opportunity as individuals of coming into Christ, but no special favor as a nation. Indeed, their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah, and their bitter prejudice and blindness have acted as a great gulf to separate them as a people from the Gospel message; and but very few of them have ever accepted God's message in Christ. As the Apostle here declares, their blindness as a nation is not to be removed until "the fulness of the Gentiles [to complete the Gospel church] be come in." This time is now about here; the Gospel church is about complete.

Do we remember how the restoration of natural Israel is to be accomplished? Yes. The Scriptures declare that it is to be brought about through the New Covenant—"This is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." It will be at the establishment of Messiah's kingdom; Messiah is then to inaugurate this covenant. What will this mean to the Jews? It will mean that their "double" is fulfilled, that "their appointed time is accomplished, that their iniquity is pardoned." [See STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. 2, Study 7.] It will mean their resurrection from the dead—both nationally and individually, both symbolically and literally. "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world [in the receiving of the Gentile 'wild olive branches' into the 'olive tree,' from which the majority of the Jews were broken off], what shall the receiving [back] of them be, but life from the dead?"—Romans 11:15.

Here we have another Scriptural teaching of the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead. The promises are to be fulfilled which were made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, the prophets and others. Though God cast the nation off for a time, he will regather them, according to his promise, when their period of chastisement shall be ended—their "seven times." [See Vol. 2, Study 4] Extending the thought, we see that the promise of God to Abraham of the blessing of all the nations and kindreds and families of the earth through his seed—the heavenly and the earthly, "the stars of heaven" class and "the sands upon the seashore" class—must yet be fulfilled. (Genesis 22:15-18) The fulfilment of this promise will necessitate the awakening of the entire human race from the tomb. Thus the munificence of God's wonderful provision for his human creatures is soon to be manifested to angels and men—to the living and the dead—to all the human family.

FIRST-FRUIT AND AFTER-FRUIT—ALL HOLY

In verse 16 the Apostle is showing that as the first-fruit of this great "olive tree" growing out of the root of the Abrahamic Covenant is holy, so is the entire fruitage. Although this promise to Abraham was given directly to his earthly seed, nevertheless God, who knew the end from the beginning, knew that the first-fruit of this promise would be Abraham's spiritual seed—the Christ, Head and body. And yet this breaking off of many of the natural branches, and the grafting in of "wild olive branches" to take their place, which has been going on during this Gospel age, was not the limit of God's great plan. It was his purpose to have a holy seed. Abraham was first tested, and all who were to constitute this seed were to be likewise tested; but these were to be used as agents in the hands of Jehovah for the carrying out of his plan of salvation.

As this first-fruit class is holy, the Apostle declares, "the lump is also holy." The word lump here would better be translated mass, for he is speaking of people. The root is holy—the covenant of Jehovah, confirmed by His oath to Abraham. So all who become joined to this root, and receive their life and their privileges and blessings from it, will also be holy.

Abraham typically represented Jehovah God; Isaac represented the Son, our Lord Jesus; and Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, represented the bride of Christ, the members of his body. All these together—Father, Son and bride—will bring forth a holy, earthly Israel. This will eventually include all mankind who shall come under the terms of the New Covenant. So Israel restored, and the entire world—all of the race of Adam who will return to harmony with God—will constitute the "holy lump," or mass—the after-fruit.

Looking at the deep workings of God's plan thus, in the light of what he tells us is future, as well as of what is past, how wonderful it is! Oh, the rich depths of God's wisdom and knowledge! How useless for us to try to discover his dealings except as he is pleased to reveal his plans to us. His doings are all mysteries to us except as we are enlightened by his Spirit. Who knew this gracious plan, so much beyond human conception? Who helped the Lord to arrange such a plan, think you? This is not human wisdom. God only could be its author. A Jew would never have planned to graft in Gentiles to share the chief blessings of the promise. A Gentile never would have arranged the original stock and branches Jewish and himself a favored graft. No, the plan is clearly of God, and well illustrates both his goodness and his just severity. Of him is all the plan; through his power it is all brought to pass, and to him be the glory forever.

INTERESTING LETTERS

LIGHT IN "DARKEST AFRICA"

Dear Brother:—

The Harvest work is growing stronger than in past days. Our friends who were much against the truth are now attending privately, and we are surely showing them the way of our Lord Jesus through his Holy Scriptures, and many are trusting in the truth. I can say that they have some reason for believing the truth now.

Surely we are living in the Time of the End, according to the Scriptures. We are seeing the clergy-people turning the Word of God into fables. They think they can stop the Christian people from sinning—as they call it—by whipping and

by putting them in prison and by making them pay so much money. Can this stop the people sinning? No; not at all! If these were the great Preacher's words and the words of our heavenly Father, and His punishment against the wicked, they would surely stop the people from sinning.

But we read in the Bible that the Deliverer shall come, and the kingdom of God shall come, and all nations shall know the way of our God; but the wicked will he destroy. Also we learn from our Master's lips the saying, "Learn of Me." People may remember that our Lord found the people of Israel doing wrong against the Word of God, and they were proud. But we never see a single line in the Bible saying that he took even one of the Jews to the Roman Governor, to be put in prison, etc.

All these things make us to be strong in faith that the harvest message is true. "Though it tarry, it will come." We had not believed it for a certain time, but when we believed we consecrated ourselves unto death.

I can only let you know how we are doing. We hold meetings twice a month, beginning on Friday and lasting over Sunday. Friday, Bible study; Saturday, discussion; Sunday, public meeting. Another week, the meeting on Friday is Question meeting; praise and testimony meeting on Saturday, and public meeting on Sunday. The number in attendance on Sunday, when we have general meeting, is 1,040, 385, 1,000, etc.; private meetings 36 to 40. But when we call all churches to one place, hundreds of brethren are present!

We thank God for his blessings which he has bestowed upon us. Furthermore, we thank him for showing us his secret and that he gives us wisdom to understand his Holy Scriptures. How glad we are to see these things being fulfilled before our eyes! In Nyassaland we see many things which have been preached in our churches, and what we are learning in the Volumes and WATCH TOWER—all these things are now being fulfilled. How glad we are to see that God has given us wisdom in preaching! How glad we are to see that our Lord is in the midst of us, leading us into his marvelous light! How glad we are that we "which in past times were not a people, are now the people of God"! And how glad we are to be dead to fleshly lusts, but to be alive to spiritual things! May God's blessing rest upon you!

Your younger brother in the service,

H. SIMON ACHIRWA.—Africa.

THE STRENGTHENING CORD

Dear Brother Russell:—

Greetings in the Lord! I feel constrained to write you concerning my recent experiences in the colporteur work, which are unusual. Several days ago I canvassed a lady who is a trance-medium. She did not order the books. Presently I called on another, who bought the Spiritualism book. Still another I called upon in the same block, not knowing in either case that they were Spiritualists.

This one began by telling me she is preparing herself to be a writing and talking medium, and how, at times, "the forces" torment her day and night until she uses strong will-power to disperse them, saying, "Leave me now; I must have rest."

Asking the Lord's assistance, I proceeded to point out from Scripture the origin of these evil spirits—the fallen angels. Strange to say, she accepted it all very readily and asked questions re the same so eagerly! At this juncture peculiar noises were heard about the room; rappings, cracklings and faint chucklings. She noticed my nervousness and said in an assuring tone. "There they are now! It's the spirits, because you are talking about them." No doubt they were much displeased because of fear that she would get her eyes opened. Another medium now entered the room and I left.

How thankful to the Lord I am that he through you has provided the "strengthening cord"—the vow! As the consummation draws nearer we realize how necessary was this provision.

Much interest is now being aroused among the natural Israelites in this city through distribution of "Jewish Hopes and Restoration Prospects." Every family took one. They speak often of having read of Pastor Russell, of Brooklyn, in their Jewish papers. "He tells us of the restoration. Oh, we are so glad 'twill be soon!"

A dear brother bearing your name (Russell), although but three weeks reading the "Helping Hands," is rejoicing in the truth therein. He gives evidence of having made a consecration and is already showing his faith by his works, by helping the Lord's people. He expects soon to see the Photo-Drama of Creation in Boston. The Photo-Drama Scenario is stimulating interest to read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES. This brother desired me to tell you of his appreciation of the truth.

Even where few books are placed it gives the colporteurs great joy to be able to reach even one who is hungering for the Bread of Truth.

I wish to testify to the blessings the Lord in his goodness is sending me—especially through THE WATCH TOWER articles. The March 15th—"Are Ye Able?"—was so strengthening for the "feet-members"!

Praying that the Lord's richest blessings rest upon you to the very end,

Yours by his grace, B. HAYNES.

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"THY JUDGMENTS ARE A MIGHTY DEEP!"

"The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men."—1 Corinthians 1:25.

The plan which God has adopted for dealing with sin and with sinners seems to the worldly mind, to worldly wisdom, to be a very foolish, a very unwise plan. The declarations of the Bible along this line do not appeal to such minds as reasonable. First of all, God created man perfect. Then he placed Adam under conditions where he was tempted and fell into sin. God then pronounced upon him a sentence of death, as He had forewarned him would be the result of disobedience. After thus sentencing man, Jehovah himself provided for a release from that death penalty by furnishing a Redeemer for the sinner at great cost. When he wished to proclaim to the world his provisions for their salvation from the curse, he sent forth preachers chosen from the race of sinners to tell the good tidings.

For nearly two thousand years these preachers have used their best efforts. As some of them would die, others would take their places. But with all the preaching that has been done only a very few have believed the message or given an attentive ear. Often have these imperfect messengers grown weary and faint. They have gone to the Lord with burdened hearts, telling him of the meager results that attended their labors. But the Lord has answered, "Continue to give forth the words which I have delivered to you; this is my will; it is just what I wish you to do." So they have toiled on, leaving the results with God.

But the world has shaken the unbelieving head. To them the proclaiming of such a message has seemed foolish, a waste of valuable time, an evidence of unsoundness of mind. Few have believed that it is of God—even if a God of love existed at all. Yet, as the Apostle tells us, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Corinthians 1:21) He chose this method, which men denominate foolishness, to select a special class for a very special purpose, in connection with his great plan. Although from the human standpoint this appears a very small and weak beginning, as if God's work is almost a failure—if he purposes to save and uplift the world—yet when the plan of God shall have been brought to its glorious consummation, it will be seen by all to have been most wise, powerful and effective. No more shall it be

"The unbeliever's jest, the heathen's scorn."

God is not now choosing the great ones of earth, but chiefly the mean things, the humble and obscure, "that no flesh shall glory in his presence." He is choosing these as instruments to bless the remainder of the world.

LIFE A GREAT BOON EVEN NOW

The question has been asked: How is the love of God to be seen from the standpoint of a deliberate arrangement beforehand which, in its outworking, has involved so vast an amount of sin, suffering and death? In thinking of this question, one should first of all rid himself wholly of the erroneous thought that sin, suffering and dying are only preludes to an eternity of woe. Then we are to remember that God is not in any way our debtor. We are his debtors, even for our existence; he owes the race nothing.

Suppose that we could disabuse all minds of the idea of eternal torture or of a purgatory of suffering after death, and should then say to them, Consider, now: Would you prefer to live on for a few years more, or would you rather die at

once? Or, suppose we put it this way: Are you glad that you have an existence, or would you rather that you had never been born? We believe that the great majority would reply that they desire to live, that they prefer to live as long as possible. They do not wish to die, either today or tomorrow or next year; indeed they would never die if they could help it!

Those who feel that they would be glad to die, or who wish that they had never been born, are those who have had more than ordinarily evil and unhappy experiences; or else they are unbalanced in mind. Many have not so much money as they would like, not so pleasant surroundings and conditions as some have and as they would wish to have. Still life is sweet; and they hold on to it with as firm a grip as possible. Love of life is inherent in man, and has survived even the sorrowful experiences consequent on the fall.

WHY GOD PERMITS THE PRESENT REIGN OF SIN

But why does God permit things to be as they are? This has ever been one of the perplexing problems to the minds of those who have still sufficient faith to believe in the existence of a Supreme Creator. We do not know that we can make the matter any clearer or state it any more plainly than we have stated it in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Volume I., in the chapter on "Why Evil Was Permitted." Putting ourselves in God's place, we are able to see that he must create man either without moral faculties, like the lower animals, or else with mental and moral faculties capable of appreciating the standards of right and wrong, of appreciating his Creator, with power to reason and to choose between good and evil—between obedience and disobedience to that Creator.

Having previously brought into existence the brute creation, God wished to create a nobler order of beings, creatures in his own image and likeness, on the earthly plane of life. He purposed to have a race of beings who were perfect like the angels, able to appreciate the same moral standards, the same principles of righteousness. The question might be asked: How could God so create these beings that they would not be in danger of sometimes falling into sin? Evidently it was not God's purpose so to create them. He desired that they should possess the quality of free moral agency, the power to exercise their own wills for either righteousness or unrighteousness.

At the time of the creation of man, Lucifer, Son of the Morning, began to cherish ambitious designs, disloyal to his Maker. He realized that a race on a lower plane of existence than himself might be induced to choose a course at variance with the expressed will of God—their Creator. Before man's creation God had foreseen that Lucifer would deflect from the path of obedience, would become a rebel against his righteous government, a great adversary, and that as the result evil would break forth later in his empire. He foresaw that through the influence of the rebellious Lucifer (thenceforth Satan—adversary, accuser, hater) man would become disobedient and fall from the condition of perfection in which he would be created.

Knowing this, and doing man no injustice, but creating him with full ability to resist temptation, God so arranged and timed the creation of man that he would be an object of attack by Satan, who would take advantage of the inexperience of father Adam and mother Eve and seek to capture the entire race of man. In other words, God purposed to permit this test to come to man, and knowing that Adam would fail in the testing and thus incur the penalty of death, he designed to make the experience of the race an object lesson to all his created intelligences, and at the same time to so overrule the matter that the human family would themselves eventually be delivered from the evil results of the fall and be greatly blessed, if they would profit by the lessons learned in their bitter experiences with sin, and would come back into harmony with righteousness.

TIME AN IMPORTANT FEATURE

God's infinite wisdom could not approve any as worthy of everlasting life who would not prove themselves to be in full accord with his divine law. The nature of sin is to propagate itself and to produce misery and degradation. With this knowledge God arranged in advance to let man have his own way. He foreknew that intelligent beings with liberty of choice and of will would eventually, if untaught and unrestricted, fall into sin, even though a penalty was attached to disobedience. He chose not to restrain Lucifer.

The plan of God is so comprehensive that it cannot be viewed and judged from the standpoint of a few years—not even of a thousand years or six thousand years. It must be viewed from the standpoint of eternity. It was arranged, not for the well-being of creatures who would live for a few years or a few centuries, but for those who would live throughout eternal ages. His plan must, therefore, be laid so broadly as to include all time and all beings created in his likeness, for his glory and their own eternal good.

We are not to suppose that Jehovah weeps in anguish because mankind are suffering and dying. He is a God of infinite love and sympathy; but from the beginning he knew that man would fall, and that he himself could overrule the entire matter for the ultimate blessing and instruction of men and angels—all his created intelligences; and he purposed so to do. We ourselves know that sin and death with all their direful effects have prevailed in the world for six thousand years. We also know that our God is at the helm, and that all things will be made to work out good in the end. We think of the flood as a terrible overthrow, because so many lives were lost. Yet the calamity would have been far greater if one half had been left to mourn for the others. It is claimed that men do not suffer very much when drowning—that death by this means is comparatively easy.

Six thousand years of sin, sorrow and death seem a long while for humanity to suffer. Yet the majority of the race have not lived beyond the age of twenty years. Perhaps one-half have not lived to the age of five. Very few have reached the age of one hundred years. We all have seasons of comparative comfort, blessing and enjoyment; even under present conditions, God has been very merciful. And from the view point of the glorious future, with its marvelous opportunities of blessing, its hope of eternal life for man, and its great lessons learned for all eternity by all of God's intelligent creatures, the reign of sin and death presents an altogether different aspect from what could otherwise be had.

In permitting the long reign of sin and its train of evils, God has been showing forth the principles of his government, that all may clearly discern in time what are the inevitable results of disobedience to their great Creator. We are sure that Adam and Eve were glad that God did not instantly carry out the sentence of death pronounced against them. We are sure that they were glad to be permitted to continue their existence for many years, even after they had been driven out of the Garden of Eden; and we believe that they had many experiences of more or less happiness, in spite of the tears, the pain and the sorrows that fell to their lot.

So when we view the entire history of the race of Adam, and perceive that all the experiences with sin, suffering and death are to be caused to outwork God's glorious purposes for the world, and are designed to prove a lasting lesson to all his intelligent creatures who now exist or ever will exist, we can see why he has permitted the reign of evil which to man has seemed so long. When we see, too, that God is now choosing a very select class, of very humble and obedient ones, to be used as agencies under his only begotten Son to recover and uplift to perfection and life everlasting all the human race who will accept the gracious provisions, we can understand why he has been pleased to call this class through the "foolishness of preaching," by very imperfect instruments. Thus he has manifested the humble ones, who will receive his message by any means which he is pleased to use, and who are glad to forsake sin and serve him.

A SAVIOR AND A GREAT ONE

God might have said, 'I will lift my curse from mankind and let them have another trial for life—an individual trial.' But even if this had been in harmony with God's Justice, it would not have sufficed alone. Mankind have long been floundering in the mire of sin. They were powerless to profit from any new trial granted them that would not include a Redeemer, a Savior, who was strong, not only to bring about the abrogation of the death sentence by a payment of their penalty, but also to deliver them from all the bonds of sin and death in their members. He must be a savior having power to bind the great adversary who has so long held the race of man in slavery and blindness. He must heal their wounds, open their blinded eyes and their deafened ears, and lift them up, up, into the light and liberty of the sons of God. Truly, man needs a mighty savior; and such, praise God, has been provided in his beloved Son!

As we trace the various steps of the marvelous plan of the ages, we perceive that to all who shall gain eternal life, on whatever plane of being, the path of humility is the path to glory. "He that exalteth himself shall be abased; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." None will be granted the inestimable blessing of life everlasting who are not thoroughly proven and found worthy under testing, who do not cheerfully humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. This principle applies to both human and spirit beings. Only those who gladly obey God, out of love for him and for his righteous laws, will be permitted to live beyond the harvest time of the Millennial age. All others shall utterly perish.

GOD'S GLORIOUS CHARACTER REVEALED

Then the holy in every sphere of life, in every part of the mighty universe of God, shall ascribe glory, honor and

praise to the almighty Creator and to his glorious Son throughout the ages of eternity. All will then see and acknowledge how marvelous was Jehovah's plan of redemption, how far beyond the power of fallen man to fathom. The majesty and glory of the divine character will stand revealed—his unswerving justice combined with infinite compassion, his glorious wisdom, his marvelous love, his mighty power. Then all will bow before him and adore!

"When all thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys,
Transported with the view, I'm lost
In wonder, love and praise!"

THE ANOINTED ONLY ARE COMMISSIONED TO PREACH

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified."—Isaiah 61:1-3.

When the Prophet Isaiah uttered these words he spoke by the power of the holy Spirit. As the Apostle Peter tells us, "Holy men of old spake as they were moved of the holy Spirit." Further, he says, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace which should come unto you, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; unto whom it was revealed, That not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel, with the holy Spirit sent down from heaven."—2 Peter 1:21; 1 Peter 1:10-12.

In our text the word anointed is used in the sense of ordination. The high priests of Israel were successively anointed, or ordained, of God, the anointing oil representing the holy Spirit. Their kings were anointed to reign over the typical kingdom of God, the oil here also representing the holy Spirit. And so Christ, the great High Priest and King, was ordained of God by the anointing of the Spirit. It was not an anointing of men or by men.

In our Lord's case we know exactly when this prophecy was fulfilled. It was when he came to John at Jordan to be baptized, and there presented himself in sacrifice to God. The divine acceptance of this sacrifice was manifested by the impartation of the holy Spirit. John the Baptist saw the Spirit as a dove descending upon the Lord, the sign given to John, but seen by no one else. Jesus recognized that he had received a special anointing and unction from the Father—and others from that time perceived it. We are not to suppose that Jesus performed miracles before he was anointed, but this does not signify that he did not speak kind words and do kind acts before that time; for as a perfect man he possessed the Spirit of God in the full measure that a man in the image of God would possess it.

The fact that our Lord Jesus waited until he was thirty years of age before making his special consecration and receiving his ordination and commission to preach does not mean that his followers should wait until they are thirty before they begin to preach. It was necessary that Jesus should conform himself to the requirements of the law of Moses, given by God to the Jews; for Jesus as a man was a Jew, born under the law and subject, therefore, to its every feature. Full manhood under the law was not attained until the age of thirty. Our Lord came to give him life as a substitute for the forfeited life of Adam. Adam was a complete, perfect man, and our Lord must attain maturity as a perfect man before he could be a perfect substitute, a corresponding price.

THE "BODY" OF CHRIST NO PART OF THE RANSOM

With the disciples of the Lord Jesus during this Gospel age, the matter is quite different. Consecration is appropriate to whoever has the maturity of mind to realize clearly what he is doing—to realize the merit of Jesus' death and the significance of becoming a joint-sacrificer with him. The giving of the ransom is not shared by the followers of Christ. That was his work alone. But his disciples are permitted of God, in the opulence of his favor, to be counted in with Jesus as a part of the Sin-offering for the world, after his merit has been imputed to them and they have become members of his body, which gives to their offering a virtue which it could not otherwise possess. His merit is all-sufficient, and it is his merit that purchases the world, through his body, the church.

The anointing that was upon Christ Jesus continued with him throughout his earthly ministry—the fulness, or completeness, of God's favor rested upon his every word and act. God was manifest in his flesh; for he was the perfect human representation of all the qualities of Jehovah's glorious character. This was demonstrated in his resurrection from the dead after his sacrifice had been finished. Otherwise his work of sacrifice would have been a failure and he would have remained in the congregation of the dead, and there would have been no benefit accruing to mankind from his death. Jesus was begotten of the holy Spirit and anointed at his baptism, and was born a completed spirit being of the very highest rank at his resurrection. No other being had ever been created on this plane of life. Hitherto Jehovah alone had possessed divine, incorruptible life.

OUR TEXT APPLIES TO THE ENTIRE CHRIST

We might have inferred without any direct statement that the words of the Prophet in our text apply to our Lord Jesus, but no doubt is left in our minds when we find that he himself quoted these words in his sermon in the synagogue at Nazareth, where he was brought up. He there stood up and read a part of this prophecy aloud. Then closing the book he said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4:16-21) He pointed out that he was the one referred to by the prophet. And we see the appropriateness of this application in every way.

But while the prophecy was primarily fulfilled in Jesus, and applied especially to him, we understand that it applies also to the members of Christ. These by becoming his body, thus became a part of himself. It is not because of any merit of their own.

This anointing that is on the church comes to us through Christ, flowing down from the head over all the body members, as shown in the type of the high priest of Israel, and as declared by the Psalmist. (Psalm 133:2) The Lord Jesus is our great Advocate with the Father, and in him alone have we any standing before God. We are thus received of the Father as spirit-begotten sons, even as was our Head. We are begotten of the Spirit, as was he.

Our vital union with our Lord as members of his body is also further shown by the Prophet Isaiah. Read carefully the 49th chapter, vs. 7-9, and their interpretation by the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:1, 2. This same Apostle further declares, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ." Again, "The cup for which we bless God, is it not the participation of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the participation of the body of Christ? For we, the many, are one loaf and one body." "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."—1 Corinthians 12:12; 10:16, 17; 12:27.

Again, the Apostle Paul declares of the church, "Whereunto he [God] called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." How the deep sayings of the Savior become luminous in the light shed upon them by the apostles after their anointing of the Spirit! How the Master fulfilled to them his promise made just before his crucifixion! He said, as we remember, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the Spirit of Truth is come, it shall guide you into all truth, for it shall not speak of itself; but whatsoever it shall hear, that shall it speak, and it will show you things to come." (John 16:12, 13) These were the deep things of God, which only the spirit-begotten, spirit-taught children of God can understand.

We are, if faithful, to be made like him and share his exceeding glory. No wonder the Apostle exultingly declared, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Corinthians 2:10.

APPLICATION OF OUR TEXT NOW

The Apostle John says that "the anointing which we have received of him abideth in us." Again, "Hereby we know that we dwell in him [God] and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." The Apostle Peter declares that Jesus

"having received of the Father the promise of the holy Spirit [for the church], hath shed forth this." (1 John 2:27; 4:13; Acts 2:33) It is from the Father and by the Son. This corroborates St. Paul's statement that all things are of the Father, and all things are by the Son. (1 Corinthians 8:6) The Scriptures tell us that we were begotten and anointed of God.

THE CHURCH'S FUTURE WORK

The anointing of the church is for a work yet future. The work of Christ and the church will not be accomplished in this present age. But God gives to those whom he has accepted opportunity to use in his service in the present life talents which he has entrusted to them. They are, as far as they are able, to bind up broken hearts and give "the oil of joy for mourning," and thus to help to allay the sufferings of others, especially of the Lord's household, though they are to assist any as they have suitable opportunity. But their special work in blessing and comforting the world will be in the kingdom. All mankind will be brought back from the tomb and will have all the blessed assistance of Messiah's reign. Everything evil will be uprooted, and everything good will be fostered and blessed.

While the anointed of God are on this side of the veil they are, as his ambassadors, to show forth his praises by telling others of the coming kingdom and the blessings then to be showered upon all, when the favors of the Lord shall be poured out upon all men. They are to tell that these blessings are both for those now living and for those who have gone down into the grave. God's great plan for the world is much broader and grander than once we thought. It is worthy of such a God as ours! Then let us tell to all who have an ear to hear, that the Lord is now pouring out his Spirit upon his servants and hand-maidens, and soon will pour it upon all flesh—all mankind.

We are instructed that this anointed class are to preach to "the meek." They are not to preach to the rebellious or the indifferent; these are to be dealt with by and by. The judgments of the Lord will forcibly break their hearts, and will effectively deal with all. The ambassadors of the Lord are to seek especially all those everywhere who manifest that they are feeling after the Lord, who are not satisfied with the things of the world, but who are longing for better, nobler things, who have and manifest a teachable disposition.

WHO MAY SPEAK IN THE LORD'S NAME

The text intimates that nobody is to speak in God's name except those who have been divinely commissioned to do so. Others may tell the story so far as they have learned it, but they are not authorized to speak in the name of the Lord. We are inclined to think that such do more harm than good, mixing error with truth; for those who do not understand the message have not been commissioned of the Lord to be his ambassadors. With God, human ordination counts for nothing. In human ordination, each denomination qualifies its own ministers. But the ordained ministers of God are servants of God and not of error. They are servants of his truth, not of the traditions of men.

What we have said as to speaking in the Lord's name does not mean that we are to carry the matter so far as to say that no one but those who see the real plan of God should even sing a hymn. In fact, the children of God are not to endeavor to hinder any from declaring the truth. Jesus gave a good illustration of this principle when his disciples told him that they had found some who were doing a work in his name and that they had forbidden them, because they did not follow him. The Lord replied, "Forbid them not." And so with us. We are not to interfere with any who are preaching the Gospel, even through strife, for they may do some good. Neither are we to endeavor to stop any who preach what they believe to be the Gospel. This is not our present commission, or any part of it. We are not as yet judges of the world; but we are to recognize the difference between such and those who are the true ambassadors, or ministers, of God.

God says of some who profess to be his mouthpieces, but whom he calls "wicked," "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee?" (Psalm 50:16, 17) Why should any undertake to give out the message of God when he has not recognized them by granting them the anointing of his holy Spirit, when they have not been taught of him, and are not doing his will? Let all others do whatever they like in co-operation with the truth, but only those who have been ordained of God in this one way should preach the Gospel. All who have received the divine commission should rejoice in their wonderful privilege of proclaiming the good tidings.

One of the features of our commission as ambassadors of the Lord is "to comfort all that mourn." The children of God, who have learned the true source of comfort, are the only ones properly qualified to be real comforters, in the Scriptural sense. These have had their own hearts bound up and healed by the Great Physician, and hence they know where to direct longing hearts who need the balm which only God can give. As the Apostle says: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4) So then, whether while still in the flesh or after we have come into our inheritance beyond the veil, we are to be comforters, to lift up those who are oppressed with sorrow and care, to bring to them "the oil of joy," the message of grace.

ON THE EVE OF THE DAY OF VENGEANCE

We are to be comforters at this particular time of "them that mourn in Zion." This is a work that the saints of today, who have been enlightened and blessed by the message of present truth, are eminently qualified to do. Many of us were mourners in Zion before this refreshing message came to us, mourning because of the confusion and worldliness and dearth that prevailed in the nominal systems wherein we were bound. But now we are free, and no more are "our harps hung upon the willows of Babylon." They are attuned to the harmonies of heaven, and we can now sing with the spirit and with the understanding the glorious "song of Moses and the Lamb." So let us be zealous in carrying this glad news to all the mourners in Zion not yet delivered, that they may join with us in this glad song.

The entire message as given in our text is now due to be proclaimed. We remember that on the occasion when our Lord read from the prophecy in the synagogue, he omitted the words, "and the day of vengeance of our God." The part of the prophecy was not due to be proclaimed; and Jesus could not have said of these words, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears"; for he was not to proclaim as then at hand the day of vengeance. So he read only the parts of the prophecy whose fulfilment was then due to begin.

But today the passage is due to be given as a whole. We are on the very eve of this great day of vengeance. We are now proclaiming in the words of the Prophet Zephaniah, "The great day of the Lord is near; it is near and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord; the mighty men shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasting and desolation, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities and against the high towers [strong and well intrenched governments]. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord. And their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured with the fire of his jealousy."—Zephaniah 1:14-18.

A LESSON NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN

In that day of terror and darkness men shall come to learn their need of a strong arm to deliver them. Their pride and self-sufficiency will be humbled into the dust. But out of that awful trouble mankind will come forth chastened and broken, and will be ready to be led out of the ruin and defeat of their own schemes and hopes, out of the darkness and chaos which in their ignorance and selfishness they precipitated upon themselves, out of the power of evil angels, into the light and blessing and deliverance then brought to them by the establishment of the kingdom of God's dear Son, long promised for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

It will be a lesson never to be forgotten. The sons of God, then exalted to the rulership of the kingdom, will begin their work of healing and blessing, of binding up the crushed and broken hearts of men. Their own experience in the present life will have taught them how to sympathize with the poor, sin-sick world; and they will be able to pour into humanity's wounds the blessed balm of Gilead, "to give beauty for ashes," to wipe away all tears, and to lead all who will step by step up the grand highway of holiness then cast up for the people. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isaiah 35:10) Only the incorrigible shall again have pronounced upon them the penalty of death—the second death, utter destruction. "These shall go away into everlasting cutting off, but the righteous into life eternal."—**Matthew 25:46.**

THE BLESSING OF THE "CUP OF SALVATION"

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now, in the presence of all his people."—Psalm 116:12-14.

To Spiritual Israel these words have a peculiar significance which they could not have had to the Prophet David. Nevertheless, we would suppose that the Prophet had to a considerable degree the proper thought as to the sentiment of the words. King David no doubt felt an appreciation of God's goodness. His psalms show us that he had a very appreciative heart, grateful for the blessings that came to him from the Lord. Properly enough his heart cried out: "What shall I render unto the Lord?" What return can I make for all his loving kindness?"

David knew of God's promise to Abraham; he knew that God would sometime bless all the families of the earth, and that this blessing would come through the seed of Abraham. The children of Israel knew that they were Abraham's seed. King David was one of these, and he felt that in some way he would be identified with this promise. The matter was more or less vague to him; but, nevertheless, Abraham's seed was to bless the world.

In proposing to "take the cup of salvation," we think the Psalmist had in mind that whatever experiences the Lord might consider necessary for him he would accept; for he must have a share in that salvation. He would continue to call upon the Lord that he might have such a share; he would pay his vows unto the Lord "in the presence of all his people." He had made solemn vows, and he would fulfil them—he would consider this a privilege; he would delight in doing God's will.

DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

To the Christian, however, all this has a much deeper significance. Beginning with our Lord Jesus, these words have a special meaning to each of the sons of God called to joint-heirship with the great Head of the church. Having been begotten of the holy Spirit and received into sonship, these wish to make a special return for all God's mercies. These have the actual forgiveness of their sins through Jesus, as David did not. His sins were only typically covered; and if he could say: "What shall I render?" surely much more should we say: "What shall I render unto the Lord?"

The Apostle Paul exhorts us: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God—your reasonable service." This is what we gladly render, then—our bodies as living sacrifices. In every truly noble heart gratitude is the responsive chord to kindness and love; and no harmony is sweeter or more inspiring to noble deeds and lofty purposes. God would have his children cultivate for their own sake, as well as for the sake of others, all the graces of true nobility and moral excellence. It is therefore most fitting that we should note every deed of love and kindness toward us, and be careful to return the gratitude and appreciation due. How often does love go unrequited because selfishness or thoughtlessness crowds out the nobler instincts of the soul!

While human love and acts of kindness often draw largely upon us for the exercise of this grace of gratitude, appreciation, how much more does the constant loving kindness and tender mercy of our heavenly Father thus fittingly draw upon our inmost being to respond in grateful acknowledgment and praise! To him we are indebted for every good that we possess. What this implies only those can know who have been brought by his love into the secret place of the Most High, and made to feast upon the "finest of the wheat," the wealth of our Father's storehouse. We are the special objects of his grace.

"HIS LOVING KINDNESS, OH, HOW GREAT!"

And who of us cannot trace a long line of special providences on our behalf? Who of us as we take a mental retrospect of our lives cannot exclaim with the poet:

> "Looking back I praise the way
> God has led me day by day!"

How wonderfully the Lord has guided his people! His children have ever been his constant care. No good thing hath he withheld from them, and all things have been made to work together for their good if they obeyed him. Who that has trusted the Lord through many years, through sunshine and shadow, through smiles and tears, by still waters and through storm and tempest, has not proved the verity of his precious promises and his abiding faithfulness! Surely, "not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you!" (Joshua 23:14) In the smallest and in the greatest affairs of our lives he has ever watched for our interests. Every cloud has had a golden lining!

What, then, shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits? What have we, indeed, that we have not received from him? Nothing! As a tender parent loves to see his child appreciatively accept his favors, so does our heavenly Father regard our attitude toward him, and our manifestation of appreciation of His favors and love toward us. His unspeakable gifts to us were purchased at a great cost to his heart. Then we will thankfully take the cup of salvation, through faith in our Redeemer, and pay our vows unto the Lord. We will drink this cup with our dear Master—this cup of suffering and of joy. "We will trust and not be afraid."

The Father has made a special provision for those who have made a full surrender of themselves to him. The experiences which he has arranged for them constitute "the cup of salvation." And in accepting this cup from the Lord, we are accepting all the experiences that come to us in his providence, whatever they may be—joy or sorrow, pain or pleasure or anything. As Jesus exclaimed: "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" so should this be the language of our hearts. It had in type been foretold of our Lord that he should be lifted up, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. He knew that he was to be the great antitypical Sin-offering; that he was to be "made sin" for fallen man. Yet this cup that the Father had poured for him he declared himself very willing to drink. And this is the cup which he has given to us.

Our Savior said to his disciples who desired to sit next to him in the kingdom: "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" He himself continued to drink of that cup until the end—he drank the dregs of the cup. And so it will be with his followers. We are to drink of this same cup. It is our individual cup, and yet it is his cup. If we be truly loyal we will accept our share of the cup thankfully, gladly. And we know that as we drink of it he will be with us; we shall not be alone. He supervises the experiences of each of his members; and with every temptation and trial he will provide some way to escape, if the trial threatens to become too severe.

THE CUP OF JOY IN THE KINGDOM

On the occasion of the institution of the Memorial of his death, the Master in his conversation with the apostles said: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matthew 26:29) Our Lord was here contrasting two great days—the day of suffering and the day of glory. This Gospel age has been the day of suffering. The Millennial age will be the day of glory, and is especially spoken of as "the day of Christ."

The fruit of the vine, the literal cup, represents two thoughts. The cup of wine is produced at the cost of the life of the grape. The grape loses its own individuality. The juice is pressed out, and thus the fruit of the vine is made ready for use. The cup of wine—the juice of the grape—represents, however, not only the crushing of the grape, but also the exhilaration that comes as the result. So in our drinking of this figurative cup. To us it symbolizes our Savior's sufferings and death, and our own participation with him in these sufferings. But wine also represents joy, gladness, and is thus used in the Scriptures. So in the sense in which the Lord used the words "fruit of the vine," quoted in the preceding paragraph, the cup represented the joys of the kingdom.

In the earthly experiences of our Lord Jesus the Father marked out for him a certain specific course. This course constituted his cup of suffering and death. But the Father promised him that after He had drunk this cup faithfully, He should be given a different cup, a different experience—glory, honor and immortality. And then the Savior was authorized by the Father to make the same proposition to those who might desire to become his followers—that if they would suffer with him, would drink his cup of death with him, then they should participate with him in his future cup of joy.

Our cup is a cup of joy and also a cup of bitterness. But when we are called upon to drink a bitter draft, let us remember him who bravely and faithfully partook of this bitterness, rejoicing to do the Father's will; and let us take courage, and likewise rejoice that we are accounted worthy to share this cup with our beloved Lord. And as he who was perfect needed strength and help divine in connection with his experiences in the drinking of the cup, as he sought the Father in earnest prayer for the needed assistance, so must we do. We should also be continually on our guard lest we enter into

temptation, lest we look away from him from whom alone cometh our help.

"I will pay my vows unto the Lord now," said the Psalmist. And "now is the acceptable time—now is the day of salvation"—for the church. Now is the time sacrifices are to be offered—not by and by. The Lord has so arranged that this vow which we take upon ourselves, this covenant of sacrifice, must be fulfilled by us. The flesh which we consecrate must be consumed. If we seek to withdraw the sacrifice from the altar, we shall be dealt with in such a manner as to destroy the flesh; else we ourselves shall be destroyed. If we faithfully drink of the cup which the Father has prepared for us, we shall afterward receive the blessings which he has promised to those who thus drink. Therefore, now, in the present life, we drink of this cup he has given us; for unless we do this now, we shall have no share in the kingdom blessings in the life to come.

In our Lord's case, literal crucifixion was necessary. He must bear the fullest measure of the Law's demand; he must bear the penalty of its every violation, even as in the case of the vilest criminal under the law; otherwise he could not have redeemed every Jew. He must bear the curse of the law—he must hang on a tree. But in our experiences, the cross will not be a literal cross of wood; the nails will not be literal nails; but bitter words and slander and misrepresentation will surely be our portion—and perhaps physical violence in some form to some of the last members of the body. We do not know.

BY WAY OF THE CROSS

"Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." We are all to pass through the trying experiences represented by the winepress. We are to lay down our lives in the divine service. We are to submit ourselves to the crushing experiences, to be obliterated as individuals, in the human sense, and to become new creatures. "If we suffer [with him], we shall also reign with him"—not otherwise. So we joyfully accept the invitation to drink of his cup. And not until the cup has been drained to the last shall we receive the other cup—the cup of kingdom joys. While our Lord had a great blessing in the obedience which he rendered to the Father, yet it was a trying time for him down to the last moment, when he cried, "It is finished." And so with the church. We must drink all of the cup; none of the contents is to be left. We must endure all of the experiences.

All the sufferings of Christ will be complete when the body of Christ shall have finished its course. The new cup of joy was given our Lord when he was received up into glory. Then all the angels of God worshiped him. Soon our cup of joy will be given to us. No doubt it was a glorious time when the sleeping saints were awakening in the spring of 1878, and entered into their reward and received the cup of blessing. And one by one, those who were alive and remained at the coming of the Master are being gathered home. Undoubtedly we shall all partake of this joy with them soon, if we are faithful. We believe the fulness of joy will not be reached until all the members of Christ are with him beyond the veil. Then we shall share his throne and partake of his glory. Then with our beloved Lord we shall drink of the "new wine" in the kingdom; for the promise is to all his faithful saints.

"YE ARE MY WITNESSES, SAITH JEHOVAH"

The concluding statement of the Psalmist as given in our text is that he would pay his vows "in the presence of all his [God's] people." It is not enough that we shall be loyal in our hearts; but the Lord desires a public confession, a witness before men. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10) And all the witnesses for the truth must be martyrs for the truth. They must, in other words, be willing to suffer for it. And so it will be to a large extent with those who are faithfully, courageously, holding up the banner of truth. They will be targets for the adversary.

Our Master said that whoever would not confess him before men, he would not confess before the Father and before the holy angels. Only those who are thoroughly loyal are to be of this very select company of which our Lord is the head, and which is soon now to be gathered into the heavenly garner.

Then let us appreciate more and more this "cup of blessing" which we are privileged to drink with our blessed Master; and let us "call upon the name of the Lord" for grace to help in every time of need. We need him daily, hourly, momentarily. And we may come to the throne of grace at any time in the name of our great Advocate.

Our Father's ear is ever open to the cry of his children. They are as dear to him "as the apple of his eye." They "are graven upon the palms of his hands." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you," is his promise to his own. All that we can render will be at best very, very little in return for all his bounties, for all his matchless grace toward us. But the measure of love and zeal that accompanies our little all will indicate the measure of our gratitude to our great Redeemer.

"What shall I render, Lord, to thee?
Thy love surpasses all my thought!
What can a fitting tribute be
To him who my poor life hath bought?

"Who sought me in my low estate,
And raised me up to heights divine!
What words can fitly sound thy praise,
Or thought encompass love like thine?

"What shall I render, Lord, to thee?
My heart, my strength, my life, I bring!
My hands, my voice, in service glad,
To thee, my Savior and my King!"

DAY BY DAY, HOUR BY HOUR

"God broke our years to hours and days
That, hour by hour and day by day,
Just going on a little way,
We might be able all along
To keep quite strong.
Should all the weight of life
Be laid across our shoulders, and the future, rife
With woe and struggle, meet us face to face
At just one place,
We could not go.
Our feet would stop; and so
God lays a little on us every day.
And never, I believe, on all the way
Will burdens bear so deep,
Or pathway lie so threatening and so steep,
But we can go, if by God's power
We only bear the burden of the hour."

THE CHRISTIAN'S TOWER OF STRENGTH

"The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."—Hebrews 13:6.

The Christian's position in the world is a peculiar one. None others can afford to be so courageous and independent as he. Yet the true child of God is not self-sufficient nor independent of any outside help. He is exhorted in the Word of the Lord to be not boastful, but humble-minded, realizing his powerlessness of himself and his need of God. Indeed, unless he is humble-minded he cannot be pleasing to the Lord. But at the same time he is to be full of courage and confidence. No power in the universe is able to cope with our God; and he has declared that he is the support and shield of his children. He is the strong tower of those who put their trust in him.

If we abide in Christ and his Word abides in us, he will be our deliverer in six troubles, and in the seventh he will not forsake us—because we have been called of God, because we have responded to that call, because we are seeking to glorify him in our bodies. Hence we need not fear what any man can do unto us. The Apostle Paul, who exhorts us to courage and confident trust in God, was a noble example of courageous faith. He tells us why we have such abundant reason for assurance of faith and absence of fear of man. He says, "Let your conversation [conduct, manner of life] be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

TRUE FAITH NOT PRESUMPTION

We should not say, "The Lord is my helper, and therefore he will not suffer my house to burn, nor burglars to break in and steal my belongings. I will not lock my doors at night; for the Lord is watching over me and mine." This would not be the spirit of a sound mind. It would not be true faith,

but presumption. We should take all reasonable precautions to prevent losses of such kinds. The Lord expects us to do all in our power for our own protection, and not expect him to work unnecessary miracles to protect us from our own carelessness and inefficiency. Under such circumstances he might allow us to become involved in difficulty and loss, and thus to learn a needed lesson. We are stewards of whatever the Lord has entrusted to us, and he expects us to exercise care in regard to whatever is properly under our care but belonging to him. We should have buckets and water at hand so as to be ready in case of fire. We should have proper fastenings upon our doors and our windows. When our own duty is done, we are to leave ourselves fully in the Lord's hands, knowing that all will be well with us.

If the Lord permits seeming calamity to come, we may rest assured that it will work out our good, if we are properly exercised by the experience. After having done our part, we should trust all consequences to him, not doubting that he will care for us in his own best way. The Lord will give us whatever help along temporal lines he sees is for the highest interests of the new creature, if we do not remove ourselves from his keeping and seek to manage our own interests. Even in the event of such a mistake, if we come to see where we have been wilful and have leaned to our own understanding and renew full allegiance to the Lord, the difficulties in which we have become involved may prove to be a real blessing in opening our eyes to our wrong course, in showing us our own insufficiency to guide ourselves, and in bringing us wholly back to God.

"THAT WICKED ONE TOUCHETH HIM NOT"

Our highest interests, our real interests, are matters of our Father's constant care. If we keep very near to the Lord, we are protected from the power of the fallen angels, who would, if permitted, bring about our ensnarement and overthrow. They cannot really harm us if we are watching and keeping our garments white. Only a lack of faithfulness would subject us to their power to any extent so far as our new creature interests are concerned. They can neither harm our bodies in any way nor cause any violence to us, unless the Lord permits it for our highest good—perhaps for our deliverance and exaltation, as in the case of our Master.

Let us, then, keep ourselves, that "that wicked one touch us not." We are subject to various attacks by the deluded servants of the powers of darkness. There may be attacks upon our good name, our reputation, our bodies, or what not, with more or less legality. We are to a considerable extent subject to man, through "the powers that be." Yet our bitterest enemies are powerless to touch us, unless permitted by the Lord. And we cannot be touched by the great adversary, if we remain true to our covenant—true to the vows we have taken to the Lord. The adversary can never touch our real selves as new creatures save by our own unfaithfulness.

WE WILL WORSHIP OUR GOD ALONE

It may be the will of God to permit us to suffer, just as he permitted John the Baptist to be imprisoned and finally beheaded, just as he permitted Jesus to be arrested and crucified, and he has permitted many of his saints in the past to be maltreated or killed. But we need not fear what men may do unto us, knowing that our God, whose we are and whom we serve, will be with us constantly, and will cause all things to work out his own glorious purposes for us and in us.

We would, of course, be glad to please men, if this were possible. But wherever it is a question of pleasing God or pleasing man, we will say, as did the three young Hebrews to the king of Babylon: "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us. . . . But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." We will not do anything contrary to the divine will, to the command of Jehovah. We will worship our God alone!"

When the Jewish Council (Acts 4:13-20) commanded the Apostles Peter and John to speak no more in the name of Jesus, their reply was: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." When Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, said to our Lord on the night of his arrest and trial, "Knowest thou that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" Jesus answered: "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." So it is with all the footstep followers of the Master. God's grace will be sufficient. Man is powerless to harm a hair of our heads, unless it is permitted of our Father in heaven for his glory and our own highest welfare.

COURAGE BORN OF FAITH

The world has often wondered at the calmness of the Lord's humble little ones under circumstances which would cause the stoutest heart to quail. But to follow the course in life which will glorify our God and magnify his grace, to be able to meet wisely and courageously the trials and difficulties as they come to us as Christians, representatives of the King of heaven, and to meet them in the spirit of rejoicing, counting our tribulations all joy, it is necessary that our hearts be in attune with the Lord, that we have no will but his, and that the fear of man, which bringeth a snare, shall be overcome. We cannot accomplish this in our own strength, but in the strength of God alone. We are instructed to fear Jehovah, and not to fear a weak mortal. The righteous are as bold as a lion, as gentle as a dove, as meek as a lamb. This peculiar combination of boldness, gentleness and meekness should characterize every Christian.

MARY'S SWEET PERFUME

OCTOBER 4.—Mark 14:1-11.

"She hath done what she could."—Verse 8.

The last five days of Jesus' ministry are full of interest. The incident especially marking our lesson occurred at the close of the Jewish Sabbath day just preceding our Lord's crucifixion. Jesus and his disciples had come to the Passover feast, he telling them that he would there be crucified, but they thinking that he was speaking in some kind of figurative language. Indeed, at no time during Jesus' ministry did his crucifixion seem to be less likely than when it occurred. His preaching and the preaching of his disciples, first the twelve and afterward the seventy, had awakened considerable interest throughout all Jewry—especially in Galilee.

Great throngs of people were at Jerusalem to celebrate this feast, which would last a week. Thousands of them had heard of Jesus; and many of them had been recipients of his mercy in the healing of their diseases. Just a short time before, a considerable number had discussed the propriety of proclaiming Jesus king. Indeed, on the very next day after the incident of this lesson, the multitude, some following and some preceding him while he rode upon the ass, had acclaimed him king. They had cried out, "Hosanna in the highest to the Son of David, who cometh in the name of Jehovah!"

But the Master knew that the masses would be only as children in the hands of the great teachers of the time. He knew that there was a murderous hatred against him amongst the chief priests, the Scribes and the Pharisees. True, it is written that they hated him without a cause; that is to say, without a just cause (John 15:25); but they had cause enough to hate him, from their own viewpoint.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE RELIGIOUS TEACHERS

Although the Jewish nation had lost its liberty long before and had no prospect of ever winning it back, nevertheless there had never been a time since the days of Solomon when their political prospects looked so favorable. The Roman emperors had manifested their willingness to co-operate with these very priests, scribes and religious leaders. The emperors wished merely to rule, and realized that they could exercise more influence through these religious leaders than in any other way.

Thus the great religious teachers felt themselves sponsors for the people. They perceived that their hold over the more ignorant Jews was being impaired by the teachings of Jesus. They felt so satisfied with themselves as claimed representatives of God and as intermediaries with the Roman government that they did not think it worth while to make inquiry respecting Jesus and his teachings. Indeed, from their viewpoint, everything was going along reasonably well. They could wish for nothing better than that their plans might not be interfered with.

Many of them had lost all faith in God and in a future life. Others, retaining faith in God and his promised kingdom, thought that affiliation with the Roman empire would be the best way of strengthening their nation and preparing it for the Messianic glories. From this viewpoint, Jesus was a disturber of the peace. He did not belong to their clique. His manner, no less than his teachings, reproved them and tended to break all their influence with the people.

The religious leaders had heard that Jesus was coming to the feast. Our lesson tells us that they discussed how he could be wisely dealt with, killed, gotten rid of in any way. They seem to have been unanimous in believing that his de-

struction would be for the good of the Lord's cause, as they misunderstood that cause. Another Scripture tells us that Caiaphas, the chief priest, had declared that it was expedient that one man should perish rather than that the nation should perish. (John 11:49-52) They fancied that the teachings of Jesus, if allowed to proceed, would certainly awaken the people to a faith in the Messianic kingdom. They thought of Jesus as an impostor, but feared that His teachings would incite some kind of fanatical uprising.

The religious leaders had murder in their hearts. It was merely a question of how they could accomplish the murder and deceive the people, so as not to provoke those who had begun to exercise faith in Jesus. Their conclusion was that the feast time would be an unfavorable one; for he would be surrounded by the multitude, some of whom thought him a great prophet, others of whom considered him to be the Messiah. Such was their attitude of mind when Judas went to them privately, suggesting that he would be in touch with the movements of Jesus and that for a certain amount of money he would inform them of the most suitable time for making Jesus a prisoner—a time when the multitude would not be with him. His plan was finally decided upon and carried out.

THE FEAST—THE ANOINTING

Jesus and his disciples were the honored guests of that Lazarus whom Jesus awakened after he had been dead three days. It was at the home of Simon the leper, who probably was dead. Jesus was the guest of honor, his disciples sharing with him. Martha and Mary, with Lazarus, were hostesses. The supper had progressed when Mary entered with a vial of very expensive perfume, the contents of which she poured upon the head of Jesus and, according to another account, subsequently poured a portion of the same perfume upon his feet.

The house was filled with the perfume; Jesus was honored. Then came a voice of murmuring—"Why this waste?" St. John tells us that the leader of the murmurers was Judas, and that evidently several were influenced by his speech. Judas posed as the friend of the poor, intimating that his regrets were not selfish or personal, but that he thought what good might have been done to others.

The Apostles afterward learned that this speech was hypocritical. At the time Jesus understood the anger of Judas, which led him openly to insult one of the hostesses of the occasion. St. John tells us the anger of Judas was because he had failed to get this money himself. He was the treasurer of the little company of disciples; he carried the money-bag; and, as they afterward came to know, he was a thief, who privately was laying by for himself. (John 12:6) And Judas is probably not the only person who has plead for the poor and at the same time sought to divert funds to himself.

THE MEASURE OF MARY'S DEVOTION

The statement of Judas that the perfume was worth three hundred pence is probably not an extreme valuation. Three hundred pence would be about six dollars. At a time when the silver penny, worth sixteen cents, represented a day's labor, three hundred pence would practically represent the labor of a year. Sixteen dollars per ounce, sometimes more, has been paid for the attar of rose; and history tells us of fabulous prices paid for perfumes in the past.

Today perfumes can be made and sold at trifling cost, in comparison with the past. And yet the ancients were passionately fond of perfumes; and the liberal use of them, as in the case before us, marked a deep respect, yea, reverence. Mary doubtless felt that her very highly esteemed friend Jesus, who had brought her brother back from the tomb, was none other than the Messiah, the Son and Representative of Jehovah God. The reverence which she felt for Jehovah she sought to express toward his highest Representative, Jesus.

Poor Mary must have felt quite crushed as she heard the harsh criticism. But Jesus came to her defense, saying, "Let her alone. Why trouble ye the woman? She hath wrought a good work on me. She hath done what she could; she hath anointed my body for its burial. The poor ye have always with you; and whensoever ye will ye may do them good; but me ye have not always."

Surely the Master's approval comforted Mary; and wherever the Gospel of the Lord has been preached, this story of her loving devotion, to the extent of considerable cost and probably considerable self-denial, has been told as a memorial of her, not merely to honor her, but especially to inspire and encourage others of God's people to the obtaining and exercising of a love which delights in service, yea, in costly sacrifice.

A SUGGESTION WORTH CONSIDERATION

A Boston printer, now dead, put on his business card the following helpful and practical suggestions:—"Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead, but fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving and cheering words while their ears can hear them. The kind things you say after they are gone, say before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffins, bestow now; and so brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them.

"If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them now in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered, while I need them and can enjoy them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, and a funeral without an eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand for their burial.

"Post-mortem kindness cannot cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers on the coffin shed no fragrance backward over the weary way by which the loved ones have traveled."

TWO PASSOVER MEMORIALS

OCTOBER 11.—Mark 14:12-25.

"As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do proclaim the Lord's death till he come."—1 Corinthians 11:26.

The subject of today's lesson is one of the most interesting features of Jesus' earthly ministry. He knew that the apostles did not know that this was to be his last supper with them. Although he had intimated the nearness of his death, his disciples had found it impossible to comprehend that any such disaster could be so near at hand as he had intimated. Jesus, however, with full consciousness of what it meant, was longing for the consummation of his work. It was probably on the very day at the close of which he and his disciples went to eat the Passover that Jesus said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I in difficulty until it be accomplished!"—a baptism into death, which was finished the following day.

Peter and John were the two disciples sent to make ready the Passover. Evidently Jesus was at Bethany, at the home of Lazarus, when he sent this word. It is supposed that the large upper room in which the Passover was eaten by Jesus and his disciples was the same one in which the apostles and others were gathered to await the Pentecostal blessings. This very room is still pointed out by tradition, but is controlled by Mohammedans, who are especially jealous of Christians.

In the evening of the same day, Jesus with the entire twelve met in this room, all the preparations having been attended to. They met to celebrate the Jewish Passover at its appointed time. The lamb had been roasted, and the unleavened bread prepared, also the bitter herbs. Everything, we may be sure, was exactly in conformity with the original requirement; for Jesus and his apostles were bound by every feature of the Jewish law as much as were other Jews—the new dispensation not yet having been ushered in. Every feature of the law was binding up to the time of the Pentecostal blessing, which marked the divine approval of the sacrifice of Jesus and the divine acceptance of all those who had become his disciples by a full consecration.

KINGDOM HONORS DESIRED

So far from realizing that they were on the eve of a great tragedy, the apostles believed that Jesus would very soon be enthroned as King. They remembered his promise that they should sit with him in his throne. This promise seemed so near of realization to them that they could think of little else but the degree of honor which they would have in the kingdom. They seemed to feel that unless they contended stoutly for it, they would not get so honorable positions. Perceiving their attitude of mind, Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; but ye shall not be so: but he that will be greatest amongst you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."

These were new standards, difficult for them to understand; and apparently they are still difficult for the followers of Jesus to comprehend fully. The one who will be chief in the kingdom will be the one who was the chief servant in the flesh. This greatest servant of all was, of course, the Lord Jesus himself. But the Master intimates that the same princi-

ple holds good in respect to all of his followers. Whoever of them will most faithfully, most earnestly, most zealously, serve the brethren will thereby be increasing his favor with God, and be preparing himself for so much higher station in Messiah's kingdom.

With the thought that any menial service would signify admission of their unworthiness of a high place, the disciples made no arrangement for feet-washing, none wishing to assume the role of servant. In that sandy country feet-washing was almost a necessity when sandals were worn. By way of rebuke, Jesus arose from the table and performed this menial service for his disciples, telling them the import of the lesson—namely, humility—and intimating that no matter how humble a service they might be able to render to each other, they should be glad to render it.

The lesson is still with us, not as a form or ceremony to be performed, but as an illustration of a principle. Any humble act of service done to one of the Lord's brethren corresponds to this feet-washing.

THE CRISIS IN JUDAS' LIFE

The Passover Supper proceeded—the eating of the lamb with the bitter herbs and the unleavened bread, which considerably resembled thick pancakes, and which was sometimes used instead of a spoon to sop up the essence of the meat. One of the Gospels declares that Jesus began to be heavy-hearted, and then said, One of you twelve, eating with me as my guest, as a member of my family, is plotting my betrayal.

There may have been a double object in this statement. First, it would show the disciples that Jesus was fully aware of the premeditated betrayal. They would not, therefore, think that something had happened to him unexpectedly, or out of the divine program. Second, our Lord may have meant this as a final reproof to Judas—to startle him, to cause him to think. At very best a traitor's course is dishonorable, but doubly so when the traitor accepts the hospitality of the one against whom he is plotting and eats his bread.

Consternation spread amongst the disciples; and one after another they asked, "Is it I?" The import of this question would be, It is not I whom you have meant! Even Judas joined in the general inquiry, "Is it I?" The Apostle John was seated next to Jesus, and St. Peter beckoned to him that he should ask the Master who was meant. It was probably a whispered inquiry, heard by Jesus only. Our Lord's whispered reply was, "It is the one to whom I will give a sop." Presently, having prepared a special sop, a mark of special interest, he handed it to Judas. Thus St. John and St. Peter knew the affair.

Apparently it was but a short time after this that Judas withdrew, the record being that "Satan entered into him." The spirit of the evil one got complete control of him while he stopped, and weighed and balanced the matter of selling his best friend for thirty pieces of silver. It is entirely probable, therefore, that Judas was not present when Jesus, a little later, instituted the Memorial Supper which Christians now celebrate.

THE SIGNIFICATION OF THE MEMORIAL

The Memorial Supper which Jesus instituted is totally separate and distinct from the Passover Supper, and yet they are closely related; for the one was the type and the other its archetype, or higher type, with a still higher signification. In the one a literal lamb was used to typify Jesus, the Lamb of God; in the other, the archetype, the breaking of the bread represented the death of Jesus.

The Jews celebrated the birth of their nation and its deliverance from Egyptian bondage. This had its start in the passing over of their first-born when the tenth plague came upon the Egyptians. St. Paul shows us that the first-borns of Israel, spared in that Passover night, typified the church of the first-borns, spared, or passed over, in the present time. while the night of sin prevails and before the morning of Messiah's kingdom is ushered in.

More and more Bible students are reaching the conclusion that the Memorial of Christ's death should not be celebrated monthly or quarterly or weekly; but that it should be considered the archetype of the Jewish Passover, and should properly be celebrated annually, and at about the same time as the Jewish Passover.

We are not to understand that the apostles comprehended the meaning of Jesus' words when he explained to them the signification of the supper which he instituted. Rather, as he had already foretold, the holy Spirit brought these things to their attention and enabled them to comprehend their meaning, after they had received the Pentecostal blessing and enlightenment. Now we may see the import of Jesus' words, "This is my body, broken for you." We perceive that he could not have meant, as some have thought, that the bread was turned into his actual body and the wine into his actual blood. On the contrary, he still had his actual body and his actual blood. He could not, therefore, have meant more than to say, This bread symbolically represents my body, which is to be broken for you; and this wine represents my blood, which is to be shed for you tomorrow—my life given up.

Neither should we think that Jesus meant that special virtue would result to the disciples from the eating of that bread and the drinking of that literal cup. We should properly look far beyond these things, and see that he meant this: Only as you by faith partake of the merits secured by death can you have the great blessing provided for you as my disciples. The apostles believed that the death of Jesus was for their sins, and that it constituted the basis of their acceptance with the heavenly Father. They realized that only as they appropriated the life of Christ would they be truly the recipients of all these blessings.

St. Paul points out for us another important signification of this bread and cup. He declares the oneness of Christ and his church. He tells us that there is but the one loaf and the one cup. Primarily, this loaf was Christ Jesus; but in a secondary sense all the followers of Christ, after having been justified through his sacrifice, are privileged to become members of his body, parts of the one loaf that is being broken. Likewise, after partaking of the merit of Christ's blood, his sacrifice, all of his true followers are counted as members with him and as participators in that one cup.

Hear the Apostle's words: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are partakers of that one bread."—1 Corinthians 10:16, 17.

THE SEALING OF THE NEW COVENANT

Jesus spoke of the cup, the fruit of the vine, as representing the blood of the New Covenant. The Law Covenant was the Old Covenant, which failed to bring the blessings to the Jews, because they could not keep it. Hence, also, they were not qualified to bless the other nations of the earth. But God promised a New Covenant, a better one, which would be introduced by a new and higher, or superior, Mediator than Moses. That New Covenant, God declares, will accomplish what the old Law Covenant failed to accomplish; for the New Law Covenant will be inaugurated by Messiah, its Mediator, at his second advent. His kingdom, established in power and great glory, will rule, bless and instruct mankind, and will "take away the stony heart and will give a heart of flesh" to all who will respond to those blessed opportunities.

Jesus' death constituted the blood which seals, or makes efficacious, that New Covenant. But mark further: The church is not to be blessed under that New Covenant of the Millennial age, which will be inaugurated at the second coming of Jesus, at the establishment of his kingdom. The church is to be blessed in advance of that New Covenant. Indeed, their consecrated lives (blood), accepted by our Lord, are counted in as a part of his own sacrifice, which seals the New Covenant. Hence the New Covenant cannot be fully sealed until the entire body of Christ, which is the church, shall have shared with him in the drinking of his cup—in the sacrifice of earthly rights, privileges, life itself.

THE COVENANT OF SACRIFICE

Meantime, we see that Jesus and the church receive their reward neither under the Law Covenant nor under the New Covenant, but under a special covenant, called a Covenant of Sacrifice. Reference is made to this covenant of Christ and the church in the Psalms, where the Lord is represented as saying, "Gather my saints together unto me, those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5) The gathering of those who enter into this special Covenant of Sacrifice with the Lord has been in progress for now over eighteen hundred years. We have every reason to believe that the sacrifice is nearly completed, and that soon all the sacrificers, members of the body of Christ, will be glorified, changed by the power of the first resurrection and will enter into the joys of their Lord, according to his promise: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."

Our Lord indicated that he would no longer drink of the cup; nor did he. His work, his drinking of the cup, was finished the next day, on Calvary. There he completed the drinking of the cup which the Father had poured for him. The Father has poured the same cup for all the followers of Jesus; and they must drink of his cup, as well as partake of the merits of his broken body, if they would be his joint-heirs in the kingdom, soon to be established.

This was the import of our Lord's words to St. James and

St. John, his disciples, when they asked for special places in the kingdom. Jesus asked, "Are ye able [willing] to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They heartily declared their willingness. Jesus assured them that they should have their request; that if they were willing, he would see to it that they would drink of his cup. And so it is with all of his followers. The Scriptures assure them, saying, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose."

INTERESTING LETTERS

A REPLY BY THE EDITOR

Dear Brother Russell:—

I am pleased to acknowledge receipt of yours of 16th ultimo.

After making copies of your letter, I went to the Editor of the Gazette and submitted to him your original letter. After reading it he said he would publish all except that portion relating to ordination. I hand you herewith the page of the Gazette containing the article, and I praise the Lord for rewarding your efforts in defending the truth here.

Through the Lord's providence I had heretofore been able, apparently, to parry every blow directed against the truth, but in this attack of Rev. Ross the javelin seemed to pass me and strike notwithstanding my best efforts to turn it aside; but now the darkness disappears and the light again shines on the cause of present truth through the good defense which you have offered; the Lord has shown us again how he can make the "wrath of his enemies to praise him." The Editor of the *Mirror* (Protestant), a contemporary of the Gazette, told me he would run your letter in full.

Dear Brother, would it not be well to let your letter come out in one of the BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY or in THE WATCH TOWER? It would give many of the dear friends some good ideas as to how to offer defense along this special line of the adversary's attacks on you and the cause of present truth. I received a letter from a brother in Grenada, stating that some prominent Plymouth Brethren were circulating Rev. Ross' pamphlet. Of course, they will not circulate so very many, as the pamphlet costs 10 cents, and very few of the Plymouth Brethren or other denominations are willing to pay that much to defend their errors.

How grand it will be when the people are delivered from the bondage of error! I am glad for the ministers' sake also, for they will not have to fight any more, and I am sure that will be a great relief to their minds! One Catholic gentleman told me that Catholics and others could argue with us until we got to the Bible, and then they had to stop!

Assuring you of my continued love and fullest confidence, which you have always had and which have never wavered since I laid my life upon the altar of sacrifice in 1897, I am,

Yours in the Redeemer's service, E. J. COWARD.

Below we reprint the portion of our letter as published in *The Port-of-Spain Gazette*, Trinidad, B. W. I.:

PASTOR RUSSELL REPLIES.

Mr. E. J. Coward,
Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, B. W. I.

Dear Brother in Christ:—Yours of October 3rd is before me. Thanks for its clippings from the *Gazette* and the *Evangelical Christian*.

I am quite familiar with the slanderous screed issued by Rev. J. J. Ross. In Canada they have just two laws governing libel. Under the one the falsifier may be punished by the assessment of damages and money. Under the other, criminal libel, he is subject to imprisonment. I entered suit against Rev. Ross under the criminal act, at the advice of my attorneys, because, as he has no property, a suit for damages would not intimidate him nor stop him. The lower Court found him guilty of libel. But when the case went to the second Judge he called up an English precedent, in which it was held that criminal libel would only operate in a case where the jury felt sure that there was danger of rioting or violence. As there was no danger that myself or friends would resort to rioting, the case was thrown out. I could still bring my action for financial damages, but it would be costly to me and impotent as respects Rev. Ross. He, however, is having troubles of his own. Since he began to attack me, he has split two Baptist Congregations —one in Toronto, the other in Hamilton. The last heard of him, he was in London, Ont., and again in trouble with his congregation. A lying spirit is sure to be a boomerang.

As respects my education in Greek and Hebrew: Not only do I not claim very special knowledge of either language, but I claim that not one minister in a thousand is either a Hebrew or a Greek scholar. To be able to spell out a few Greek words is of no earthly value. Nor is it necessary longer to study these languages, in order to have knowledge of the Bible. Our Presbyterian friends have gotten out at great cost Young's Analytical Hebrew, Chaldaic, Greek and English Lexicon Concordance, which anyone may procure. And our Methodist friends have issued a similar work—Strong's Analytical Concordance and Lexicon. And there is a still older one entitled Englishman's Hebrew, Chaldaic, Greek and English Lexicon and Concordance. Additionally, Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon is a standard authority. The prices of these are not beyond the reach of the average man. By these works scholarly information respecting the original text of the Bible is obtainable. I have all four of these works and have used them faithfully. Very few college professors, even, would risk to give a critical translation of any text of Scripture without consulting these very works of reference, which are standard. To merely learn to read the Greek and Hebrew without a six years' course in their grammars is more likely to hinder than to help in Bible study; far better take the acknowledged scholarship to which I have referred.

Additionally I remind you of the many translations of the Bible now extant—all of them very good. I have all of these and find them useful in comparison in the study of any text—one sometimes giving a thought which another may not. The other day, for curiosity's sake, I counted Bibles in different translations, etc., in my study and found that I have thirty-two.

As respects my business dealings, Brother Coward, I need not remind you that American Courts are very strict and that if anybody feels that I have wronged him out of a dollar, he would have no difficulty in haling me into Court. You have my assurance, dear Brother, that I do not owe any man on earth a penny and that I have never taken a penny from anyone unjustly. On the contrary, as you know, I have spent several small fortunes in seeking to do good to my fellow-men —in helping them to a better understanding of God and the Bible. Having once been an infidel myself, and having subsequently found that I had confused the teachings of the Bible with the teachings of the creeds, and that the Bible's teaching is a glorious, grand doctrine, it has since been my business and pleasure to do all in my power to help fellow-mortals out of darkness into the true light.

* * *

If you choose, you may make such extracts of this as are likely to reach intelligent people through any of the newspapers. But really I care little for what men may say or think about me. Of course, such things are painful; but they are only what the Bible tells us will be more or less the experience of all who would be loyal to God and his Word. So persecuted they the saints and prophets of the past—even the Master himself. And as for how I got my education—it seems to me of little consequence. I have enough to serve my own purposes, and, apparently, too much to please Rev. Ross and others of his type, who, not knowing how to meet my theological teachings, do not attempt to do so at all, but merely charge me with ignorance. As I read his vile slanders I thought of what the New Testament says about St. Peter and St. John. They were so woefully ignorant that all the people perceived that they were "ignorant and unlearned men." If they were living today, I suppose that the Rev. Ross and Co. would be after them to show them up as not having been ordained by the Baptists and not knowing anything anyway.

Very truly your servant in the Lord,

C. T. RUSSELL.

The portion of our communication omitted above, follows:

I need not tell you how absurdly untrue Rev. Ross's statements are in respect to my ordination; but really it seems strange how little people use their thinking faculties in such matters—how few who would read the Rev. Ross's statements would see their absurdity. For instance, he is a Baptist and was authorized or ordained by the Baptists—not by Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Catholics or Episcopalians. Would an Episcopalian recognize Rev. Ross' ordination? Surely not! Would a Roman Catholic recognize his ordination? Of course not. Ordination merely means authorization. The Catholics will authorize, or ordain, those only who belong to their faith. The Baptists will ordain, or authorize, those only who are Baptists. How foolish, then, to talk about ordination from their standpoint!

But ordination from my standpoint, the Bible standpoint, the standpoint of an increasing number of Bible students all the world over, is different. It is a divine ordination. But our Baptist friends and our Methodist friends would say that

they, also, recognize Bible ordination, that they are not merely dependent upon each other. But we challenge them to prove that they ever had a divine ordination or that they ever think of it. They merely think of a sectarian ordination, or authorization, each from his own sect or party.

True, Catholics and Episcopalians are different and do recognize a Divine ordination. They claim that Jesus ordained his twelve apostles and that these have successors in the bishops, who are styled "apostolic bishops," and under the theory of "apostolic succession" have the same power as the original Twelve Apostles to ordain and to teach. Bible students believe that they err in this claim and that the doctrine of "apostolic succession" is unscriptural. The Bible recognizes only twelve apostles. More than that, the Bible denounces all apostolic bishops as being in error. Referring to them, Jesus said that they claimed to be apostles, and are not, but do lie. (Revelation 2:2.) In other words, contrary to the superstitions of Catholics and Episcopalians, their bishops have no authority whatever to ordain anybody.

What, then, is the proper ordination of a minister of Christ, and how can it be obtained, according to the Bible?

We answer that God's ordination, or authorization, of any man to preach is by the impartation of the holy Spirit to him. Whoever has received the holy Spirit has received the power and authority to teach and to preach in the name of God. Whoever has not received the holy Spirit has no divine authority or sanction to his preaching. In other words, he is unordained in the highest, truest sense of that word.

What is the secret of the opposition and slander that is being raised up against me and against all who, like me, are Bible students? It is malice, hatred, envy, strife, on the part of those who are still hugging the nonsense of the dark ages and neglecting true Bible study. They see that their influence is waning. But they have not yet awakened to the true situation. They think that I am responsible for their smaller congregations and small collections. But not so. The real difficulty with them is that the people are becoming more intelligent and can no longer be driven with the crack of a merely mandevised whip of fear. The colleges of the world have been teaching that the Bible is a foolish old book, until few preachers and few of the educated of the world believe it to be of divine inspiration. Losing faith in the Bible, in the preachers and in the creeds, the people are drifting toward atheism. That is the real difficulty.

While my work does not, indeed, help to build up any of the sects of Christendom, it is helping to establish Christian people in a true faith in God and in the Bible. It is giving them a firm foundation and an intelligent understanding such as they had prayed for and hoped for before, but never found. This is not because of great ability on my part, nor on the part of my associates, but because God's time has come for blessing Bible study in the light of present-day opportunities. It is as Jesus promised—the wise virgin class of Christian people, who "trim their lamps"—study the Bible—find it to shine out brightly and to point them to the new age of blessing under Messiah's kingdom.

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REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."—Matthew 5:11, 12.

These words of our Lord are addressed to his disciples—not merely his apostles, who were chosen to be his special messengers, but all his followers throughout this age. A disciple is a pupil—one who is being taught by another. All who are Jesus' disciples are to take the message of our text to themselves. "Blessed are ye," signifies that persecution is a favor from God. Consider it as a favor from the Father when men shall revile you—not because of the reviling, but because they shall say these things of you falsely, for Christ's sake.

No one would choose naturally to be persecuted or to have evil spoken against him. The Scriptures say that a good name is more to be esteemed than great riches. But if it is for Christ's sake that we suffer, we may know that the Lord will recompense us. In the Lord's arrangement there is to be a time of "evening up" for all we suffer here. Thus we lay up treasure in heaven. All that we suffer now is storing up for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if borne for him.

From this standpoint we should really desire persecution. We are not to strive for it, not to endeavor to bring it upon ourselves unnecessarily; but realizing that if we lack persecution we lack one of the evidences of being true disciples of the Lord, we rejoice when in the providence of God it is our portion. Some, it is true, might be reviled for something evil or unwise that they had done. There would be no blessing in such an experience. The blessing comes when the accusation against us is false and is for the truth's sake.

"All who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Hence we should investigate our lives to see whether we have this evidence that we are living godly. The Lord is the "true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We are the lesser lights. In letting our lights shine faithfully, we shall bring upon ourselves persecution. Let us not imagine that escape from persecution in our own case is the result of superior wisdom or tact on our part. "All who will live godly shall suffer persecution," is the promise, the assurance of Scripture. We should not court it, but should desire this evidence of our faithfulness, and should wish to be one of the "blessed" ones, of whom the Master speaks in our text. Then let us ask ourselves, Do I have persecution for Christ's sake? We should make a prayerful examination of our hearts to see whether we are fully loyal to God, to see whether we are letting our light shine out properly. If we lack this proof of sonship, we should inquire, What is the reason?

PERSECUTION A SURE RESULT OF FAITHFULNESS

A sister once said to the Editor, "I have no persecution, no opposition. Everything seems to be going favorably with me." She seemed troubled. We asked the sister to study her own heart to see whether or not she was as faithful as she knew how to be. Upon her reply we said, "Probably you take your persecutions with such grace that you are happy under them." The sister replied that she would be happy if she thought that was the case. Then we told her that the only other explanation we could think of was that the Lord was allowing her time to gain strength in order that she might bear what would come to her later. We told her to pray about it. A year or two after we again saw the sister. We recalled the circumstances, and asked her if she had yet had any persecution. She answered, "Oh, yes. I have had plenty of persecution, but I am happy and rejoicing in it!"

It is impossible to rejoice in persecution until we get the right focus on the subject. We cannot do this of ourselves, and need, therefore, to take the matter to the Lord and confer with him. After we have had "a little talk with Jesus," our faith takes hold on him. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to be exceeding glad and joyful in persecution and affliction for Christ. The Apostle Peter also declares, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as . . . an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters; yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him glorify God on this behalf."—1 Peter 4:14, 15.

The Master was not surprised at the attitude of the chief priests and religious leaders of his day. He knew from the beginning that he would have their opposition and hostility, and he warned his disciples not to expect otherwise As to the reason why there should be persecution against the Lord and those who faithfully follow in his footsteps, he himself tells us, saying, "The darkness hateth the light." Darkness stands for Satan, for sin, for everything contrary to righteousness. God is represented as the great light, "and in him is no darkness at all." Light is healing, beneficial, health-giving.

They who are of the darkness hate those who are of the light, because the light reproves the darkness, and the darkness does not like to be reproved. Wherever righteousness is, it is a rebuke to that which is sinful, dark. Our Lord stood for the light. He represented the truth, the heavenly Father. And those who were in darkness were in opposition to him in proportion to their darkness—some of these knowingly, others in more or less of ignorance. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all them which believe not." Satan has been skilful in putting darkness for light and light for darkness.

The fact that many of the world are in opposition to God and righteousness is not because as a rule they are evil of

heart, but because Satan has succeeded in making the darkness seem desirable and the light undesirable. It was thus in the religious systems of Jesus' day, and we believe that it is the same in the religious systems of today. Saul of Tarsus was for a time one of those blinded by Satan. In persecuting the followers of Jesus he verily believed that he was doing God service. But when he was apprehended by the Lord and the light was revealed to him, he proved himself loyal to God.

And so we trust it is with some who today oppose the light and truth now being proclaimed. They are deluded; but if their hearts are fully loyal to the Lord, if they are true to their consecration vows, the truth will be revealed to them before "the door is shut"; for "ye, brethren, are not in darkness; ye are the children of light." "The wise shall understand." Soon the knowledge of the truth will come to the "foolish virgins," and they will wash their soiled robes in the blood of Christ—during the great tribulation shortly to come to the whole world. And soon, too, the light of the knowledge of God is to fill the whole earth. But so long as Satan is "the prince of this world," and there are those in the world who have his spirit, and those who are followers of the Lord and have his spirit, just so long must there be conflict.

The opposition of the darkness to the light may be manifested in different ways. In the days of our Lord and the apostles there were persecutions of Christians by Jews. Later, during the long centuries in which the Word of God was neglected and the truth was obscured by gross errors, there were persecutions of Protestants by Catholics and of Catholics by Protestants and of Jews by both—all because of failure to study the Word of God and to follow its teachings. But very few in these dark times had access to the Word.

Some of the opposition to our Lord was open, and some of it was hidden. Many of the apostles, like their Master, suffered death by violence; and many of the faithful down through the Gospel age have suffered violent deaths. At the present time, outward persecution is not sanctioned by law, nor is it tolerated to any great extent.

PRESENT METHODS OF PERSECUTION

Persecutors have all along used the weapon of reviling, slander, saying all manner of evil falsely against those who are God's true people. As the Bible declares, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Today slanderous charges are made and villainous, opprobrious expressions indulged in by opponents of the truth, and this is the chief weapon, because the defamers have not the power at present to use open, personal violence. Public sentiment and law would not permit it. But the persecution is of the same brand, the same spirit—merely governed by circumstances and conditions. Those who would say all manner of evil falsely, knowing the charges are false, are the very kind who would crucify or burn at the stake, had they the power. Not being permitted to use personal violence by the present laws and the general sentiment, these are forced to content themselves with bringing all sorts of false charges—seeking to assassinate the reputation and destroy the influence of those who are proclaiming the truth, the Word of God.

The right attitude of the persecuted ones is indicated in our text. Instead of feeling downcast and discouraged by these experiences, and thinking them strange, evidences that God is against us, we should conclude the very reverse. We should say to ourselves, "This is the same kind of experience that the Lord had, and that his people of the past have had." So, "Marvel not if the world [especially the religious world—the world that hated him] hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you," forewarned our Master. So far from being discouraged, we are to rejoice—not that any could rejoice in the persecution for its own sake, for persecution is grievous; but we are to rejoice because "great is your reward in heaven." What we do not get here of prosperity, we shall get there—in the kingdom.

The Socialists say that they intend to have some of the good things now! They have not sufficient faith in the future blessings to be willing to wait. But the class addressed in our text are those who have faith in God and his promises, those who are associated with Christ, who understand that the experiences of this time are working out for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and they are content to await God's time. These are rejoicing in their hearts, realizing that they are enduring for righteousness' sake, that they are on the side of God, the side of right, the side of truth, and realizing that these afflictions are only momentary, as it were; for the present life is but a mere span compared with the eternal life, the glorious immortality, so near at hand, in which we shall receive the blessings promised—joy forever with the Lord.

The Master gave all his followers fair warning that they were not to expect the world to appreciate their attitude. One might well reason that if one gave up sin and adopted a righteous course, the world would esteem him; that all would see the worthiness of his character and would show him special deference. But we must not expect this under the present reign of Sin. It would be a very broad way into the kingdom, and a great many then might take this course for the favor of man, for the prosperity which it would bring them. The Lord could never demonstrate our fitness for the kingdom honors under such conditions.

If our great Master was called Beelzebub, we cannot expect that the members of his household will be treated any better. If he who was perfect was held up to scorn as the prince of devils, we may expect similar treatment to be meted out to his followers by those whom the adversary has blinded; for we are less able to uphold the standard of righteousness than was he. When his enemies attempted to make his character appear vile in the sight of others, he did not retaliate. Jesus did on proper occasions point out the wrong-doing, the wrong character, of those who were the religious leaders and teachers; but he did not do this in a retaliatory sense. On various occasions he accused them of being untrue, unholy, hypocritical; but he said nothing with a view to injuring them, but with the desire to show them their improper condition of heart, that they might profit by his instruction. He endeavored to help others to see the real condition of these blind leaders of the blind, in order to prevent them from falling into the ditch toward which their leaders were hastening.

THE MASTER'S CRUCIAL TEST

When the scribes, the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law tried to trump up charges against the Master and to put evil constructions upon what he said, he was patient under all these trying conditions. He submitted to the treatment. It might be asked, Why did God permit his holy Son to suffer such revilings? Why did he not smite down those who did so wickedly? The answer is that the Father wished to demonstrate the kind of character that was pleasing to him, and he wished to test the loyalty of Jesus himself. Would he be submissive and obedient or would he resent these affronts? Would he say, "I will have none of this! I did not come into the world to bear such indignities"? His painful experiences were thus tests of his loyalty to the Father.

Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that he should submit himself, even unto death, and he had agreed to do this. Now the crucial test was: Would he continue loyal to the Father and carry out his purposes? If so, he would be worthy to be the Messiah, worthy to be the divine Son of God throughout eternity. Our Lord's experiences had all been foretold in prophecy. In order to fulfil these prophecies it must be that he receive revilings, and he must accept them properly. The Apostle Peter shows that in this he was a worthy example to all of his followers. As he who was holy, harmless, undefiled, did not seek to have the Father bring upon the revilers some punishment for their misdoings, so this is an example for us; so we should walk in his steps.

SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION STILL HERE

We realize that in our case there is none righteous, not one who is perfect. So we see that our enemies might have some cause to revile us. They might see some of our imperfections and have something that they could pick at and exaggerate. The Apostle Peter says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." As they said all manner of evil against our Lord falsely, we may be sure that they will say all manner of evil falsely against us. And as he bore it patiently, so are we to take patiently everything that comes to us, and to recognize that nothing can possibly happen to us except what the Father will foreknow and permit for our good and for his glory. Our Master left us a portion of his cup that the Father poured for him. After the cup has all been drained, then will come the glory and the honor—but not now.

We might naturally expect under the changed conditions of the present day, that those who are loyal to God and his truth would not be maltreated and persecuted as in Jesus' day. But we believe there is another way of viewing the matter. We believe that Jesus, if he were here in the flesh today, would be persecuted and maligned by the worldly-minded, especially in the nominal church systems. Now, instead of crucifying him literally, or roasting him at the stake, they would "roast" him before the public—a more refined form of persecution—for the spirit of persecution is still here.

In proportion as the followers of Jesus are faithful to the teachings of the Master, in that same proportion they will be out of harmony with everything opposed to the spirit of Christ, and in that same proportion they will be misrepresented and persecuted. In Jesus' day there were plenty of people who

did reverence to the Doctors of the Law, who made broad their phylacteries and were very exact as to the letter of the law, the paying of tithes, etc. Jesus did not seek honor and high position. But he appealed to the people to turn from sin, to walk in his steps, to stand for the truth as against all unrighteousness and untruth. This appeal touched no responsive chord in the hearts of the worldly-minded.

For this reason, we say that the world has not changed, that the world is still in opposition to the Word and its spirit —particularly the religious world. It is still true, however, as in the days of our Lord in the flesh, that the common people are inclined to hear the Gospel gladly, if not blinded by the religious leaders. But today, as in Jesus' time, many are influenced by the false representations of those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual shepherds. If then the world should come to be in sympathy with us as a people, and should speak well of us, and we should become popular, we should come under the condemnation expressed in the Master's words, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you; for so did their fathers unto the false prophets."

THINK IT NOT STRANGE

If, on the contrary, we find that in spite of our best endeavors we are beset by opposition, and are viewed with suspicion, if unworthy constructions are placed upon our unselfish efforts to do good and to carry to others the glorious light which has so blessed our own hearts, let us not be surprised or feel aggrieved; for undoubtedly it is for the same reason that Jesus was opposed.

The spirit of light is the spirit of Christ. The spirit of darkness is of the world. All who have sympathy for that which is evil, or have been so blinded that light appears as darkness, will oppose the light. There has been so much of selfishness in the world, and the people have been so often taken advantage of and duped, that we cannot wonder that they are slow to believe that there are any who can be actuated solely by the motive of blessing their fellows.

It will be to the interest of some to promote priesteraft, and they will, therefore, seek to break down whatever is inimical to their interests. They say, "You are opposing us." We reply that we are only holding up the light. But they feel that the light that is reaching the people is undermining their influence. We believe that this is the secret of much of the strong opposition to the truth that is prevailing in some quarters. There is a large number, we believe, who in many respects are good men, but who are fighting the light. We may suppose that they do not realize what they are doing—that unwittingly they are holding on to the ignorance of error, in bondage to sin and Satan. For this reason they are in antagonism to those who are lifting the veil from before the Lord's people and showing them the character of God, that he is love. Hence the conflict which is going on.

Another phase of opposition is in respect to financial matters. When we claim that what is given to the Lord should not be obtained by cajoling the people, should not be pulled out of them, worked out of them, extorted from them, but that whatever is given should be a free will, voluntary offering, we are running counter to the custom of centuries. As one Baptist minister said to two of our brethren, "Think of Pastor Russell's advertising 'Seats free and no collections!' Where would we be if we did not have collections, or if the people got the thought that it is not the proper thing to pass the collection baskets?"

THE REBUKE OF HIS PEOPLE SOON TO VANISH

As our Master was hated without a cause, so let this be our experience, as far as possible. Let us see to it that the hatred, the malice, the envy and spirit of murder which is heaped upon us is entirely undeserved. Let it be our earnest endeavor that our lives, as fully as we are able, shall reflect the light of the truth, shall be as noble and upright as possible in all things; that our words and actions shall glorify the Lord whom we serve, and be eloquent of our love for all mankind, especially for the household of faith, whether enlightened by present truth as yet or not.

In a very little while, we believe, we shall be glorified with our Lord, if faithful. Then a new dispensation will be inaugurated; and those who hate us now, chiefly because blinded and misled by the adversary, will bow their hearts before us as the Anointed of the Lord, and we shall have the blessed privilege of uplifting them, of enlighting and forgiving them, of helping them to attain the perfect image and likeness of our God.

HOW FAR ARE OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED?

The question might arise with some, To what extent does God supervise the experiences of his children? The Master said, "The cup which my father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" Then how would it be with our cup? Is God not also our Father? Are not we members of Christ? Who, then, but the Father pours our cup? But we know that God is not a participator in any evil thing; how, then, has he anything to do with the evils that come to his people?

We answer, There are all manner of evil forces and influences surrounding us. These evil influences are of Satan and the fallen angels. "Our adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," and the fallen angels also go about seeking how they may assault the children of the Lord. But they can have no power whatever against us except as the Father shall permit it. He will permit no evil influence to touch us to our injury as new creatures, if we keep close to him. And he will prevent harm or injury to our persons, unless he sees it will outwork good to us, if we are rightly exercised by it.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR OUR GOOD

We have also the opposition of the world. But Satan, the prince of this world, succeeds in blinding the minds of men, putting error for truth, and darkness for light, in order to make the way of righteousness and obedience to God appear foolish and undesirable and extreme. Those who have more or less of the spirit of the world bring against the Lord's children in a perfectly natural way, aside from the direct influence of the evil one and his cohorts, a certain amount of opposition. For instance, our Lord, as the time of his death drew near, was speaking to the apostles about the great climax of his experiences—that he would go up to Jerusalem, that men would crucify him, etc. Then Peter said, Lord, Lord, do not allow your mind to run in this channel! You have come to earth to be the great King! Do not let the thought get into your mind that you are to be crucified! And the Lord turned to Peter and said, "Get thee behind me, adversary!" He was the Lord's adversary for the time.

So the world often become adversaries of the children of God in their zeal for what they think the more honorable and advantageous course for us. They urge, Do not take such an extreme views of things, and you will get along better. This is opposition to our consecration vow; and when we resist their well-meant efforts, they seek to thwart us and to bring us back to their views and ideas. The ideal of the world for us as Christians would be, Do good, and work for social uplift, for civic reform; build hospitals, establish orphanages, etc.; but do not spend so much time studying that old Bible, or they will call you an extremist or a heretic. So the world tries sympathetically to influence us. And our Father permits these influences to be brought to bear upon us for our proving. We may be sure that the Lord so supervises our experiences that nothing can come to us in any way whatsoever but what will work for our spiritual good so long as we keep ourselves in his love—so long as we wholly abide in him. And death itself is powerless to touch us until God's time for us shall have come.

Our flesh is out constant, ever-present adversary. It tries to say, No, no! Do not carry this thing so far! Our flesh is inclined to be in harmony with the world. But our new creature replies, Jesus walked the way of sacrifice and suffering—and St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John. Then the flesh suggests that they were special persons. But we know that the Bible teaches us that the same course is to be followed by all of the Lord's faithful people, and that all these will receive persecution.—2 Timothy 3:12.

All will not be crucified, nor will all be thrust in a caldron of boiling oil or be sawn asunder or beheaded. We shall probably not have any of these experiences; but we must suffer. So we bid our flesh be silent, and we rejoice in the experiences that we do have; for "if we suffer [with him], we shall reign with him." (2 Timothy 2:12.) Of course we rejoice! And the world says that we are going insane!

THE PRECIOUS PROMISES OUR STRENGTH

We are to remember, dear brethren—and this is to be a parting thought with us—that nothing can by any means harm us, aside from our Father's will. We are promised that not one hair of our heads shall be hurt—figuratively. And we have the guarantee from the Lord that "all things shall work together for good to those that love God," who put their trust in him. Whatever would not be a blessing to us will not be permitted. Our trials and tribulations, rightly received, are to work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:17, 18.

As we look back, we can see that all who have walked in the narrow way have received persecution. Whoever has been in accord with God has been out of accord with the course of this world. There were the Baptists, and then the Methodists, who in the early days had persecution because they had more light than others. The Presbyterians also for a time, because they had greater light than others, received persecution.

THE NIGHT ALMOST OVER

And we must expect the same today. Persecution will come to those who have the courage of their convictions. The Lord tells us that the anointing that we have received of him is for the very purpose that we may show forth his praises. (1 Peter 2:9) We must examine ourselves to see if to any extent we have kept our light under a bushel. In the 11th chapter of Hebrews, St. Paul recounts the sufferings of the prophets and worthies of old. Some of them were stoned to death, some sawn asunder; they were killed and persecuted in a variety of ways. These godly men endured much for righteousness' sake. "And all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

But the night is almost over. Soon the Lord will rise up. He will stretch forth his hands—his power—and his children shall be delivered. Soon will come the glorious reign of Messiah. Then all who will live righteously shall have peace. Altogether, dear friends, our text is very precious—one that should encourage our hearts and help to guide us on our way, and bring us comfort and rejoicing in these closing days of our pilgrimage.

"Our God is love; he loves to hear our voices;
In Christ we share the riches of his grace;
He loves to fold his arms of comfort round us,
And let us nestle in the children's place.

"He loves to answer prayer, though not it may be
In just the way that we should think the best;
But in his own prospective, perfect judgment
He gives the blessings and withholds the rest."

JEHOVAH'S ABIDING PRESENCE WITH HIS PEOPLE

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."—Exodus 33:14.

The children of Israel had come out of Egypt; they had crossed the Red Sea, and had come to Mount Sinai. Moses had gone up into the Mount, had received the tables of the Law, and had come down and found the nation in idolatry, worshipping the golden calf which they had made. While Moses was still in the Mount, the Lord had told him that Israel had already turned aside from the true God to idols, and was offering sacrifice to a molten calf as the god who had brought them forth out of Egypt; and he instructed Moses to go down to the people. The wrath of God was hot against them, and he proposed to Moses that he consume them and make of him a great nation. But Moses besought the Lord for Israel, and the Lord was entreated of him and spared the nation from annihilation, and promised him that he should still be their leader.

Then Moses went down from the Mount. He realized that Israel had grievously sinned, and his anger was kindled against them. He cast down the tables of the law, which were in his hands, and broke them, when he saw and heard the dancing and feasting and shouting around the idol which they had set up for themselves. Here was a nation delivered by God from Egyptian bondage. The Red Sea had opened for them to pass over, by the power of Jehovah. They had also received various blessings along their way, notable proofs of divine guidance. Yet in spite of all this, here was rebellion and idolatry! What could he expect of a people who had so little appreciation of God, that they were quickly turned aside? Even Moses' own brother, Aaron, led astray by the insistence of the people, felt it necessary to co-operate with them in the making of the golden calf.

Then Moses took the calf which they had made, and burned it in fire, ground it to powder, scattered it upon the water and compelled the children of Israel to drink of it. He reproved Aaron, and then stood in the gate of the camp and said to all the people, "Who is on Jehovah's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men."—Exodus 32:26-28.

MOSES' CRY AND ITS ANSWER

The day following, Moses explained to the people how great was the sin of which they had been guilty and told them that he would go to the Lord in prayer, if peradventure he might make atonement for their sin. Then he went to the Lord in earnest supplication, pleading that if God would not forgive his people, he would also blot out his name from his book. But God answered, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." He promised to send his angel before Moses, but assured him that he was not yet through dealing with Israel for their iniquity. He instructed Moses to tell them of their stiffneckedness and to command them in his name to put off their ornaments, that he might know what course he would pursue with them.

The people obeyed God. They laid aside their ornaments, and humbled themselves and worshipped the Lord. Moses, heavy of heart, felt that unless God would in some special way give him the necessary wisdom and grace for the great task of leading so perverse a people into the inheritance which the Lord had promised them if they would serve him, he would be utterly insufficient for the undertaking. So he again appealed to God in earnest prayer. He told him of his trepidation and his earnest desire for his sustaining help and his presence with him in all the way, pleading, This is too great a work for me!

Then the Lord assured Moses that he would go with him, that he should have his presence throughout the entire journey to the Promised Land; for he had found grace in his sight. He said, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Moses then besought the Lord, "Show me thy glory." It was here that God put Moses into the cleft of a rock and covered him with his hand while he passed by and let Moses see his glory from behind, saying, "No man can see my face and live."

When God speaks of his presence with his servants we are not to think of his being with them in his bodily presence, but by his Spirit and through his angelic messengers, sustaining, blessing and guiding them. He protects them from whatever will harm them. He watches over their every interest and tenderly cares for them.

IDEA OF GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE AN ERROR

It is a common, but erroneous, thought that God is actually present in person everywhere. We do not understand the Scriptures to so teach. This generally prevailing error that God is everywhere present in person, and at the same time, has led many to think of him as being not a person at all, but merely an influence. We understand the Bible presentation of the matter to be that God has a personal, bodily presence, aside from the power and influence which he exerts; and that he has a central seat of government, where he resides.

"Heaven is my throne, the earth is my footstool," says Jehovah. The one who has his seat in heaven and whose footstool is the earth is a great God! But this is, of course, a forceful figure of speech, showing his all-embracing power and control. God does not actually sit in a certain part of his universe and have his literal feet in another part. The language of Scripture accommodates itself to the mind of man, and speaks of God as if he possessed the same bodily members as humanity. But actually we know not what a spirit body is like. "It doth not yet appear," even to the saints of the Lord who are still in the flesh.

We understand that the bodily presence of Jehovah is in heaven. Everything in the Bible teaches us that he is very great—infinite in power. We read that "the Lord looketh down from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth." (Psalm 33:13, 14) He has beheld men in their distress, and has provided for their deliverance "in due times." But we should clearly distinguish between this thought of God's looking down from heaven and the thought that he is personally present on earth. We can see a mile off, or five miles off, by the power of our sight. We can be a hundred or more feet away and be present by the power of our voice; or aided by the modern invention of the telephone, we can be present by our voice several hundred miles away. In that sense of the word the Lord is present everywhere throughout his mighty universe, and his power can be exerted everywhere. He has means by which he can be cognizant of all earthly affairs and of matters pertaining to all his great domain.

We have these powers only to a very limited extent. The telegraph, the telephone, the telescope, etc., are all means by which our presence, power and influence are extended to a certain degree; but our powers are limited to this small planet, except as we further extend them by means of prayer, and thus set in motion influences whose extent we are not now able to fathom. But this latter privilege is only for a few at present. Not many thus have access to the power which controls the universe. And these who have the privilege of com-

ing to the mighty King of heaven may come only in his appointed way, subject to the conditions which he has made.

We can place no limitations upon the power of Jehovah. The inventions of this time of the end, which have increased our powers of communication, and so have united all parts of the globe, give us but a very faint conception of the infinite powers of the Almighty God. These inventions, we believe, will continue to increase and multiply through the incoming age, thus adding more and more to the powers and blessings of mankind. These will give mankind a greater and greater appreciation of the majesty, glory and might of their Creator as they come to know him as he is and to worship him in spirit and in truth. Yet no human mind, even in perfection, will be able to comprehend the mighty Maker of the universe.

GOD'S GUIDANCE THROUGH THE WILDERNESS

So God promised Moses that his presence, his power and sustaining grace should go with him all the way. He wished him to understand that he was not to perform his great work alone, without all-sufficient backing. "I will be with you," was the promise. The Lord's presence was indeed with the children of Israel in a very marked manner—continually with them from the time they crossed the Red Sea, guiding by blessings or by chastisements, as they should need. He was with them in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, and by his presence in the Shekinah glory which covered the Mercy-seat in the Most Holy of the Tabernacle. After the Tabernacle was set up by God's instruction, these manifestations of his presence, his power and his watchful care never failed. The pillar of cloud and of fire guided their journeyings; and when these rested, it was an indication from God that they were to abide where they were until the pillar of cloud or fire again moved from its place.

Moses had said to the Lord, "If thy presence go not with us, send us not up hence"—this is too great a task for any man to accomplish alone. But if thy presence will continue with us, if I can be shown thy will and be continually directed by thee, then I will be able to lead this people through the wilderness journey to the land of Canaan. Frequently the Lord spoke to Moses through the Tabernacle. Thus we see that the promise of his presence with him was fulfilled. The Lord gave him rest. He lived to be one hundred and twenty years old, yet was not his strength impaired nor his eye dim. We remember that there was a time when Moses realized that the work of judging the people was too great for him. He took the matter to the Lord, and seventy judges were then chosen to share his burden. The matters that were too difficult for them they brought to Moses. He went to God with all his difficulties and burdens and he had continual blessing.

THE LESSON TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

The experiences of natural Israel have very important lessons for Israel according to the Spirit. A people originally a part of the world, we have been invited to come out from the world and to journey to a new Country, to come into a heavenly inheritance. We are marching toward the glorious kingdom promised us if we are faithful. There are trials and difficulties along the way. But our God has promised us, as he promised Moses his servant, that his presence shall go with us. Sometimes he seems to withdraw from us and to leave us to ourselves; but he does not really do so. He tests our loyalty and our faith in him by withholding the sense of his presence at times.

Shall we, then, like Israel of old, conclude that God is no more with us, and turn again to the gods we formerly worshiped—gods of wealth or of pleasure, gods worshiped by the nations around us? Shall we give ourselves up to revelry, worldly merry-making and sin? Shall we forget all the way by which our God has led us, all the great deliverances which the past of our lives have recorded? Shall anything—either "tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come or any other thing in creation be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?" Surely not!

The closer we live to the Lord, and the greater our faith, the more we shall realize the divine direction, and the more we shall make use of the means he has provided for our strengthening and upholding. We may call upon him in time of trouble; we may go to him in prayer; and he never fails those who put their trust in him and earnestly seek to walk in his appointed way. This being true, we may go forth upon our journey, in perfect trust and confidence. Having consecrated our all to the Lord, we are to seek for his guidance, for his presence is with us, in all the affairs of our life.

Few have such mighty burdens to carry as Moses had. But all of God's children have burdens to bear, and important responsibilities are resting upon each of us who have taken upon us the vows of our God. Each member of the body of Christ, the true Israel of God, is privileged to have the continual guidance of the Lord in every experience of our wilderness journey. Heavenly manna is furnished for our daily sustenance. The water of life flows out to us for our daily refreshing, from the smitten Rock of Ages. Our Father's chastening rod restrains us when we are in danger, or when we wander into any forbidden path. How lovingly he brings us back into the right way, and heals our wounds, and graciously forgives our stumblings and weaknesses! Surely we may have implicit confidence in our heavenly Guide. Thus we may rest in him and be kept in perfect peace. Our hearts can truly exclaim with the poet:

"He has guided my steps where I could not see,
By ways that I had not known;
The crooked was straight and the rough made plain
As I followed the Lord alone.
I praise his name for the pleasant palms
And the water-springs by the way;
For the glowing pillar of fire by night,
And the sheltering cloud by day.

"There is light for me on the trackless wild
As the wonders of old I trace,
When the God of the whole earth went before
To search me a resting place!
Hath he changed for me? Nay, he changeth not;
He will bring me by some new way,
Through fire and flood and each crafty foe,
As safely as yesterday."

He who so faithfully cared for Israel after the flesh, who were a perverse and fickle people, will surely care more abundantly for his true spiritual Israel, who love him supremely and are daily seeking more fully to know his will that they may do it.

The Apostle Paul, in warning spiritual Israel not to fall after the same example of unbelief of natural Israel, and thus lose their hold on the Lord, says, "We who have believed do enter into rest." (Hebrews 4:3) It was unbelief that led to the disobedience and perversity of Israel after the flesh, and that led to their final rejection by the Lord as his favored people, to whom should apply the most precious promises. They have lost forever as a nation the special place of favor which was theirs by inheritance. What a lesson this should be to spiritual Israel! And yet we see that today the great mass of spiritual Israel are falling "after the same example of unbelief." And they, too, will lose the chief place of favor, which was offered them when it was taken from unbelieving natural Israel. Only a faithful "remnant" of both natural and spiritual Israel will gain the great inheritance held out to them by the Lord.

THE GLORIOUS INHERITANCE OF SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

Those who prove faithful during the present dispensation shall inherit the most precious things which God has to offer, the secret things which were for ages kept hidden, but are now revealed to the true saints of God. The faithful of past ages shall inherit the earth as rulers and princes over mankind, during the glorious reign of Messiah. Gathered to these will be natural Israel then living. They shall have a rich heritage. What remains for them in the ages of glory to follow, we may not know with certainty, but it will be a blessed portion, we may be sure.

The faithful of the present age have been raised to "sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus"—"the Lion of the tribe of Judah." These faithful ones are the twelve tribes of Israel who are to reign with him. These—only a little flock, in all 144,000—are of the faithful remnant of natural Israel, who were gathered at the beginning of this Gospel age, and the faithful remnant from the Gentile church of this age. (Revelation 7:4-8; 14:1-5) These have "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," and which none others can know. "My peace I give unto you," whispers the Master to these. We have a rest of faith now; and we are assured that we who have entered into this rest shall in due time, if we faint not, enter into the complete "rest that remaineth for the people of God." This rest we shall enter into when we experience our glorious "change" in the first resurrection, when we are transformed in body and made like our Lord, and shall see and know as we are now seen and known to God. We shall then be blessed with the exceeding glory which he has promised—immortality, his own nature—and a seat with our Savior in his throne.

The God of Israel is indeed ever present with his true people. He never forgets us, but is constantly looking out for our interests, guarding us in every time of danger, providing for our every need, both temporal and spiritual, whatever is

best for the interest of the new creature. He reads every thought of our hearts; he marks every impulse of devotion and love to him; he shapes all the influences surrounding our lives for our disciplining and refining, and hearkens to our every cry for aid and comfort and sympathy and fellowship with him. He is never for even a moment forgetful or off guard. "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps." (Psalm 121) If we call him in the busy hours of the day, or in the silent watches of the night, he is near to uphold and sustain and protect, whether we can realize his presence at all times or not.

How blessed the assurance of such constant, abiding care and faithfulness! No real child of God is devoid of these evidences of his precious relationship to the Father—the God of Israel. And the saints who have been called with the heavenly calling, and are faithfully responding, are his true Israel in the highest sense, heirs of all his choicest promises. How goodly a heritage is ours!

THE ANOINTING OF THE CHURCH

"The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you."—1 John 2:27.

Under the divine arrangement with the nation of Israel their high priests, who represented the entire priesthood, were inducted into office by an anointing with a peculiar kind of rich perfume called the holy anointing oil. This oil was made according to a special prescription, and the people were not permitted to use it, upon penalty of death. After Israel had become a kingdom, the kings were also anointed with this holy anointing oil.

These two offices of priest and king were afterwards shown to be typical of a united service which would find its antitype in One who was to be a Priest upon his throne—a royal priest, a priestly king. The Scriptures give us a type of this united office in the person of Melchizedek, of whom it is written that he was king of Salem and priest of the Most High God. (Genesis 14:18-20; Hebrews 7:1-17) By thus comparing Scripture with Scripture we learn that Messiah, who is to accomplish the great work of blessing the world, is to be the one who will combine the offices of both king and priest.

Examining the type closely, we find that the holy anointing oil was poured upon the head of the high priest only at the time of his induction into office. Poured liberally upon his head, the oil ran down to the very skirts of his priestly robes of office. As we shall see later, this circumstance was also typical.

Looking forward from the type to the antitype, we perceive the Scriptures to teach that there is to be established in the earth a great Messianic kingdom, which will bind Satan, restrain all evil influences and give the whole world of mankind a full opportunity of reconciliation with God. We also understand that there will be done a great priestly work in connection with this kingdom. This also will be a part of Messiah's great work, which is thus shown to be twofold; as King he will rule mankind with a rod of iron for their blessing, and as Priest he will instruct, uplift, heal their diseases and awaken the dead.

"CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY"

The nation of Israel well understood that their Messiah was to be the promised seed of Abraham, who was to bless all the families of the earth; but not until the time of our Lord's first advent was it due to be understood that this seed was to consist of more than one individual. The Apostle Paul calls our attention to this fact and declares that this was the mystery hidden from previous dispensations—that the Messiah was to be, not an individual, but a company under one Headship. (Ephesians 3:2-7; Colossians 1:25-27) Furthermore, this Messiah is not only to be multitudinous, but is to be gathered from amongst many nations.

Only a few can understand this mystery; many do not comprehend it yet; in fact, it is to be understood only by a special class, for whom it is designed. The Scriptures show us that the Gospel age is set aside for the selection of this great antitypical King, greater than Solomon; this great antitypical royal Priest, represented by Melchizedek. The call of this age is for those who shall become members of this company, the antitypical Priest and King.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

All who would become members of this kingdom class must look to our Lord Jesus as the one through whom the favor of God is to come to them. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved." Since the death and resurrection of Christ a new way to life has been opened up. Christ will be the Head of the church which is his body; and the entire church will complete the great antitypical Prophet, Priest and King—the long expected seed of Abraham.—Galatians 3:8, 16, 29.

Therefore let all who have offered themselves to God in consecration take up the cross and follow the Master; let them live as nearly as possible the life that he lived, walking in his steps. While we cannot be perfect according to the flesh, and while God cannot approve anything imperfect, yet our perfection is to be that of intention, of will; and thus through the Redeemer shall we approve ourselves unto him.

Reverting to the typical picture of the anointing of the Jewish high priest at the time of his induction into office and comparing it with the antitype, we perceive that the great antitypical Priest was anointed at Jordan. There our Lord Jesus, the Head of the Christ company, received the holy Spirit without measure. At Pentecost the antitypical anointing oil began to flow down to the church. As in the type the oil poured upon the head of the high priest flowed down to the very skirts of his garments, so the holy Spirit has come down from the Head of the church even to the last members of the anointed body of Christ.—Psalm 133:1-3.

THE ENTIRE CHRIST COMPANY ANOINTED

We receive this anointing from the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. All things are of the Father and all things are by the Son. (1 Corinthians 8:6) The Father bestowed the holy Spirit upon the Son, and authorized him to bestow it upon his body. This granting of the holy Spirit was designed to be an anointing for the whole body; for the Father recognized the body when he recognized the Head. When Christ made imputation of his merit to cover the blemishes of the church, he made us acceptable to the Father; and this acceptance was outwardly manifested by the tongues of fire, etc., which came upon the apostles at Pentecost. This outward manifestation was not the most important thing, however; for the apostles might have received the holy Spirit without any special manifestation of divine power.

The tongues of fire which descended at Pentecost, like the dove which lighted upon our Lord at his baptism, did not continue to be seen. Both the dove and the flame of light were merely outward representations for the purpose of convincing the beholders that the promised blessing and power had come.

When Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, was received into the anointed company, there was another manifestation of the fact that the holy Spirit had been given to the followers of Jesus. So there might be many manifestations of any fact. Even now God might give a manifestation to show that he had bestowed the holy Spirit; but by so doing he would merely be indicating the fact—the holy Spirit was already there. The anointing which the church received at Pentecost was the divine sanction, the divine recognition, of those consecrated to follow in the footsteps of our Lord. God thus gave outward demonstration of the fact that there was to be a church.

Since Pentecost the same Gospel call has gone forth throughout all the world—to as many as the Lord our God doth call. (Acts 2:39) Those who accept the terms and conditions of that call come into the anointed company. When we come into Christ, we come into this anointing. We do not get into the body of Jesus, but we come into this symbolical body of the Anointed—The Christ. We enter into this condition in which we are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" Jesus our Lord. Throughout this Gospel age this anointing has continued in the church. "The anointing which ye have received abideth in you"; it continues in you. Those who never come into this anointing will never be of the church.

ANOINTING AND BEGETTING

As to how we may know that we have been begotten is another phase of the matter. At Pentecost when the church began, there were outward signs by which this anointing was demonstrated—gifts of the Spirit, gifts of tongues, etc. These were merely outward gifts, the Apostle tells us, and might mean no more than tinkling cymbals or sounding brass. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3) It might be that those having the gifts had merely come into relationship with God in an outward, formal way, and had made no real progress in spiritual things.

God's arrangement seems to be that after we have come into this anointed company and thus may from the very beginning speak and think of ourselves as the anointed class, there will by and by come a manifestation that we have really entered into this class. This evidence will not be by our speaking with tongues, etc., but by the appearance of the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit—meekness, patience, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. The manifestation of these fruits

would seem to mean that we were becoming more and more actuated by the Spirit of Christ.

But even here we must discriminate between the natural disposition and that acquired by growth in grace. For instance, there are those who have a great deal of patience—too much, in fact; they are indolent. Their patience, therefore, is not a fruit of the Spirit. In order to distinguish between natural traits and acquired graces we are to compare the person's natural disposition with his growth in grace and in the fruits of the Spirit.

The anointing of the Spirit is not altogether the same as the begetting of the Spirit. The anointing relates merely to the recognition as a member of a class called to a special work in the Messianic kingdom. When we become related to God through Christ we become members of the anointed company. But while the anointing is represented of the whole church collectively, the begetting of the holy Spirit is an individual matter. In various ways the Scriptures explain to us that we are begotten of the holy Spirit by and through the Word of truth.

SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE WORD OF TRUTH

In other words, no one can receive the holy Spirit except he has received the truth. As an illustration, Cornelius was a good man, who prayed much and gave alms liberally; all this, however, did not give him the holy Spirit. But when the appropriate time came—the end of the seventy weeks of favor to the Jews—Cornelius was directed to one who would tell him what he ought to do. He was instructed by a holy angel to send for St. Peter to come to his house and to tell him words. (Acts 10:22) Words were necessary.

In order to become members of the church of Christ, there must be intelligent action on our part—it is not something of a hocus-pocus. We may know, therefore, that no heathen, however noble by nature, could possibly be of the church class; and the same is true of people who are civilized. Whoever is to be of the anointed company must have a knowledge of the privilege of coming into relationship with God through Christ. If any one has not this information, he cannot possibly be of the church class.

It is the Word of God, the Gospel message, that will bring people into relationship with God. So whoever will receive the holy Spirit must first receive the knowledge of the truth; and then this truth will operate upon him. First he must take his stand for righteousness; next he must receive Christ as his Redeemer. Then, after having accepted Christ as his Savior, he must go forward and make a consecration of himself to walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus. If he merely understood that this is the will of God, we believe that he would be received of the Lord—begotten of the holy Spirit. Then it would be God's order that he receive more instruction, because he had taken the proper steps thus far.

THE PURPOSE OF THE ANOINTING

How much of this is done automatically we may not surely know. As the skilful human being operates largely along automatic lines, so the great Creator would doubtless have automatic lines along which to work; and one step would lead on to one result, and another step to another result, etc. Our supposition is that God has some great principle operating automatically by which, under Christ, all whom he would accept would receive certain blessings individually. As soon as the individual would take the required steps, he would realize the divine blessing and guidance in his affairs.

All of the anointed have the mind of the great Head of the church. So we are to seek to abide in Christ individually as well as collectively; for as we have come into the anointed class, so it is possible for us to go out of that class. To abide in Christ, we must, as new creatures, grow in grace, in knowledge and in love; for as new creatures we shall, if faithful to the end of our course, be perfected in the first resurrection, and sit in the throne with our Lord and King.—Revelation 3:21.

WHY GETHSEMANE'S AGONY?

OCTOBER 18.—Mark 14:32-42.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."—Matthew 26:41.

Following the institution of the Supper which memorializes his death, Jesus and his disciples sang a hymn, and then went out of the city to the Mount of Olives opposite—a distance of perhaps a mile. Apparently several important lessons were given to the disciples en route to Gethsemane. These St. John's Gospel records in Chapters 15-17.

The word Gethsemane signifies an oil press—a name that is full of significance. When we remember that the Jews used the oil of the olives both for food and for light, and that Jesus is the nourisher as well as the enlightener of the world, we see a special fitness in his having his trying experiences, which almost crushed his soul, in a garden used for the crushing of olives and the extraction of their oil.

Gethsemane was not a flower garden, but an olive orchard or garden. The supposed site is still carefully preserved, and guarded by Franciscan monks. In the Garden are some very ancient olive trees and one extremely old oak. The Garden is supposed to have belonged to some of Jesus' friends; and there is claimed to be some evidence that John Mark, the writer of the Gospel of St. Mark, was the lad who was awakened from his slumbers by the commotion incident to Jesus' arrest and who came forth in his nightgown.—Mark 14:51, 52.

A NOTE OF WARNING

En route for Gethsemane, Jesus sought to impress upon his disciples the fact that they were entering a great crisis. He quoted to them the prophecy, "I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." (Zechariah 13:7) He said to them plainly that as a result they would all be offended—discouraged, stumbled, amazed. The thing that they were not expecting would occur.

St. Peter, full of confidence in his own devotion to the Lord, denied this, declaring that it would not be true in his case—that even though it should be true of all the others, he was ready to die with the Master, rather than to deny him. Jesus still insisted that St. Peter was in great danger. He was trusting too much to his flesh, and not looking to God and prayerfully watching against temptation. Indeed, all the disciples joined in the same remonstrance against the accusation that Jesus had made. They declared themselves loyal and ready for death. How little they knew what severe trials would come upon them!

Surely there is a lesson here for all the followers of Jesus—today as well as then. It is right that we should feel ourselves thoroughly determined to be loyal to the Lord's cause to our very last breath; for such a determination is very necessary to victory. The mistake made by many is in not realizing how severe the trials and temptations may become—in not realizing the necessity of heavenly assistance in our every time of need. The Apostle wrote, "When I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Corinthians 12:10) By this he doubtless meant, When fully loyal to the Lord, I feel my own weakness and insufficiency, but I am strong because then I rely especially upon heavenly aid—then I watch and pray, and am thus forewarned against the temptations.

Doubtless in the end of this age—in the closing days of this Gospel dispensation—there will come Gethsemane experiences to the church of Christ. Those who will stand those temptations and trials, and come off victorious, will be the ones whose faith and trust in the Lord are strong—those who watch and pray lest they enter into temptation, and who are thus safeguarded against it. As our Lord forewarned St. Peter and the other apostles of their coming trials, so he has forewarned us of the great crucial test near at hand. Let us profit by the experiences of the apostles recorded in this lesson.

"SORROWFUL EVEN UNTO DEATH"

Arrived at the Garden, Jesus left eight of the apostles near the entrance, and went further into its shades with Peter, James and John. All were to watch, to be on guard against something that was to occur, something of which Jesus knew, but which seemed most improbable to the apostles. They were unable to comprehend the Master's pessimism, even though they sympathized with him.

It was midnight, and they were accustomed to retiring early. The strain of the evening, and the weighty lessons which the Master had imparted, reacted in drowsiness. They slept, instead of watching and praying. This was true even of the three nearest to the Master.

Wishing to be alone in his communion with the Father, Jesus went a stone's throw farther into the shades by himself. Time and again, in the agony which came upon him, he came seeking human sympathy, only to find his dearest ones oblivious in sleep. Well had it been expressed by the Prophet, "Of the people there was none with me." (Isa. 63:3) He trod the winepress of grief alone.

Not until he had finished giving admonitions to his apostles and had left some to watch at the entrance of the garden, did the Master seem to give special thought to himself and to the momentous events anticipated within a few hours. As he was leaving his favorite three, he gave utterance to the weight of

oppression which seemed suddenly to rest down upon his soul. He exclaimed, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death!"—I feel as if I would die now, without coming to that great crisis which is before me. We read that "he was greatly amazed and sore troubled." The Greek is equally strong, signifying utter amazement and sore trouble, carrying the thought of loneliness, home-sickness, friendlessness.

THE CAUSE OF THE MASTER'S SORROW

This feeling of wretchedness, despair, which suddenly came upon the Savior, continued for some time; for he went in prayer to the Father three times, petitioning that this hour might pass from him, this terrible oppression which was breaking his heart. The Evangelist Luke, who was a physician, tells that the Master's distress was such that it brought on a bloody sweat. Although this record respecting the bloody sweat is not found in some of the older manuscripts, nevertheless physicians agree that such experiences have occurred to others in great distress.

How shall we explain the great distress of the Master in anticipation of his own death, of which he had knowledge in advance and of which he had told his disciples, assuring them also, as in this lesson, that he would arise from the dead on the third day? Why should the thought of death have so much more terror for the Redeemer than it has had for some of his followers, yes, than it has had for people in general?

Hundreds of martyrs have gone to deaths equally terrible or more so. Hundreds have exhibited great courage, fortitude, in the face of equally horrible deaths. How shall we account for this attitude of the Savior and his so earnestly praying that the hour or the cup might pass from him?

In order to appreciate this question and its proper answer, we must remember how different was the Master from all the remainder of mankind. A death sentence rests upon all the world. We all know that it is merely a question of time when we shall die. We all know that the dying process can last but a few hours at most. Not only have we no hope of escaping death, but by reason of being nine-tenths dead already our intelligent faculties are more or less benumbed. We are more or less reckless, careless, and proportionately fierce.

EXHIBITION OF TRUE COURAGE

There are soldiers who will rush to battle in the face of instant death with apparently not a fear, and there are horses which will do the same thing. The greatest courage, however, is manifested by those who know, understand, appreciate fully, just what they are doing and who greatly fear death, but who notwithstanding press onward in obedience to the command of duty and of love. Jesus was such a soldier. He comprehended, as others had not comprehended, what death really is. He appreciated, as others did not appreciate, the meaning and value of life.

Jesus had left the heavenly glory, divesting himself of the higher nature on the spirit plane, exchanging it for the human nature, because man had sinned and because in the divine purpose and arrangement he was to die, the just for the unjust, as man's redemption-price. This was the Father's will concerning him. He tells us that for this purpose he came into the world. This thought dominated his entire life. Daily he was laying down his life, in doing the will of God and in serving humanity. Now he had come to the great climax.

The heavenly Father had promised that if our Lord was faithful in this work given him to do, he would be raised from the dead by divine power to the spirit plane of being and to a station still higher than he had before. He doubted not the Father's faithfulness in this matter, nor did he doubt the Father's power. But the Father's provision and promise were conditional; only if our Lord would perform his part faithfully would he receive the resurrection to the higher life. If in any sense or degree, great or small, he should yield to sin, the penalty for sin would be upon him—"Dying, thou shalt die."

For three and one-half years his life had been devoted to God and to the doing of the divine will. The only question was, had he done the divine will fully, completely, and absolutely in such a spirit as had been pleasing to the heavenly Father? More than this, could he, would he, pass through the experiences of the next few hours with proper courage, proper faith, proper obedience; or would he fail, and lose his all in death?

NO ADVOCATE FOR THE MASTER

Thus we see how different it was with the Master from what is is with any of us who seek to walk in his steps. We have nothing to lose; for as a race we are all under sentence of death. Besides, the followers of Jesus realize that he was the Son of God who died for our sins, and that his merit compensates for our imperfections because we abide in him and desire to do the Father's will.

But had the Master failed, there was no one to make good for him. His failure meant everlasting death. Moreover, it meant the loss of all those special blessings which God had promised him as a reward for special faithfulness. It meant the loss of the great privilege of doing the Father's work in uplifting humanity from sin and death conditions through the Messianic kingdom. In a word, the Master's personal eternal life was in the balance that night in Gethsemane, as also were all his prospects of glory, honor, immortality and high exaltation at the right hand of the Father, far above angels, principalities and powers.

No wonder the Master, realizing all this, was overwhelmed with the thought! No wonder he wished that if it were possible for the divine plan to be otherwise worked out, he might be saved from, spared from, the special tribulations and horrible experiences of the hours just before him! Part of the horrors of that experience surely was the fact that he must be dealt with as a malefactor, as a blasphemer of God, as an enemy of God and of righteousness.

WHAT OUR LORD DREADED

To a debased and depraved soul, this would mean little; but to one full of love and loyalty to the Father such experiences would be terrible—that he who had sacrificed his all, even his heavenly glory and his earthly interests, to do the Father's will, should be considered a blasphemer of God, and that he should be crucified as a malefactor, an injurious person! What a terrible experience to one of the refinement and nobility of soul which Jesus possessed, of whom we read that he "was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners"!

Apparently this ignominy was the thing which Jesus prayed might pass away. He did not pray that he might not die; for he knew that he had come into the world for that purpose, and that only by his death could the death penalty resting against the human family be removed. He had been talking about his death repeatedly; he had not once thought of escaping death. He well knew that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." But he did hope that the Father might have some way of passing by the special ignominy of that hour. Yet even in his greatest distress the Master prayed, "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."

St. Paul assures us that the Master's Gethsemane experiences were linked with fear—not fear of dying, but fear of remaining dead, fear that he would not be accounted of the Father worthy of that glorious resurrection which had been promised to him on condition of absolute obedience. St. Paul says, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him out of death [by resurrection], was heard in respect to the things which he feared." (Hebrews 5:7) He was saved out of death; and more than this, he was given the assurance by the Father that he would be saved out of death.

STRENGTHENED FROM ON HIGH

This is the explanation of the statement that an angel of God appeared to him in the Garden and strengthened him—gave him the assurance from the Father that he had been faithful up to that moment, and that the divine blessing would be with him in the hour of trial just at hand. From that moment onward, all the fear and agony were gone. If the Father had approved him thus far, and if the Father's blessing and smile went with him, he could endure all things, come what might. Throughout the remainder of that night and the following day, Jesus was the calmest of the calm, under the most trying circumstances. He comforted those who wept about him; he committed his mother to the faithful St. John, etc.

In these experiences of the Master, we find more or less a repetition in his disciples. When assured that their sins are forgiven, that the Father himself loves them, that his grace is sufficient for them, and that the Redeemer's robe of righteousness covers them, the followers of Jesus can, under such circumstances, be courageous, even while dreading death.

One great difference between the Master and his followers should be remembered: Whereas "of the people there were none" with him, with us it is different; the Master is with us, saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Moreover, with us also there is a fellowship of spirit amongst the brethren of Christ, whose words of encouragement by the way, as they watch with us and pray with us, are a source of strength in every time of trouble. Thanking him for all the divine provision and arrangements, let us go onward to our Gethsemane, strong in the strength which God supplies through his Son.

AN UNFAITHFUL TREASURER'S FALL

OCTOBER 25.—Matthew 26:14-25, 47-50; 27:3-10.

"Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed!"—Matthew 26:24.

Judas hailed from the south of Palestine, while the other eleven of Jesus' disciples were Galileans. It is inferred that because of superior business qualities Judas was made the treasurer of the apostolic company. The friends of Jesus noted the fact that he and his followers needed to give their entire time to the heralding of the kingdom. It is not strange, therefore, that we read that some voluntarily donated money for their support.

We cannot imagine Jesus and his apostles begging for money or even "passing the hat" for a collection. To have done so would have been to discount Jehovah's declaration that all the gold, all the silver, and the cattle upon a thousand hills are his; and to imply that he would have need to ask for assistance. On the contrary, the Scriptures tell us that some voluntarily contributed to the Master's support; for instance, Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and others. (Luke 8:3) Such voluntary donations made it proper that there should be a common treasurer for the company, and that he should be of superior business acumen.

We find no reason for believing that Judas was a bad man at the time of his selection by Jesus to be one of the twelve apostles. We have every reason to believe that he developed a bad character even under the most favorable influences—in the continual company of Jesus and the other apostles, and with the message of the kingdom continually in his ears. There was, however, a beginning to his deflections; and the intimation of the Scriptures is that his temptation came along the lines of avarice, selfishness, love of money.

"A ROOT OF ALL EVIL"

Alas, how many honest men have been seduced from the path of righteousness by the love of money! We remember that one of the serious charges which Jesus brought against the Pharisees was that they were money-lovers. It would not seem at all strange if it should prove to be true that the difficulty with many Christians today also is along this line of love of money. It is still true that "the love of money is a root of all evil." (1 Timothy 6:10) The Apostle declares that through this deception many pierce themselves with sorrow—not always so seriously as did Judas, however.

Judas loved money to such an extent that he was willing to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver which, on the basis of labor, amounted to between two hundred and three hundred dollars in value. Others have loved money to such an extent that they have sold their consciences to gain wealth. Some have sold the truth for money believing that they would prosper in business better by advocating error. Some have sold the church for money, and have been willing to preach what they did not believe for the hire of money and the approval of men. Some have sold their nation's interests for money, bartering their patriotism.

Surely there is great need for every one to be on guard against the insidious influence of the love of money. But we should clearly distinguish between money and the love of money; for it is the latter which causes ruin and which entraps and ensnares the soul. Money represents toil, labor, accumulation; and as such it should be valued for the good it can do. But to love money, to serve it, to make it an idol and to allow it to alienate our hearts from God, we should not do. Let us not forget that this love of money was the primal cause of Judas' horrible failure.

A FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY

Not at first, but afterward apparently, did the disciples learn that Judas, who carried the treasurer's bag, was a thief. (John 12:6) Doubtless even when appropriating the moneys contributed to the support of the little company of disciples, Judas could have some plausible excuse; for sin is always deceptive. Doubtless he would have said, "I laid the money away, thinking that the time would come when the Master and all of us would have greater need for money, and when my provident foresight would be appreciated." Brooding on the subject increased his desire for money, and led his active business mind to hatch out the plot for the betrayal of Jesus.

The record is that when Judas perceived that Jesus had been condemned, he had remorse for his action and took back the money to the chief priests, wishing to undo his deed. They laughed at him, declaring that it was no concern of theirs, but his own, if he had betrayed innocent blood. Because the returned money was "blood money," they could not put it into the Temple treasury again. Instead, they purchased therewith a piece of cheap land, a potter's field, as a burial place for strangers. Thus they fulfilled to the very letter a prophecy which they had probably forgotten: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed."—Matthew 27:9, 10.

The account implies that Judas was surprised when Jesus was condemned. Apparently he surmised that Jesus, brought to the crucial test, would assert himself as the Messiah and would triumph over his enemies. Judas thus probably thought that he would hasten the establishment of the kingdom, in which he hoped to share. For his apology in the end he could say, "Well, we are ahead just thirty pieces of silver; and you may thank me for having brought matters to a climax sooner than otherwise." Thus he would have shone as a hero, as well as have demonstrated his financial wisdom and his suitability for the post of grand treasurer of the kingdom. But in addition to all this, apparently he got a little angry at Jesus because the Master had approved of Mary's conduct in respect to the spikenard. It was under the impulse of that resentment that he first sought the priests and the scribes to negotiate for the betrayal.

OBLIVION—NO HOPE OF A RESURRECTION

We are not hereby suggesting excuses for Judas. There can be no excuse properly offered for treachery to God and his cause. We are merely pointing out the fact that every transgressor must first consent in his own mind to his wrong course. In other words, the mind, the conscience, must be perverted before each step of sin. Hence the words of Jesus are fully justified: "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born."—Matt. 26:24.

Such treachery, such willingness to hand over his Friend, his Teacher, and the One whom he had accepted as the Son of God and through whom he had expected the Messianic kingdom, was perfidy of the worst type. With all the other apostles, Judas had been called to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and to become a sharer with him in the sufferings and trials incidental to loyalty to the truth, misunderstood by the people, and if faithful to receive with his Master a share in the heavenly kingdom, which is to bless the world. Judas, with the others, had preached the kingdom, had cast out demons, and had healed the sick, by the power of God operating through the name of Jesus. He had been constantly with the Savior, and knew of the purity of his life, knew of his loyalty to God. Therefore all these things constituted his responsibility and his guilt.

The fact that he suicided implied a fulfilment of Jesus' words—that Judas wished that he had never been born. Every one who suicides declares the same fact. Yet there may be hope for other suicides, because of their ignorance, and because Christ died for all; and they, with others, must surely have a blessing and an opportunity for everlasting life as a result.

But in the case of Judas, all this was discounted by the fact that he had already enjoyed such privileges, opportunity and knowledge, and had sinned against light and knowledge. The declaration that he went to his own place, his appropriate place, does not signify that Judas or anybody else is to be eternally tortured as a punishment for sin. Rather, his own place was oblivion, hopeless oblivion, without prospect of a resurrection. He died like a natural brute beast, nor could argument be shown why such a character, who had enjoyed such privileges, should ever have any future opportunity.

HARMONY OF TWO RECORDS

As to the fate of Judas, one Scripture tells us that he went and hanged himself. (Matthew 27:5) Another Scripture declares that his iniquity accomplished the purchase of a field; and that, falling headlong, he burst asunder, and his bowels gushed out. (Acts 1:18) To harmonize these two accounts is very simple. Both are true. To hang himself, he probably chose the branch of a tree overhanging a precipice, where he could the more easily accomplish his purpose. If under the strain the rope broke, we can readily see how his headlong fall took place.

However, the matter of his death is of slight importance. The important thing is to notice how his soul died, in that he lost his relationship with God and with Christ, and all hope therefore of a future life. Yet the Master was gentle toward him to the very last, giving him every opportunity to relent and to retrace his steps, down to the very last act.

The fact that God had foreknown from the beginning that one of the twelve would betray Jesus, the fact that the purchase of the field with the blood money had already been prophesied, did not alter the responsibility of Judas for his

own fall. It was not God's foreknowledge that injured Judas, but his own wrong course; and thus it is with all. God's knowing from the beginning whatsoever will come to pass does not affect us, for he merely knows in respect to us what we will do of our own volition, our own yielding to avarice, to sin.

The testimony that Jesus knew in advance who would betray him does not prove that Jesus knew this at the time when he chose Judas. He knew that the Scriptures intimated that one of his disciples would betray him; and from the beginning of the deflection of Judas toward sin, toward avarice, Jesus knew that he must be the one who would commit the traitorous deed; yet in no sense of the word did Jesus' conduct lead Judas to the wrong, but rather forewarned him to the contrary.

TAKE UP THY CROSS AND FOLLOW CHRIST

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me."—Matt. 16:24.

This is a very beautiful and significant text. The words "come after me" have not been properly translated; "follow me" is a better translation. It was the custom in ancient times for a teacher to have a company of his disciples following him; as Socrates did, for instance. So our Lord's disciples, pupils, followed him. They traveled with him that they might have the opportunity of continually getting instruction from his lips. It was so with all the teachers in the olden time. Sometimes, as in the case of Gamaliel, they had a school —the pupils sat "at the feet of Gamaliel." They would discuss questions much as we do at "Bethel" table today. Their custom was that the pupils would ask questions and get the views of the teacher.

Jesus said that any one whom he instructed might know from the beginning that he would have severe experiences; he would not receive great honor. On the contrary, those who would be his disciples must take up their cross and follow in his footsteps. There would be trials all along the journey, he told them. The Lord did not wish any to become disciples of his under a misapprehension. "Where I am, there shall also my disciple be." Those who follow Jesus in this vale of tears, witnessing for God and the truth, will be blessed by him and eventually share in his Messianic glory and honor and partake of immortality. But unless we partake of his cup and are immersed into his death, we can have no share in his kingdom.

OUR CONVENTION TOUR

The blessing of our heavenly Father has surely been with us richly on our Western Convention trip. Everywhere the European conflagration was the topic of absorbing interest. Many are convinced that the consummation of the Gospel age is at hand, and everywhere the household of faith are lifting up their heads and rejoicing that their deliverance is drawing nigh, as our Lord foretold in his great prophecy, recorded in Matthew 24 and parallel Scriptures.

The Editor and his stenographers left Brooklyn on August 23 and arrived at Chicago on the 24th, in time for the inauguration of the I. B. S. A. Temple. This building has been leased by the Chicago friends for the use of the local Ecclesia and for the Photo-Drama of Creation, and is well adapted for its purpose, being centrally located. The attendance was 1250 interested. The attention was excellent.

From Chicago the party sped westward, and arrived at Spokane, Wash., on August 27. Here we spoke to an audience of deeply interested Bible Students, numbering about two hundred. Thence we went to Everett, August 28, where a public meeting had been arranged for. About six hundred were present and gave the closest attention to the discourse. At Bellingham, August 29, fourteen hundred were at the public meeting.

From Bellingham the little party went to Vancouver, B. C., where seven hundred greeted them, giving very close attention to the discourse. August 30 was given to Seattle, Wash., where twenty-six hundred heard the address. Here, as elsewhere, the friends are very earnest and zealous. Thence we hastened to Tacoma, August 31, where fifteen hundred were in attendance.

Our next stop was at Santa Cruz, Cal. Here an interesting and profitable eight-day Convention of Bible Students was in session. The attendance was estimated to be about seven hundred and fifty, chiefly from the Pacific States. The party remained at the Convention about four days, September 2-4. The Photo-Drama was shown four evenings, and was greatly enjoyed by many of the citizens.

September 10 was devoted to a one-day convention at San Diego. Twelve hundred were in attendance at the public meeting, and many were turned away, for whose benefit an overflow meeting was arranged. September 11 the party were at Los Angeles, where the attendance was thirty-five hundred. September 13, at Salt Lake City, thirty-two hundred were in attendance. Thence we went to Denver, September 15, where six hundred friends listened to the discourse. Next was Colorado Springs, September 16, where eight hundred were in attendance.

Then the party went South to Fort Worth, Texas, where a three-day convention was in progress, with four hundred and fifty Bible Students present. While this convention was not large, yet it was full of interest. Then came San Antonio, September 19, where twenty-one hundred listened with deep attention to a discourse on up-to-date topics. At Houston, September 20, twenty-four hundred assembled to hear the address, and nearly as many were turned away. On September 21, at Beaumont, Texas, nine hundred listened with deep appreciation.

Continuing our journey, we reached New Orleans, September 22, where one thousand heard us. At Birmingham, Ala., September 24, fifteen hundred were present. Thence we went to Atlanta, Ga., where a four-day convention met, September 24-27, with approximately four hundred and fifty in attendance, the delegates representing many states. After leaving our Atlanta friends, we hurried on to the Saratoga convention.

The Saratoga convention, although not a large one, was an extremely interesting gathering. The convention proper numbered about 950. Some of the meetings ran up considerably more through local interest. One thing noticeable in this convention, as well as at all the others, was the meek and quiet spirit of those in attendance. While all lifted up their heads rejoicing that our deliverance is near and hasteth greatly, nevertheless there was no spirit of excitement. Rather all seemed to realize that we have received of the Lord blessed promises and enlightenments which far more than repay for our trials and difficulties. All were resolved that the whole world would not compare with the light and peace and hope already ours—not to mention the glorious things expected soon. Surely we prefer God's time, as well as God's plan, above all others. If he but continue us in his favor, in the future as in the past, we may well rejoice in the experiences coming day by day, end when they may.

During our trip we continually encouraged the dear household of faith to await God's time for the accomplishment of our hopes, preferring it to our own, if different. While we everywhere noted that patient waiting was manifested, yet, on the other hand, we deplored the over-confidence of some respecting the exact time of the glorification of the church. We endeavored to distinguish between our hope and the time of its fulfilment, and urged all to cast not away their confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. However, the present great war certainly stimulates our confidence in every feature of the divine program.

CLASSES CO-OPERATING IN EUREKA DRAMA NO. "Y"

A number of classes find that the financing of Drama No. "Y" is heavier than they can afford, and are planning to join their forces with other classes—two or three classes, for instance, taking the Drama between them. This is quite agreeable to us. However, the Society does not wish to sell the Parts separately, but would rather recommend that the whole outfit be ordered together, and handled on a partnership basis. In addition to costing less for each class, it will require fewer operators from each class.

Incidentally, we urge that the speaking elders of the classes do not neglect the home service. Younger brethren, not used at all to speaking, and some sisters, make very acceptable operators for the Drama. The speaking elders might follow the Drama, giving Chart Talks, etc.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO A FRIEND

Dear Brother:—

I arrived home safe Friday afternoon after a somewhat adventuresome journey.

At Yarmouth, I had an interesting experience. I was talking with two young women from Annapolis, when a young minister with whom they were acquainted came up, and they introduced me. Noticing my pin, he said in a rather challenging tone, "You are a Russellite?" "Yes," I said, "I am a Bible Student; and you are an Evolutionist." "Yes," he said. I then said, "I am glad to meet you. I have been wanting to hear the doctrine from a real Evolutionist."

He then proceeded to explain Evolution. I then asked him where people would evolve to after death. He said the soul kept on evolving. I asked him where men got their souls if these were the outcome of Evolution, and monkeys did not have any. He replied that surely God could impart to each man a soul. He gave me a pamphlet on Evolution by Dr. Elliot, and I gave him my WATCH TOWER to read.

When I had finished, he asked what I thought of it. I said, "I think it is very good for a man's idea, but he has no proof that it is correct—nothing at all to back it up, no proof of any kind. Now, I can prove everything I believe by the Bible."

Then the minister said, "But the Bible is self-contradictory; and what proofs have you that it is correct?"

"No," I said, "the Bible is not contradictory when you understand it; but it is the most harmonious and logical book ever written. Any one merely reading it must admit that it could not be written by man."

He finally promised to read some of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, which he told me he had in his home.

May the Lord's blessing be with you and all the dear Bethel family.

Your sister in Christ, STELLA H. WATERMAN.

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VIEW FROM THE WATCH TOWER

The Scriptures foretell that in the end of this age there will be a cry of "Peace! Peace!!" but that there will be no peace. (Jeremiah 6:14) This prophecy has been fulfilled. When the First National Arbitration Board convened at Geneva, Switzerland, and gave its first reward, September 14, 1872, the cry of "Universal Peace" went up all over the world. There was to be no more war. All difficulties between nations were to be settled by arbitration. How sadly disappointed must those people be who, in spite of the many wars since that time, have continued to cry, "Peace! Peace!" Their theory has been that universal peace between the nations would speedily usher in the Messianic kingdom.

How few look to the Word of the Lord to see what he has to say on the subject or, looking, entirely disregard God's testimony through the prophets, to the effect that the present age would end and the Millennium be inaugurated, not by Peace Conventions and Peace Treaties, but by "A time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." (Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21) The peace cry has received an especially severe shock in the present momentous war, involving more than any other war on the earth ever! Instead of the present war being nearly over, we incline to expect much more serious complications in Europe—that other nations will be drawn into the war.

Notwithstanding the fact that the President and the Secretary of State of our own land are wise men, lovers and promoters of peace; and notwithstanding the fact that there is no apparent reason why our country should ever be involved in this war, nevertheless we are apprehensive. The great nations of the old world, impoverishing themselves and destroying their commercial interests, as well as being robbed of hundreds of thousands of valuable lives by this war, will not wish to see the United States towering high above them in every way by reason of its isolation. We may be sure that the crafty statesmen of Europe, while professing interest in our peace, will really do all in their power to embroil us in war by one device or another.

SHORTENING OF THE DAYS OF TROUBLE

While desiring peace at home and abroad, all who are children of the Highest must desire the Father's will to be done—rather than our own. Hence, should the war extend even to our own land, in spite of everything we can do to the contrary, let us not be discontented, but still pray, "Thy will be done!" Let us look beyond the present terrible war to the glorious things which God's Word assures us lie just beyond it; namely, Messiah's kingdom.

When we say that the kingdom lies just beyond the war, we should note the fact that, according to the Scriptures, it will not be set up immediately. Following the terrible storm of this war will come a great revolution, symbolically styled "a great earthquake." (Revelation 16:18) In conjunction with this social revolution, the Bible indicates that churchianity will for a time be greatly exalted as the hoped-for power by which the revolution may be offset and stopped. During that brief time of Babylon's prosperity, the true church will be in hard lines, from the earthly viewpoint. Nevertheless, "all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to his purpose."

Following the revolution and churchianity's exaltation quickly will come the anarchy, which the Bible everywhere symbolizes by fire, because of its destructive force and influence. That will be the time mentioned by our Savior, saying, "Unless those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." (Matthew 24:22) The Master tells us, however, that those days of anarchy and general strife—"every man's hand against his brother, against his neighbor, and no peace to him that goeth out or to him that cometh in"—shall be shortened. The establishment of the church in glory, the bringing of the elect into control of the world, will shorten those days and inaugurate the reign of the Prince of Peace.

PRAYING FOR PEACE IN EUROPE

Our honorable President with praiseworthy intent requested all Christian people to make October 4 a day of prayer for peace in Europe. However, we cannot concur with our worthy President in this matter. Much as we appreciate peace—and we have all our life labored to be a peacemaker—we cannot pray the Almighty to change his plans to conform to those of our honored President.

For twenty-five hundred years God, through the Bible prophets, has been telling his people about this great war and concerning the more terrible Armageddon which will follow it; and can we expect him to reverse the program at our behest?

The prayers of those millions praying for the prosperity of the Germans and the extermination of the Allies, and the prayers of other millions for the success of the Allies and the annihilation of the Germans, and the prayers of the Pope and of our President and other good people that this awful war shall promptly cease will all go unanswered, if we read our Bible aright. The war will proceed and will eventuate in no glorious victory for any nation, but in the horrible mutilation and impoverishment of all. Next will follow the awful Armageddon of anarchy.

After that, peace, lasting peace, may be hoped for, because God has declared it! It will be brought in by Messiah's kingdom, for which so long we have prayed—"Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as in heaven."

For forty years we have been proclaiming this very war and its glorious outcome, by sermons, oral and printed, and in our books on Bible Study in twenty languages. Now, when the very year has come and the prophecy is being fulfilled, could we consistently ask the Almighty to change his program? Nay! Rather, our discourse on October 4 was from the Master's words, respecting the present "Distress of nations with perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear of those things about to come on the earth."—Luke 21:25, 26.

Our address was given in the New York City Temple—fifteen hundred heard for two hours, and many were turned away.

CATCHING FISH WITH THE GOSPEL NET

"Jesus saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."—Matthew 4:19.

Our Lord's parables, figures of speech, and more or less "dark sayings," such as this one, were usually based upon incidents connected with his ministry. We remember the context here—he had been preaching at the Sea of Galilee, and had put out in a boat because of the crowd of people. (Luke 5:1-11) The boat was one that was used in the fishing business, conducted by Peter, James and John. Following this discourse, Jesus invited these men to become his disciples, using the words, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

The expression, "fishers of men," suggests many good features illustrative of the work of the Gospel age. In fishing for fish there is a carefulness exercised that is very necessary to success. The skilful fisherman studies what kind of fish-hook to use and what kind of bait to put on the hook. Then he catches the fish individually. Likewise very much of the work of this age has been an individual work, accomplished by talking to people; those engaged in it should seek wisdom from on high to put the message into such form as would be most helpful to people—that they may be caught by the Gospel.

The Lord uses an illustration of a drag-net to represent the work of the Gospel age. During the past eighteen centuries the drag-net of the Gospel has been passing through the world. It has not caught all the fish; for it has been drawn only through certain parts of the earth which God chose especially to favor. Thus he has drawn a net full; and he says that at the end of this age there will be a sorting of these fish—a putting some back into the sea, as not worthy, and a retaining of others. Throughout this age there have been some drawn by the Gospel who have been unsuitable for God's work; they have not been the kind of people God has wished to choose. Therefore he did not make things so plain for such that they would stay; but rather has left some subjects obscure, in order that such would reject the truth and turn aside.

THE NATURE OF THE HARVEST WORK

However, aside from this parable of the drag-net, which represents the Lord's people as fishers of men, and which might in some respects seem applicable only to the close of the Gospel age, there is another commission. The general commission to all of the Lord's people applies today. It reads, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the good tidings to the meek; to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to the bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion; to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."—Isa. 61:1-3.

We read that when Jesus was speaking to the people he made some remarks, and gave some parables forth, which they could not understand. For instance, he said that unless they would eat of the flesh and drink of the blood of the Son of Man there would be no life in them. They said, Who can understand that? Who can accept that teaching? So they walked no more with him—they got out of the net. Throughout this age the Lord has been gathering in the fish. But the great work of selecting is to be accomplished in the end of this age. To a certain extent in this age thousands of people have been caught in the Gospel net and have been more or less brought under the influence of the truth; and yet they are not fit for the kingdom. Without any unkindness towards them, the Lord now simply puts them out of the place not suitable to them.

We are not to think of this comparison as perfectly representing this matter—but it has an illustrative power to be made useful in this connection. We do not really catch men as a fisherman catches a fish. The fisherman does the fish more or less harm in taking it out of the water, whether with a hook and line or with a drag-net; and those fish which are brought up in the drag-net are not honored in any manner. Our Lord used this illustration merely to represent how the Gospel fishing was to be done. His followers were to fish for men for the kingdom—not to do them violence, but to do them good. Those who catch fish exercise a great deal of care. While catching the fish, they usually hide themselves, so that the fish will not see them, but the bait. So in drawing men to the truth we should hide ourselves and throw out as bait those features of God's Word which would apply to this one or that one with whom we might be dealing.

Coming down to the present time, the question might arise, Is this Gospel message still to be sent out, or have all the fish been caught and the Gospel net drawn to the shore, and will there be no more received? We answer that we do not so understand. We believe that we are away down in the harvest of the age; if not fully at the end of the age, we believe that it must be very near.

OUR PRESENT ATTITUDE

Looking at the harvest of the Jewish age, we see that it was forty years long in one sense of the word; yet the beginning of that forty years was a very indefinite thing—and the closing seemed to extend over six months, perhaps. We remember that in the beginning of our Lord's ministry there came forty days of his temptation; and that then came the time during which his disciples were being gathered to him. For a year there was very little of importance accomplished. If we consider his experiences as typical, we might consider that the early part of the harvest was not very sharply marked. The harvest seemed to increase as it progressed, and did not culminate until after the destruction of Jerusalem. This fact leads us to wonder if there are not six months more of the harvest here.

The Lord evidently saw that it would be better for us that we should walk by faith, not by sight, and that we should have the experiences we are having. These experiences are excellent. We have been receiving things so good, so refreshing to us, that if they continue for six months longer, or six years longer, we shall be very glad that the Lord has given us this longer opportunity of testifying to his goodness. On the other hand, it may be that the work of the harvesting of the "wheat" has been fully accomplished, and that the work of the present time is for the great company class and for the world.

"So on we go, not knowing,
We would not if we might;
We'd rather walk in the dark with God
Than go alone in the light;
We'd rather walk by faith with him
Than go alone by sight."

The consummation of the Gospel age is now upon us. We are expecting wonderful things, glorious things. The thing especially looked for now is the ending of Gentile dominion. The dissolution of the nations is at hand, and that disintegration precedes the establishment of Messiah's kingdom.

At what time the Lord's people will be taken beyond the veil the Lord has not fully indicated. But we have the assurance that when he shall appear, be manifested—when his epiphania shall occur—we shall be with him, we shall be like him and see him as he is. He will not begin his great work of establishing the kingdom until the church shall be with him. We may not understand all that this implies. Perhaps we may be with our Lord, in service on this side the veil for a while. We had not thought so; but we are simply willing that the Lord's will shall be done, whatever it may be, and we are waiting for the indications of his providence.

"We know not what awaits us,
God kindly veils our eyes,
And o'er each step of our onward way
He makes new scenes to rise;
And every joy he sends us comes
A sweet and glad surprise.

"One step we see before us,
'Tis all we need to see,
The light of heaven more brightly shines,
When earth's illusions flee;
And sweetly through the silence comes
His loving 'Follow me.'"

THE ROYAL LAW OF LOVE

"We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification; for even Christ pleased not himself."—Romans 15:1-3.

As children of God each one of us should use care that others are not injured by our liberty in Christ; for this would be condemned by the law of love. The Apostle clearly emphasizes this thought in this Epistle to the church at Rome. He points out that all the Lord's children are not alike "strong in the faith." Some, weak in the faith, can see that Jesus is our Redeemer, but cannot realize as yet the liberty which we as sons have in Christ. One realizes that he is at liberty to eat whatever agrees with him; while another, who is weak, eats vegetables only, lest he violate some law under which he thinks himself. Some Christians condemn their brethren who eat meat, seeming to forget that our Lord ate flesh. We should learn to grant each other full liberty of conscience; the stronger should not despise the weaker, nor should the weaker judge others by himself. It should be sufficient for each of us to know that God accepts the others as well as ourselves, and manifests His acceptance by blessing them in His service.

It is the same with reference to observance of days. One esteems one day above another, as the Apostle says; while another esteems every day alike. Let each carry out fully the

conviction of his own mind—whatever he believes to be the will of God for himself. When St. Paul urges that each "be fully persuaded in his own mind," he does not mean that each should make up his mind what is the will of God for all his children, and then stick to his opinion, whether right or wrong, and be unwilling to listen to or consider the thought of any others of the brethren on the subject. On the contrary, he urges growth into the full liberty of Christ, counseling patience and consideration on the part of the stronger for the weaker. He approves the stronger, and plainly states that the brother who thinks himself under bondage regarding the eating of meat, the observance of Sabbath, etc., is the weak brother.

LOVE AND CONSIDERATION FOR THE WEAKER

The Apostle, however, counsels that if the weak brother observes such a bondage, not as an attempt to "keep the law," and to justify himself thus before God, ignoring Christ's redemption-sacrifice, but because he thinks that our Redeemer wishes him to be bound by such ordinances and observances, then the stronger ones should not rail at his conscientious weakness, or make light of it, but should receive him as a brother, trusting that discipline, experience and growth in grace and knowledge will gradually bring him to the liberty which others of the brethren reach more quickly.

Those strong ones who enter fully into the spirit of the Apostle's statement, "It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak," and deny themselves what their consciences permit, have the greater blessing. They can realize in an additional degree that they are following in the Master's steps; "for even Christ pleased not himself." But if the stronger brethren by sarcasm and influence should try to force the weaker ones to use a liberty which they do not realize, it would be forcing them into sin. Therefore the weaker brethren should be left to the liberty of their own consciences. The influences of love and truth alone should be brought to bear upon them, in the hope of gradually educating them to an appreciation of their full privileges as free men in Christ.

Thus the body of Christ may be full of charity and unity, each member carrying out the convictions of his own mind as to the Lord's will, and each seeking to grow in grace and in knowledge, out of childhood's weakness into manhood's strength, as rapidly as possible, being developed as he feeds upon God's Word.

The Apostle refers especially to the observance of days as a lack of development, saying (Galatians 4:10, 11), "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am anxious on your behalf, lest my labor for you has been in vain." He here addresses those who had once known the liberty of sons of God, but who were now going again into bondage through false teaching. He recognized in them an evidence that they were not growing into the liberty of sons of God, but going backward toward the servant condition; and he was fearful that this weakness and failure to maintain the liberty of sonship might lead them even to reject the Gospel—that Christ gave himself for our sins—and accept as a gospel a hopeless substitute—that Christ would save them if they kept the law.

But glorious is the liberty of the sons of God! Let us stand fast in it, as the Lord enables us to grasp it in its fulness, yet at the same time extending sympathy and love to those who have not yet reached the high vantage-ground where they can get a broad, comprehensive view of our blessed standing in Christ. Thus we bear the infirmities of the weak brethren, our companions in the way, and thus we are in harmony with the law of love.

THE BEAUTY OF SELF-ABNEGATION

The Apostle appears to be drawing to our attention the thought that selfishness is the predominating principle of the world. People are seeking generally to please themselves—often unjustly, sometimes justly, but simply ignoring others. He is pointing out that the Christian is to take a different course. We are enlisted under the banner of Christ, which is the banner of love. We are to look well to the rules which belong to this new order of things of which we have become members. The followers of Christ, instead of seeking their own selfish interests, are to consider the interests of others. Instead of seeking their own pleasure, they are to seek the pleasure of others, where this will not conflict with their vow of consecration.

This does not mean that the disciples of Christ are to seek their own misery. But they are to give their thought and time to pleasing others rather than themselves. The Apostle tells us that this is the example set before us by our Leader, our Pattern—"For even Christ pleased not himself." He was not in the world to seek to do the things pleasing to his own flesh. Quite to the contrary, he renounced his own fleshly interests and gratification for the benefit of mankind. So we covenant to do when we essay to walk in his steps. The denial of self, the taking up of the cross, means the renouncing of self-will and the leading of an unselfish life, in accord with the divine Pattern and the divine plan.

OUR BRETHREN OUR NEIGHBORS IN CLOSEST SENSE

With this light upon the Apostle's words, our thought is that the primary meaning of the word neighbors as used by St. Paul is, those closest to us. That is to say, in the church of Christ, our brethren are our neighbors; they are the ones nearest, closest to our hearts. All the children of God are our brethren; they are particularly our neighbors because they are on our own plane. We should especially seek to please these to their edification. This does not mean that we should necessarily please them according to the flesh; for this would, in many cases be quite the reverse of their edification. If we please the brethren rightly, we shall rather "stir up their pure minds," their spiritual minds, to love and faith and zeal, to good works. This implies that the word please is used here in a limited sense.

It is not possible for us to please all people. The direction of our energies should be for their good as we have opportunity. Even though they be not saints, we should "provoke" them—rouse them—"to love and good works" as far as possible, and not to anger or malice or sin or anything unworthy. We may not always be successful in pleasing people to their edification. There may be times when even the brethren will feel aggrieved rather than pleased at our efforts to serve them. We think, however, that if we seek to please them to edification, striving to exercise the spirit of a sound mind, our course will have the Lord's approval and blessing, whether it has the approval of others—even the brethren—or not.

So let every one of us endeavor to "please his neighbor for his good to edification." This matter of neighborhood, the condition of nearness, extends, next to the church, to our own families. Of course, as relates to earthly obligations and temporal needs our family would have the first claim, and would be our neighbors, very near, according to the flesh. We should seek to please them for their edification—should seek to do them good, as here suggested. The same principle would extend, as we can readily see, to the butcher, the baker, the ice-man, etc. We are not to please any of these to their injury, or in any way that would not be for their edification. We are not to descend to the world's methods. If they wish to tell stories that are not good, not pure, we are not to join in with them. If we cannot please them by that which is good, we are to avoid unnecessary contact. We are to do good and to edify only.

THE WORLD RECOGNIZES THE GOOD

We should endeavor to be as pleasing as possible to all of our neighbors. If we rebuke in a rude way, it would not be pleasing to them, nor would it be likely to edify them. There is a way in which we can give proper reproof even to very worldly people. The world has a higher standard morally and religiously than they would be willing to acknowledge. Even if they sneer outwardly, in their hearts they recognize that which is good. We often find people who are impure in their own lives who like the society of the pure. They have some appreciation of the good, even though, being defiled themselves, they are likely to defile whatever they touch.

It would not be proper for us to expect that we can do a great deal of good to worldly people—at least that much fruitage will generally be manifested—at present. Our aim should always be to please as far as possible, as far as loyalty to God and the truth will permit. We should not be of that "grouchy" sort, always going through the world with a quarrel. Rather we should let our light shine, that they may see our good works, and thus "glorify God in the day of their visitation." A sweet, kindly spirit is the very best recommendation we can give the world now of the power of the truth. The Lord's people should be kindly disposed toward all men—in the church especially, but also toward all with whom we come in contact.

A WORD OF WARNING

Let us here say that we fear that some of the Lord's children who have a husband or a wife not in harmony with the truth, or perhaps more or less in harmony, but not fully consecrated to the Lord, make a mistake and perhaps by their example prevent the development of further interest in the companion. If, for instance, a husband is fully consecrated and his wife is not, the husband should exercise great care that his zeal for the truth does not lead him to neglect his duty in helping to lift the burdens of household care, etc., which are pressing upon the wife. Volunteer work, meetings, etc., should not so fill his spare time as to cause him to overlook the fact that he owes a very special duty to his wife in ministering to her real needs or comforts.

We fear that some have been embittered and hindered from a full acceptance of the truth or led to opposition by such lack of loving, thoughtful consideration on the part of the companion who professes entire consecration to the Lord. If we really are fully the Lord's, our home is the first place where this should be demonstrated. No amount of zeal for the service of the truth outside of our homes will excuse us from the duties which we owe to our families and which they have a right to expect. To fulfil our obligations is a real service for the truth, and often a most effectual one. If there is water or coal or wood to carry, or other real services which a husband may and should render to his wife, these should not be neglected for any other service. If she is willing to attend some of the meetings, let him show an appreciation of her company and a pleasure to have her go.

The same rule applies to the consecrated wife. Some time and personal service are just requirements of the husband; and the wife should exercise the spirit of justice, love and of a sound mind along this line, and not give her companion just cause to feel that he is forgotten, unloved and uncared for because of the wife's new interests. The husband is the rightful head of the home. There are duties which are obligations to every child of God, and to neglect or ignore these may be the cause of incalculable harm. The real duties of a husband or wife or parent or child are never abrogated when we give ourselves to the Lord. Each consecrated saint should seek by prayer and by the study of the Word and of divine providences in our lives to discern the will of the Lord concerning us, that we may be "living epistles" which shall glorify our God, and not bring a reproach upon his cause or upon our own Christian profession.

SACRIFICE OUR SPECIAL MISSION

Each member of the royal priesthood is to remember that the special mission of our office, our vocation, our calling, in the present time is to sacrifice. One form of service frequently not discerned by the Lord's people is the opportunity of renouncing our own desires or plans, our own methods or preferences, and in the interests of peace accepting instead the plans, the desires, the preferences of others—where it is merely a matter of personal preference. Where we believe the Lord will be as well pleased to have the matter the one way or the other, a yielding of our own wishes often proves a blessing, both to the one yielding and to the one receiving the kindness and consideration. This is the spirit of love, the spirit of the Master.

In the body of Christ the different members have their various inherited weaknesses against which they must wage a lifelong warfare; and these weaknesses are sometimes of such a nature as to interfere to some extent with the rights and comforts of others as well as of themselves. And just here the Apostle offers the word of counsel, "We, then, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." This does not imply that we should not expostulate with such a one and endeavor to help him to get rid of his infirmity. This we should do, in the spirit of meekness and kindness, while we humbly endure the trial of our patience. It is his good that we are to seek, not chiefly our own greater enjoyment of physical or mental comfort. We are to please him for his edification, not by simply ignoring his fault, as though we considered it right, but, if there be suitable opportunity, by kindly urging him to strive against it, still humbly and patiently submitting to the discomfort it brings to us.

If this spirit prevails, the Apostle further shows (1 Corinthians 12:24-26), there need be no schism in the body; for the members all have a mutual care and a mutual love one for another—a care which seeks to encourage and strengthen all that is good and to discourage, by our example and sometimes by a kindly word, all that is unbecoming, and a love that throws its mantle over a deformity and endeavors to conceal a fault rather than to expose the weaker brother or sister to the reproach of the other brethren. Thus, in the true church of Christ, which is knit together in love, if one member suffer, all the members suffer with him; or if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with him, and to some degree share the honor, just as in an earthly family, when one member rises to an honorable distinction, all the members of the family partake of that honor and joy.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!

For such self-sacrificing love how necessary is the spirit of humility, gentleness, patience and faith! The Master's words along this line are very forceful—"Except ye be converted [from the spirit of the world to the Spirit of Christ] and become as little children [in meekness and teachableness], ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven." This blessed law of Christ, the law of love, should rule in all who have taken by consecration the name of Christ. Its hallowed influence should radiate from us, not only among the brethren, but also out upon the world, as a powerful witness to the effect of the grace of God in the heart. Thus we shall demonstrate to them that the love of God received into a life brings peace and harmony and happiness; that it makes noble, devoted, faithful husbands; more kind, loyal and tender wives; more obedient, loving children; more kind, good neighbors; and that it pours "oil on the troubled waters" of all our experiences, bringing blessing wherever it reaches.

"TREES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS"

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."—Colossians 2:6, 7.

The context from which our text is taken seems to show that the Apostle is contrasting with the Gospel hope the various hopes which might go to establish one in some kind of faith, some kind of belief, some kind of course in life. But he is addressing those especially who have already accepted Jesus Christ as God's Representative—those who believe that God has sent his Son into the world to be the Redeemer of the race of Adam, and by and by to be the Deliverer of mankind from the power of sin and death. All those who are in Christ Jesus have received him with this understanding. This is the only message which God has sent; this is "the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

DIVINE VS. HUMAN MESSAGE

The Apostle Paul urged those to whom he wrote to continue in this faith, and not to try to combine earthly philosophy with this heavenly message. As they had received Christ as God's Anointed and their Sufficiency in all things—the One "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Deity bodily"—so they were to walk. As they had recognized him as the heavenly Teacher, so they were to continue to make progress in the same way—the path that leads to glory, honor and immortality. They were not to think for one moment that any human teaching could be mixed with the divine message; for any other doctrine would serve only to confuse the heavenly message in the minds of the hearers.

This would not mean, however, that the teachings of the apostles were to be ignored, for the Master especially informed the church that his twelve apostles would be his mouthpieces. It would, however, guard us against any supposition that there would be any other teaching or any other church to take the place of Jesus and his apostles. To these he declared that whatsoever things they would bind on earth would be bound in heaven, and whatsoever things they would loose on earth would be loosed in heaven.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL PLANT

Having stated the matter in this way, the Apostle then uses a forceful illustration to show how we are to progress in Christ. Turning from the figure of a man walking in Christ as a member of his body, St. Paul gives us the picture of a tree, the root of which goes downward and the trunk of which reaches upward, to obtain that nourishment which will give it strength and stability. As the roots of a tree push themselves downward and imbibe the nutriment of the soil, while at the same time the trunk and the branches reach up into the atmosphere to obtain through the leaves the necessary elements of growth, so the mentality of the Christian takes hold of the great and precious promises of the Word of God, while at the same time he is building character through his heart appreciation of these promises, in connection with the experiences of life. The roots of faith push down deep into the knowledge of the divine plan, while the tree of character grows higher and higher, developing and maturing the rich fruits of the holy Spirit of God; for instruction is a form of construction.

While the Christian is thus growing up in character-likeness to our Redeemer, and his roots of faith are reaching deep down into the deep things of the Word of God, he is becoming established, settled. A tree that is well rooted in the earth is hard to uproot. It has a wonderful strength, a wonderful hold upon the earth, and requires years to die out. So it is with the Christian whose faith has been properly established; he should be so fixed, so established in the promises of God's Word, that no wind of doctrine could overturn his faith.

Whoever is continually looking around for something new

is thus demonstrating the fact that he is not established in the faith. Having once made sure that the divine plan is the plan of God, we should not permit ourselves to be moved away from that position. On all Christians who are thus rooted and grounded in the Scriptures the theories of our day—Evolution, Christian Science, New Thought, etc.—have no effect whatever. No Christian growth will be developed nor spiritual life retained unless the soul becomes fixed and settled in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

ONE CAUSE OF SPIRITUAL DECAY

When once we have seen the plan of God as revealed in Jesus, and have given ourselves to God and the study of his Word, the only way to retain our spiritual life is to continue in this doctrine, to root ourselves in this soil and remain there. We are not to seek other fields with the thought that we can receive additional nourishment there, and that an admixture of other elements with what we have will be advantageous. No theories will mix with the Lord's plan. It is complete; it needs no assistance from other systems of belief. Any attempt to incorporate with it theories and ideas of men will only destroy its value. We can never become rooted and built up in Christ by such a course; our spiritual decay, and finally our spiritual death, would be the result.

No child of God can be carried about by every wind of doctrine; nor can he indulge in a morbid curiosity as to what this or that new theory may teach. To do so is very dangerous to the spirituality of a Christian. For one who has never known the truth there might be some reason for such a course, but for one who has once thoroughly proven what is the truth in Christ to go hunting around for new pastures in which to feed, there is no excuse. Either he has never been established in Christ, or else he has fallen into a spiritual decline. There is an exhaustless field for thought and for mental and spiritual activity in the plan of God in all its varied features.

We believe that God purposed to have a seed of Abraham through whom a blessing would come to all the famiiles of the earth. Those who look for the fulfilment of this promise realize that Christ is the seed of Abraham and that his work is to fulfil this promise. For this purpose he came into the world. Later on, the church learn that not only Christ Jesus, the Head, but also the church, his body, are sharing in the same faith, the same promise made to Abraham. Each individual called has the opportunity of coming in, of exercising his faith, and of being built up as a member of the body of Christ. By this time the body of Christ must be nearly complete. The hour is at hand when this glorious seed of Abraham is to take hold of the affairs of earth and bring in "the restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3:19-21.

As a tree does not breathe the same element at all times, and as it is not always flooded with sunshine, but needs also the rains and storms for its development, so the child of God needs varied experiences and sometimes change of environment to best develop all the fruits of the holy Spirit. The great Husbandman knows just what experiences and surroundings each one of his "trees" needs—how much sunshine, how much rain, how much cold and how much heat, how much pruning—and he will supply just what is best adapted to each case. He knows how to vary these conditions, environments, etc., without disturbing the process of rooting and upbuilding, but developing it. This we do not know how to accomplish, but would bring upon ourselves spiritual disaster. So we need to keep ourselves continually under the care of the skilful Husbandman and earnestly co-operate with him, that we may grow and become strong and immovable—firmly established.

DEPTH OF ROOT SHOWN IN VIGOR AND FRUITAGE

The depth and the spread of the roots of a tree are shown by the vigor and fruitage of the tree. A tree that is not deeply and firmly grounded can neither bring forth rich, luscious fruit nor furnish cool, refreshing shade to man. Depth of root is absolutely essential. So the Christian's faith must be deeply grounded in Christ; and thus shall we also grow up into him, learning more and more what is the divine will as expressed in him. The rooting process is unseen, and can be judged only by its outward manifestations. When there is luxuriant foliage there is good rooting. But the growth must not stop there; fruit must be borne. And so the spiritual life of the child of God will manifest itself more and more in its likeness to Christ. To vary the figure, the Christian will not only be a branch in the vine, but will bear rich clusters of fruit which should become more choice in quality and size year by year.

We sometimes see Christians who have little knowledge of worldly things and yet have deep spirituality, very deep rooting and grounding in Christ, a clear insight into the deep things of God, and a rich Christian experience. Perhaps their knowledge of the usages of polite society is less than that of many others of their brethren; they may have had fewer opportunities to learn all these details; and yet their ripe attainments in Christ may shame some who are more outwardly correct according to the social standards of the world. How careful we should be that our standards of judgment and our estimates of character are fashioned after the pattern of the Master; that we look beneath the surface; that we note rather the real, the essential traits, than any outward peculiarities of the flesh which in the sight of the Lord should have no weight in deciding the quality of the character or the place in the kingdom.

SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

If we are to be the judges of the world in the next age, how shall we be fitted for this position, if we do not learn now how to take the proper viewpoint, the Lord's viewpoint, in our estimates of our brethren? If our love and our esteem for them is gaged by trifles, yea, by matters even unworthy of notice in the eyes of the Lord, are we developing the qualities of character which will fit us to be the judges of the incoming age? How are we growing up into Christ in all things? Let us judge ourselves rigidly along these lines, that we may indeed become like the Master and win his final approval.

The Apostle urges that we become established in the faith. This term refers to "the faith which was once delivered to the saints"—the one faith. This is to hold at all costs. Satan will attempt to divert our minds into other channels, to draw our attention to some new thing. But the plan of God, the truth of God, as revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord, is but one. It is given us for our instruction in righteousness, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." (2 Timothy 3:17) It is not the truth of Geometry or Trigonometry or Geology or Astronomy or any other science that we are to be diligent to study and be grounded and built up in, but God's Word. (John 17:17) These other truths are very well in their way, but we have little time to study these now. We shall have all eternity in which to learn all the wonders of creation, but now we are to apply ourselves especially to the mastery of spiritual truth, the deep things of the mystery of God, revealed to his saints for a specific purpose.

AN ESTABLISHED CHRISTIAN NOT A BIGOT

The truth embraces all the scriptural teachings relative to Christ and his work, to our relationship to him as members of his body, and to the brethren as fellow-members. We are to abide therein with thanksgiving. We should familiarize ourselves with the different features of this truth more and more. We should be clear in regard to what our Lord taught and why he taught it, and should know how to connect the different parts of the truth into a harmonious whole. We are to be thoroughly furnished. We are heartily to appreciate the loving kindness of our God in revealing to us these glorious things, and to realize that we did not originate them ourselves, nor was any man the originator of them, but the Lord himself. They are the gift of God to us, and we are to be most thankful for this great gift, to guard it jealously as a priceless treasure, and to let our light shine to the glory of God's name.

The general sentiment among the teachers of false doctrine, and even among the world in general, who do not believe in the necessity or the advisability of being established in faith, is that to be established is to be bigoted. Those who are so unfair in mind as to receive and tenaciously hold what they have never proven, either by sound logic or by the authority of the Word of God, are rightly called bigots. But one who in simple, childlike faith accepts and firmly holds to what God has inspired, what he has caused to be written in his Word for our instruction, is not a bigot, but a strong, established character, and will stand when all the structures built upon the numerous theories and imaginings of men shall have fallen. The great day now upon us is trying every man's character-structure, of what sort it is, and but very few, even among professed Christians, will stand the test.

The few who will pass safely through this crucial trial without loss are those only who have become established in the truth of God, "rooted and grounded and built up into Christ." The difference between a strong and steadfast Christian and a bigot is that one is established in truth, and the other is established in error. The "fire" of this day will continue to burn and to manifest the great difference between the two classes, until all have been tested and tried and found worthy or unworthy.

IMPORTANCE OF SELF-SCRUTINY

The Apostle's words in our text lead each child of God back to the time when he first made his own consecration. Under what conditions did we come into Christ? We recall that it required much humility on our part to acknowledge that

we were sinners, utterly unable to save ourselves. Some seem to forget the way in which they started. They started with faith and humility and meekness, and with the desire to be truly built up into the Master's likeness. But they seem by degrees to lose sight of this, and begin to grow in another direction than straight upward into the fulness of Christ. They like to make some show before the world. They come to neglect the first principles of Christian development, while still talking about the doctrines, or making up doctrines of their own.

Thus gradually these get away from the doctrines and the Spirit of Christ. The Apostle puts us on guard against these dangers: Are you sure that you ever really received Christ? Are you sure that you ever actually made a full consecration to God and became a new creature? You should know this. If you did, then make sure that you are progressing in his likeness. Without careful scrutiny, you might think you are progressing when you are not. The narrow way remains narrow unto the end of the journey; a mere profession of faith and a certain round of observances are not sufficient. Remember that we are to confess the Lord by our looks, by our manner, by all the acts and words of life.

Only by continual scrutiny of ourselves in the light of God's Word can we make real progress in the narrow way in which our Master walked. Truth is to become brighter and fuller and more luminous as we go onward. To this end, we must keep close to the Word and in line with his program. The Lord will not accept little, undeveloped sprouts for the kingdom, but he wants those that have grown and matured—strong, sturdy "trees of righteousness."—Isaiah 61:3.

GOD'S WORD ALONE WILL UPBUILD

Delve into the promises of God more and more. As you do this, the roots of faith will draw up the nutriment and send it out into your life, and you will grow, just as a tree grows, because nourished, fed. Thus alone will you become established in The Faith, and not in your imaginings nor the imaginings of others. Our faith is to grow stronger and more vigorous day by day. It is not to be a faith in ourselves or in anything apart from the Lord. Faith is what we started with in the beginning, and we shall need it in increasing measure as we go on in our upward way—faith in God and in his sure Word. All that we know as children of the Lord has come to us through the channel of Jesus, his holy apostles, and the prophets of old, and we are to continue feeding at this same table with thanksgiving.

We are not to feel a spirit of bondage, and say to ourselves, "I would like to ramble outside; I do not like to confine myself merely to what the Bible teaches. I would like more liberty." This disposition is not the spirit of a true son of God. Such sentiments encouraged would lead to utter spiritual disaster. All such temptations, if they come, must be promptly and positively resisted. Our spirit should be one of deepest gratitude and thankfulness that we have been granted this glorious divine revelation. Following thus in the Lord's way, we find the only true joy, and can make the only true progress. "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Peter 1:10, 11.

SPECIAL FALL VOLUNTEERING

Already over ten million copies of the regular 1914 Volunteer matter have been distributed in the U. S. and Canada, although some places have not yet been supplied. We have a large quantity still on hand which, however, is being rapidly diminished. Further orders should be sent to us quickly.

As a follow-up to the regular 1914 ("End of the World") edition, we have just issued another number of THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY (Vol. 6, No. 5) treating "The Distress of Nations" and the Cause of God's Anger—the prophetic aspect of the present European War, and its relation to the great Time of Trouble. We recommend the distribution of this new matter wherever the "End of the World" edition has gone.

As heretofore, the Society gladly supplies this literature gratis, all charges prepaid. Order promptly whatever you can judiciously use, stating exactly what localities you expect to serve, and the census report of the population of the district. Also mention any large proportion of population speaking any other language than English. We will have this new volunteer matter in the German and other languages later on.

The present is a favorable opportunity, while the eyes and ears of the masses are open. Let us labor "while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."—John 9:4; 4:36.

THE RESURRECTION THE GREATEST OF MIRACLES

In his new creation God began to create something entirely distinct from anything that He had yet made. The new creature is not an earthly creature; and nothing that is of the earthly being will ever have a part, to our understanding, in that new creation, either now or at any time. Nothing will carry over from the human to the divine, the human to the spiritual.

The human being is more or less depraved. He hears something about God, about the divine nature, about what sin is and why it is undesirable, about the reconciliation which God has provided through Christ, and about the invitation to become joint-heirs with Christ in his heavenly kingdom. He becomes conscious of all this through his ears, through human power; for he has no other power. He must have a hearing ear, else he would not hear the message at the present time. Some have more of the hearing ear, others have less. The one who has more of the hearing ear would be more attentive, more pleased, when he learns that God has a provision for the assistance of repentant sinners. The more the depravity the less of the hearing ear. The depraved person lives on a natural plane; therefore he has less inclination to come to God and less of the hearing ear to hear anything that God would have to say. But the class who cannot hear more or less distinctly have had their ears dulled by the adversary with false doctrine.

HOW TO BECOME A NEW CREATURE

What we do see, then, is God's gracious invitation to become associates with Jesus; and this is good tidings to those who have the hearing ear. We say, "I am glad that God has invited me to come back into his family, and that he has provided for the covering of my imperfections. I am pleased to know that there is a special invitation now to those who have the mind of Christ and who desire to walk in his steps, and I gladly avail myself of the arrangement. In harmony with this invitation I offer myself a living sacrifice."

When we have done this, we have been converted. In what way? We are turned around from the way of sin and from our own will, turned to go in the way of righteousness. This is conversion.

The next step for us to take is that of making a consecration to become a living sacrifice to God. And that consecration of our all to God includes everything that belongs to us—all that we are—the human ego, personality—all of its hopes, aims, possessions, for the future in every shape and form. Everything is included in that consecration to God. Did this make us new creatures? No. But it puts us in the way that we are eligible to that position. What is the next step? The next step is the application of the merit of Jesus, put over us as the wedding garment, covering our imperfections. Of what use is this to us? It makes us acceptable to God. The Apostle tells us to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, and our reasonable service.—Romans 12:1.

The next thing in order is for God to indicate his acceptance of that which we offer and which is accepted. This he does by begetting us of the holy Spirit. Just what this means we are not wise enough to know. God foreknew Jesus Christ as the Head of the body and he foreknew us, the class predestined to be the members of that body. And now by coming under the required conditions we are accepted as members of this class. We are to show our devotion and our loyalty, to show that our surrender of our will is a genuine thing. This we do by being exercised by our contact with the truth. If we have been in error, our loyalty will be determined by the way in which we weigh the matter and decide it. If we decide the matter slowly, it means that we are a little obtuse. If we decide the matter quickly between the truth and the error, it means that we are loyal to God's will, his truth, and thus we are all the more pleasing to him, as a loyal child. If we decide the matter slowly he will not cut us off, but perhaps will give us some chastisements; for we are in the school of Christ.

HOW THE NEW CREATURE GROWS

In one picture we are represented as embryos, not yet born; in another picture as children, not yet having reached manhood,

but as growing in grace and knowledge and character. Either picture is very beautiful. But we cannot mix them. We cannot imagine the child not born as growing in knowledge, etc., nor can we imagine one developing toward manhood as an embryo. In the embryo picture we perceive that every human child must grow, and that in order to do so it is dependent on nourishment. If some accident happen, that embryo might die; if there were some miscarriage, the embryo might never be brought forth into life. We see that from the time we became new creatures in Christ, we began to develop the new mind. The brain is the same as before the new will developed, and the body the same; just as a mother is the same person that she was before the child was begotten.

Let us consider the subject from another viewpoint. This new creature is the governing power—the only thing that God recognizes, and that we recognize, as having control of this mortal body. Why does the new creature have the control? Because the will is transferred from human interest to God's will. God's will is now our will as new creatures. We have full rights and control in this body, whose earthly rights are given up. God has accepted the sacrifice, and the new creature must be loyal in controlling the body in accord with the divine will. Henceforth we are to see that the mortal body is kept under. Some people might say that we are treating it unkindly; but from God's standpoint we are treating it as wisely as possible, in order to do God's will. If it were God's will that we undertake some great work, we would certainly put the body through a course of training to fit it for the undertaking.

Practically, the new creature says to the mortal body, "You are my body only for the time being. I am the new creature, desiring to use you in God's service, in order that I may see how obedient I can be to God's cause." The old creature might say, "But I have some rights." The new creature replies, "You have no rights. I shall use my judgment as to what you shall do or not do." If the new creature yielded to the old creature, the latter would prosper in its own aims and projects, and the new creature would be puny and weak in courage, strength and everything else. The new creature is to assume control of all the interests of the old creature, to sacrifice all that is to be sacrificed to the will of God.

PERSONALITY MAKES SOUL

The more we do this, the stronger we become spiritually; and the stronger we become spiritually, the more ready we shall be for our change. What is our change? It is the spirit birth in the resurrection. Not one atom of this old body will go into the new condition. What, then, will go into the new condition? It is the new creature. What is the new creature? It is the ego which lives in the mortal body, which feeds not upon natural bread, but upon every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

If God has a work for the new creature to do in the present time, then we are to take reasonable care of this body. To misuse the body would not be in harmony with God's will. The body has become the new creature's property. The new creature will take the dominant control of that body. A spiritual body would not be a soul without the ego, the personality, the being, any more than would the earthly body. It is the ego, the personality, that makes the soul. Simply one hundred and fifty pounds or so of matter does not make soul.

The soul is the thing that comes down from the father to the child. Adam and Eve gave soul to their children, and so that spark of life which God gave originally continues to come down. In the resurrection that soul, or spark of life, is carried over and becomes the new soul. This spark of life which God recognizes all the while and preserves in all of its development, is to be transferred to a new body that will be fully in harmony with it. There will not be any discord, any inharmony, between the new mind and the new body. If the new mind grows very strong now, it will have all the more difficulty and conflict with the old body and will have all the more desire for the new body.

PROCESS OF TRANSFERENCE NOT KNOWN

Can you explain to us how this new life will be transferred to the new body? We cannot. In the case of our Lord Jesus, we have the explanation that the Logos, a spirit being, left the spirit condition, came to earthly conditions and became the personality, ego, man, in earthly conditions. And we have the account that this same one who came into the world, the same one who died and went away again to heaven, is coming again. It is the same ego. It has changed its character, its power, according to the different body. At first it had a spiritual body; afterward it had a human body; it now has a divine body, superior to all. But the ego, the personality, has persisted with all of these bodies.

Our ego, our personality, is to pass from this earthly body and be given a new body. The power by which this can be done is divine power. If anybody can explain what that is, of what the first man was made a soul, perhaps we could explain how it is with the new creature. Or if any one can explain what makes the germ of wheat grow, perhaps we can explain how the new creature has this germ and how it grows. We must trust in God's power for this whole matter of the resurrection, not only of the new creature, but also of the world in general.

Whoever doubts divine power cannot believe in a resurrection. We cannot imagine, for instance, how Moses or Abraham or any one else of the remote past can be raised to life so that he would know himself, read the story of his life in the Bible, and remember that the events therein recorded were true. How that can be God only knows. We believe it because God says it. If we knew how to do it, perhaps we could make a resurrection ourselves.

A HELPFUL ILLUSTRATION

But it is just as easy to understand about the resurrection of a man to the human plane and the bringing of him into a new human body as to understand how the new creature, the new soul, can be brought into its new body. It is the new creature that will get the new body. When we get our spirit bodies we shall know all about the process; for it is written that when we get the spiritual bodies we shall know even as we are known.—1 Corinthians 13:12.

Meantime, however, we might find illustrations to help us to understand. Take, for instance, the making of a record for the phonograph. Something went out of the mouth, and made little indentations on a cylinder of wax. Later on, from that very wax cylinder the voice of the speaker is reproduced. Now, then, if we know how to reproduce the human voice, it gives us a little illustration of how God, with his unlimited power, can preserve everything recorded by the convolutions of our brain, and of how these could be preserved in the future absolutely—everything by which we could know ourselves in the future. We do not know ourselves by the number of pounds weight we are or by the difference in our beard. We know ourselves by something in our mind. But if our reason be gone, then we would not know ourselves.

God has made us new creatures. He is the All-powerful One who knows how to do this. And the more we come to know about him and the length, the depth, the height and the breadth of his wisdom, the more we know how to appreciate all he has told us, and the more we have absolute confidence in him. It is wise foolishness that God should promise a resurrection. The world cannot understand—to them it is foolishness. They cannot believe in a resurrection; therefore they cannot have the joy we can have through the exercise of our faith.

MOCK TRIALS OF JESUS

NOVEMBER 1.—Matthew 26:57-68.

"As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth."—Isaiah 53:7.

Justice is a quality of mind which naturally and properly commends itself to every rational being, civilized or heathen. Every nation strives, therefore, to have just laws upon its statute books; and it must be admitted that many of the laws of the world, including those of Lycurgus and those of Caesar, have manifested much wisdom and much justice.

But the Jewish law, given by God himself at Mount Sinai at the hand of Moses, properly claims the highest place; and the laws of all nations in any degree claiming to recognize Christianity properly seek to represent the principles of justice on the highest plane. Nevertheless, when it comes to the interpreting of these laws, and their application to individual cases, we find that everywhere there is a tendency to make excuse and depart from the laws and from the principles of justice under the claim that the circumstances and conditions of the case make necessary such a violation of law and of just principles.

The story of the conviction of Jesus unjustly, by a Jewish court and in violation of Jewish law, must not surprise us nor be thought different from what has occurred in numerous cases in other courts.

AN ILLEGAL ARREST

Jesus was arrested, neither by Pilate's orders nor by Herod's nor by their soldiers. His arrest was made at the instance of the high priest and his associates, who particularly had concluded that the life and ministry of Jesus were inimical

to their plans and projects and to what they considered to be the best interests of Judaism. The murder of Jesus was plotted in advance. But the murderers sought some excuse for their conduct, as all murderers do; and, being politicians, they sought also an outward form or semblance of justice, having regard for the opinions of others of tenderer consciences than themselves.

Under the charge of the priests were a number of men who served as policemen in the Temple and its precincts. These were the servants of the high priest; and, armed with maces, swords and lanterns, they followed Judas, who knew beforehand that on this particular night Jesus did not intend to go to Bethany as usual, but purposed to rendezvous with his disciples in the Gethsemane olive orchard, or garden.

They brought Jesus directly to the house of Annas, a superannuated high priest, whose son-in-law Caiaphas officiated in his stead. Annas attempted an examination of Jesus, but met with little success, and turned him over to Caiaphas, whose house adjoined, being in the same courtyard. There, at probably three o'clock in the morning, the Sanhedrin had gathered.

The plot for Jesus' death was deeply laid. The hours between the time when Judas left Jesus and the other apostles at the Passover Supper and the time of this trial were spent in gathering the Sanhedrin from their various homes throughout the city. Conditions were considered desperate enough to justify all this arrangement for the murder of him who "spake as never man spake"—because he taught the people—because his teaching of the people was weakening the power of the scribes and the Pharisees and of the traditions of the elders.—John 7:46; Matt. 26:55.

The theory of erroneous religious teachings is that ignorance and superstition are necessary for the preservation of sacerdotal power. Thus always has error hated the truth; thus always has darkness hated the light. The condemnation of Jesus was merely another triumph of darkness over the light. Yet it was a triumph only in appearance; for God's plan was thus being carried out. The great Atonement for sin was thus being arranged for, the result of which will be the ultimate overthrow of sin, Satan and death, and the establishment of righteousness and truth world-wide and everlastingly.

AN INIQUITOUS TRIAL

The Sanhedrin was composed of seventy of the most influential Jews, an ecclesiastical court, whose voice properly had great influence with the Roman Governor, in whose hands lay, at this time, the power of life or death.

Caiaphas not only filled the office of high priest, but in this particular case he acted as prosecuting attorney. While gathering the Sanhedrin, he had not been forgetful to collect witnesses, who are said to have been suborned, or bribed, to give their testimony. Of course, no attempt was made to bring before the Sanhedrin any of those whom Jesus had relieved from the power of evil spirits, nor any of those whose blind eyes he had opened or whose deaf ears he had unstopped, nor any of those whom he had awakened from the sleep of death. The high priest knew, for instance, particularly about the case of Lazarus, but they desired no such testimony. They were bent upon murder, to be accomplished in an apparently judicial form.

Caiaphas called the witnesses, but found that their testimonies were self-contradictory; and it was a part of the Jewish law that at least two witnesses must agree before any matter could be considered proven. Finally, two partly agreed that they had heard Jesus say something about the Temple—that he was able to destroy it and rebuild it in three days. They probably had misunderstood Jesus. However, their testimonies were too slight to make a basis for conviction.

As a last resort, Caiaphas attempted to get Jesus himself to say something which he could construe to be blasphemy. To the various questions Jesus answered nothing; but now Caiaphas exclaimed, "I adjure thee by the living God, tell us truly, Art thou the Messiah?" It would not do for Jesus to keep quiet and fail to answer this question. To have done so would have been to deny this great truth and to have failed to give proper witness to the Sanhedrin. He therefore avowed that Caiaphas had expressed the truth in what he had applied.

Caiaphas leaped to his feet, anxious to grasp the opportunity of calling this statement blasphemy; but Jesus proceeded to say, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Affecting great horror at this, Caiaphas dramatically tore his priestly garment, as implying to the Sanhedrin that as a representative of God amongst them he had heard something awful indeed. Turning to the Sanhedrin, he inquired, "What further need of witnesses have we? Ye yourselves have heard his blasphemy. What think ye?"—What is your verdict? Their answer was, "He is worthy of death."

Apparently only two refrained from this vote—Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, both of whom had learned to have great respect for Jesus. But what power or influence could they have? As the very most, they could claim that the proceedings of the Sanhedrin were illegal, that the law forbade that they should sit as a court to condemn anybody to death in the night-time. Hence Jesus was remanded to an adjoining court-room while the Sanhedrin waited to take its official action after daybreak. Meantime, in that waiting-hall, Jesus, condemned by the high priest as a blasphemer and malefactor, was subjected to various indignities by the attaches of the high priest's palace, who ignorantly supposed that whatever was done by the high priest must be right.

SUBMISSIVE TO THE DIVINE WILL

The Scripture which declares, "Ye have killed the just one, and he doth not resist you," and the Golden Text of this lesson are in full agreement, and are both applicable to Jesus in these trials. Jesus opened not his mouth in the sense that he did not attempt to defend his life. Realizing that nothing was happening to him contrary to the Father's will, he gladly permitted matters to take their course, without attempting to hinder the results.

Who can doubt that his brilliant mind, and his tongue, which "spake as never man spake," could quickly have brought such an argument for his defense that Caiaphas and the entire Sanhedrin would have trembled and would not have dared to condemn him! He spoke only what was necessary to be said that the truth might be presented, and it was their own perversion of this truth which his enemies styled blasphemy.

The Scriptures intimate that the followers of Jesus must not expect full justice in the world, nor always to be rightly understood. They, too, are to remember that the cup of their experiences, like that of their Master, is supervised by heavenly wisdom; and that if they are obedient to the divine arrangement, they will find that all of their experiences will eventually work out to their highest welfare. "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God."

SOWING AND REAPING

NOVEMBER 8.—Galatians 6:1-10.

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."—Verse 7.

Today's study was intended, by those who mapped out these lessons, to be a temperance lesson. There is surely a sense in which it is true that those who yield to appetites which crave injurious stimulants and narcotics will certainly reap a slavery to those appetites, a corresponding weakening of their own characters. All good people—all who have at heart their own welfare and the welfare of humanity—must surely deplore the ravages of intemperance; and any word or example that would be helpful to fellow-creatures, that would assist them to become strong characters and useful members of society, should not be withheld.

We may, however, be fully sure that nothing will completely and thoroughly liberate mankind from the weaknesses of their fallen nature, except God's appointed remedy—Messiah's kingdom. But this conviction should not hinder us from taking our place publicly on the side of righteousness and of the best interests of humanity in respect to every question.

Let us not, on the other hand, go to the extreme which some would approve, but let us follow strictly on this, and on every subject, the teachings of the Bible. Following this course now, in this lesson, it is our duty to call attention to the fact that the Apostle's words have no reference whatever to intemperance of one kind more than another. The Apostle is not addressing the world in general; much less is he addressing some poor inebriates. He is addressing the consecrated people of God, as he declares in the opening verses of the Epistle.

These consecrated Christians the Apostle speaks of as brethren, and instructs them how they should deal with any of their fellows who might be overtaken in a fault, who might become entangled with some form of sin, not by reason of sympathy with sin, but by reason of weakness of the flesh or by unfavorable environment. The most spiritual ones of the church should exercise themselves to bring about a restoration of the erring one to a condition of righteousness and fellowship with God. This they should do in a meek manner, remembering that they also are imperfect in the flesh, and that they also may at some time or other inadvertently fall into sin, contrary to their heart intentions.

In this manner they were to "bear one another's burdens" —assisting one another in battling against the weaknesses of the flesh and the besetments of sin. In this way they would be fulfilling the general law of Christ.

The law of Christ is a law of service and self-sacrifice in the interests of others. Those who, finding a brother overtaken in a fault, merely throw back their heads, denouncing the brother in a haughty, imperious manner, in a holier-than-thou manner, have not yet attained a proper appreciation of what is the law of Christ—the law which is to govern all the members of the body.

This law of Christ, the Apostle points out, is a law of love. Governed by this law of love, Jesus laid down his life, not merely for his friends, but even for his enemies. All, therefore, who would claim to be disciples or followers of Jesus should have the same mind, the same disposition, the same spirit, and should seek to follow the same law of love. Thus the Apostle says, "We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16)—in seeking to assist the brethren out of difficulty and to bring them nearer to the Lord and to his standards.

TOO MUCH SELF-ESTEEM

The Apostle points out that one great danger which besets all the true followers of Jesus is headiness—thinking too highly of self and, therefore, not thinking highly enough of the brethren, especially of the brethren who stumble in some particular in which this individual has not himself, as yet, stumbled.

One of the first lessons to be learned is that we are really nothing, that we are bundles of imperfection, that on the strength of our own merit we could not commend ourselves to God nor have his favor. Furthermore, we are to learn that in proportion as we think of ourselves as somebody, to that same extent we are not pleasing to God, and are in his sight all the more nobodies. If, therefore, anybody think of himself as a somebody in God's sight, he should begin to realize that he is nothing, a nobody unworthy of divine notice, except through the favor of God in Christ. Such a person is deceiving himself and is hindering his own progress in the good way.

Each one, therefore, instead of seeking to judge or to reprove his neighbor or his brother in Christ, should seek to prove out his own work. He should carefully discern to see to what extent he has made progress in the things which God has declared will be pleasing in his sight. He should seek to ascertain to what extent he has put away anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, and to what extent he has put on the graces of God's holy Spirit; namely, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

To whatever extent he can see that he is progressing along these Scripturally defined lines, to that extent he has ground for rejoicing, without in any sense or degree seeking to compare himself with others and thus to estimate himself wholly by the imperfections which he may see in others. By following this course, each should be seeking to find out his own weaknesses, seeking to bear his own burdens and seeking, therefore, not to be a burden or a reproach to others—either to the Lord or to the brethren.

Along the lines of this teaching, there is no room for clericism. Rather, as the Apostle says, "Those who are taught in the Word should communicate with those who teach in all good things," telling them of any blessings received or of any clearer views of the Word of God which have come to them. The Apostle may also have meant that those who receive blessings from a teacher may properly seek opportunity for recompensing that teacher, either with thanks or with co-operation or in some other way helping the teacher to forward his work of teaching in any good and profitable manner.

There is a principle at stake here. God operates along the lines of justice, and he cannot be deceived. His eye reads the heart, the motive, the intention. We might even temporarily deceive ourselves with specious arguments, but no one can deceive God. It is a principle of the divine arrangement that sowing shall bring reaping, and that the thing reaped shall be of the same character as the thing sowed.—Galatians 6:7.

THE CHRISTIAN'S ARDUOUS TASK

The world does not engage in this sowing and reaping that the Apostle speaks of; only the church do so. The church is composed of those who have heard the voice of God offering forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ to all those who become his disciples—offering also divine assistance and the begetting of the holy Spirit to a new nature and to glory, honor and immortality. All who have really and truly become followers of Christ, who have taken up their cross and have covenanted self-denial in walking in the footsteps of the Master—these alone are true Christians.

It is for these to order their steps in harmony with the Lord's leadings and to know that the results of their lives will be in proportion as they follow their covenant of self-sacrifice and faithfulness as disciples of Jesus. These have covenanted to give up the world, its aims, its objects, its ambitions—to sacrifice all these, that they may become "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" Jesus their Lord in the heavenly inheritance.—Romans 8:17.

These should understand that it is not sufficient to agree to sow to the Spirit, but that the reaping of spiritual blessings and of heart development will depend upon their faithfulness in sowing to these ends. "He that soweth to the Spirit"—that is, he that lives a spiritual life, seeking to serve the will or Spirit of God in all of his words, deeds and thoughts—will reap the largest crop of spiritual development in the various qualities which go to make up the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, those who sow to the flesh—that is, who live after the flesh, seeking to please their own flesh, seeking to do according to their fleshly minds or wills, or seeking to please the fleshly minds or wills of their friends or relatives—these must only expect that in their case the flesh thus cultivated will grow the stronger in power to control their lives, and that they will make proportionately less progress along the lines of the Spirit.

In other words, the Apostle explains that every time we give heed to the fleshly inclinations of our fallen natures, we are hindering our own spiritual progress, and that the tendency of all such yielding to the flesh is toward corruption, toward death. On the other hand, to whatever extent we mortify the inclinations of the flesh, and seek to live in harmony with the Spirit of the Lord, in that same proportion we shall grow strong spiritually, and be prepared for the everlasting life on the spirit plane which God has promised to those who shall demonstrate their love for him and their loyalty to the principles of righteousness.

This does not mean that only those who attain the complete mastery of the flesh will receive any blessing from the Lord, but that unless we manifest to the Lord an appreciation of the spiritual things, we shall not make progress therein, shall not be fit for everlasting life and shall not receive it; whereas, on the contrary, if our conduct shall manifest to the Lord our love for truth and righteousness and our desire to please him, however weak our flesh, he will account such worthy of everlasting life, knowing that when they shall have the perfect bodies of the resurrection, they will be glad to live in absolute harmony with the divine arrangements. Thus the Apostle on another occasion wrote, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who are walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Romans 8:4.

FAITHFUL CONTINUANCE IN WELL-DOING

In verses 9 and 10, the Apostle draws his argument to a conclusion. All who wish to do right—all who wish to live according to the lines marked out by the holy Spirit through the words of Jesus and the apostles—should not only start out well by making a full consecration, but should continue faithful, and not be weary of striving against sin and of being faithful to righteousness.

God is seeking to develop and to fix character in his people; and in due time, after they shall have suffered awhile, fought and battled for a time against the weaknesses of the flesh, they will reap the reward; they will get the new bodies that God has promised—the resurrection bodies. Then their battling and trials will all be ended; for the new bodies will be in perfect accord with the new will, and there will be no cause of conflict between the two. The work of grace will then go grandly forward, through them, for the blessing of the world.

And, says the Apostle, let us not merely avoid harshness toward those who have been overtaken in a fault, let us not merely guard ourselves that we shall sow to the spirit and not to the flesh, and let us not merely avoid weariness in this good way; but let us additionally, "as we find opportunity, do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith." In so doing, we shall be copying our heavenly Father's character. He is the Fountain of Blessing. From him come the blessings of the present life—the sunshine and the rain—upon both the just and the unjust, upon the evil and the good.

As the heavenly Father is continually giving blessings, rather than seeking favors, so we as his advanced and developed children are to seek to have the same character-likeness, the same disposition, the same mind; namely, a disposition to do good to everybody, but especially an earnest desire to do good unto all who are the Lord's children—unto all who are of the household of faith.

ST. PETER SIFTED LIKE WHEAT

NOVEMBER 15.—Mark 14:27-31, 53, 54, 66-72.

"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."—1 Corinthians 10:12.

St. Peter was admittedly a man of strong character, very courageous, but rather too impetuous. He is one of the two disciples of whom it is written that "The people perceived that they were ignorant and unlearned men." (Acts 4:13) In some respects, therefore, St. Peter may be said to have had less advantage than Judas. Both had equal opportunities in the school of Christ: yet how different the results with the two men! The one went down into the second death despised; the other, after ups and downs of trial and discipline, passed to a reward of glory, honor and immortality with his Master, ranking amongst the highest of the apostles.

Our lesson for today deals with the special "sifting" which came to St. Peter at the time of our Lord's death, and of which he was forewarned by Jesus, saying, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." St. Peter's courage, manifested on so many occasions, was really his weak point. Notwithstanding all that Jesus had said to forewarn him of the sifting experiences that were just before him, St. Peter realized no dread, no fear. Hence he did little watching and praying in comparison with what he should have done, and self-confidence led to his undoing for a time.

It was the same St. Peter who, when told that he would deny our Lord before the time for the cock to crow the next morning, declared that it surely was a mistake, for he was ready to die with his Master. It was the same St. Peter who drew his sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant, afterward healed by Jesus. It was the same impulsive St. Peter who was the first to acknowledge the Messiahship of Jesus.

Jesus had inquired what people were saying about him—who they said he was—and had finally asked, "Whom say ye that I am?" Then St. Peter answered, "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the Living God." Jesus replied that this answer indicated that St. Peter was in a blessed condition of relationship with God, or otherwise he would not have had the knowledge to make this statement. He said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Who could think that this same noble character would be so overwhelmed with fear that he would deny his Master, even with curses!

One thing which impresses itself quickly and forcibly upon our minds is the thought that the writers of the New Testament were certainly very different from the majority of writers in that they told the absolute truth without modification or varnish. Surely no other book is like the Bible in this respect. The founders of great religious world-systems and of various sectarian systems have manifested a very different spirit. Their heroes are all great, noble, educated, heroic. Never would they think of pointing out such weaknesses as those manifested by St. Peter on the night in which our Lord was betrayed, when he denied his Master.

Surely this gives us greater confidence in the Bible—in its honesty, in its truthfulness. We can rely upon the fact that the men who thus freely tell of their failings, and who speak of their lack of learning, must have been men of great courage, great sincerity, great love for the truth. Surely their testimony is worthy of all acceptation.

ST. PETER'S TRIAL UNEXPECTED

Temptations will come in an insidious form. We cannot imagine that at the time when he cut off the ear of the high priest's servant St. Peter had any sympathy with the thought of denying our Lord. But circumstances and conditions changed. The Master was taken a prisoner. Whatever power he had previously exercised whereby he walked away from his enemies, and they could not take him because his "hour had not yet come," that power he evidently was not exercising now—his hour had come. To see his Master apparently without friends in heaven, delivered over to his enemies and led from one tribunal to the other, had a paralyzing effect upon St. Peter.

St. John had such an acquaintance with some one connected with the palace that he was permitted to enter the court and bring St. Peter with him; but they had separated. St. Peter was in the courtyard. It was cold, and he approached an open brazier to warm himself. In the light of the court, surrounded by the gossiping servants of the palace, he was keenly scrutinized by one of the maids, who said, "Thou art also a disciple of the Nazarene."

Stunned by the identification and wondering to what it might lead, St. Peter promptly denied that he had any knowledge of Jesus. Then he moved away to another part of the court, where the shadows were deeper and the people fewer. But again he was recognized as a Galilean and accused of being one of Jesus' disciples. Again he denied the charge. The third time he was approached with the same charge that he was one of Jesus' disciples and a Galilean, and that his speech betrayed him. Again, with cursing, he denied that he knew his Master.

Terrible! we say. And surely St. Peter felt afterward that it was terrible; for just at that time, the early morning, came the beginning of cock-crowing, and he remembered the Master's words that Satan had desired to sift him as wheat, and that before the cock crew he would have denied his Master three times. The whole matter came upon him with crushing force; and, wrapping his cloak about his head, he hastened away into the darkness, weeping bitterly; for just about the time that the cock crew, Jesus was led forth not far from him, and as he looked at Jesus, the Master lifted up his eyes and looked at St. Peter. It was a sympathetic glance, not an angered one; but it went straight to the heart.

St. Peter's crime was nothing like that of Judas; he had merely sought to protect himself. He had not sought to injure or even to risk the injury of his Master. The thoroughness of St. Peter's repentance is abundantly testified by his subsequent loyalty even unto death. Tradition has it that he was condemned to be crucified; and that, remembering how once he had denied his Master, he felt that it would be too great an honor for him to share exactly the same death as his Lord; and that, at his own request, he was crucified head downward.

THE LESSON TO ALL CHRISTIANS

Our Golden Text voices to all Christians the lesson of St. Peter's experiences—"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." When we are weak in our own estimation and, full of faith, cling tenaciously to the Arm of the Lord, then we are really strong in the might which God supplies through his eternal Son. Another lesson is that however different the experiences of God's people, all who fall into line for the great promotion to the first resurrection must expect to endure severe siftings, provings—of their love for the Lord, the truth, the brethren, and their loyalty to all these.

Let us never forget that siftings are permitted, not because the Lord has no interest in us, but because only those who can stand siftings, trials and tests, are fit for places in the kingdom.

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MAKING READY FOR THE REIGN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

"The nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth."—Revelation 11:18.

It may be that many of the Lord's people were expecting more than they should have looked for to occur with the opening of the Jewish year 1915, which began with September 21. The human mind seems to have a natural tendency, and one with which we should have sympathy, to expect matters to culminate more rapidly, fulfilments to come more suddenly, than they ever do come. For instance, the Scriptures tell us that about the time of the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, certain great events, enumerated in our text, will begin to take place. Many Christian people, looking at the statement, expect all this to be fulfilled in a few minutes, or a few hours, or at most a few weeks. But as we come to understand the Scriptures, we perceive that it covers the thousand years of Christ's reign.

"The nations were angry, thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged." The church are the first to receive their judgment, the decision in their case; for the world God has appointed a thousand-year day. (Acts 17:31; 2 Peter 3:8) "And that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets [the ancient worthies] and to the saints [all the holy ones], and them that fear thy name, small and great." All this latter class—the world of mankind—will

be judged, will have the decision passed upon them, according to the way in which they will conduct themselves under the Millennial conditions. And thou shalt "destroy them that corrupt the earth." If this verse contains so much that a thousand years will be required for its fulfilment, the same may be true of other Scriptures.

Another Scripture (Daniel 12:1), describing the period of transition from Gentile supremacy to Messiah's kingdom, declares, "There shall be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." Our Lord discussed this statement in his great prophecy, and added, "No, nor ever shall be." (Matthew 24:21) After speaking about the tribulation that should come upon the Jews in the close of their age, the Master said, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (Luke 21:24) We think it reasonable for us to hold that if there are Gentile times to be fulfilled, they must have been foretold; and that if they have been foretold, then they were foreordained, or planned of God, who knew beforehand how long those Gentile times would be and when they would be fulfilled.

Our Lord's words, then, seemed to suggest to us the propriety of searching to see what we might discover concerning the times, or years, of the Gentiles. Looking through our Bibles and our histories, we found that there was a particular date when God took away the kingdom from his typical people, Israel; and that at that time he gave over the dominion of the world with more or less of a lease of power to the Gentiles. We also found that, as far as we can see from the Bible, this date when the kingdom was taken from the last king of David's line, King Zedekiah, was the year 606 B. C. (We would not say that it was not 605 or 607, but that as nearly as we can tell it was the year 606 B. C.) Then we reasoned that if 606 B. C. was the time when God took away the typical kingdom, no doubt he had at that time the purpose of giving some lease of power to the Gentile nations; and we looked to see what history and the Bible had to say upon the subject.

THE IMAGE OF GENTILE SUPREMACY

Merely repeating what we have studied in the series of books called STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, only putting the information in another form, we found that when God took away the kingdom from King Zedekiah, He gave the dominion to the Gentiles, the Emperor Nebuchadnezzar being the first of these world-rulers. We learned, in the Scriptures, that God gave Nebuchadnezzar a dream. By morning the king had forgotten the dream, but it was afterwards explained to him by the Prophet Daniel. In his dream Nebuchadnezzar saw a great image, the head of which was made of gold, the breast and the arms of silver, the belly and the thighs of brass, the legs of iron, and the feet of iron smeared with miry clay.

The Prophet Daniel explained that this great image, which stood before Nebuchadnezzar, represented all the Gentile kingdoms. Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, was represented by the head of gold; next came the Medo-Persian, represented by the breast and the arms of silver; then Greece, represented by the belly and thighs of brass; then came Rome, represented by the legs of iron; next came the so-called Holy Roman Empire, represented by the feet smeared with miry clay; and last, the present government of Europe, represented by the ten toes, also of iron smeared with miry clay.

According to this vision given to the Emperor Nebuchadnezzar and interpreted by the Prophet Daniel, God designed that picture, image, to represent all the Gentile governments that would ever have sway over all the earth.

When we had this matter clear, then we said, The period of time during which these universal empires will have controlled the world must be the times of the Gentile. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, God has mentioned the Gentile times (Luke 21:24), and now in the Old Testament we find out how many times there are—how many years; for in Scriptural usage a time means a year.

As we studied the subject still further, we found that God had told the Israelites that they would come under his disfavor for seven times. (Leviticus 26:14-28) These could not be literal years; for the Israelites passed through many tribulations as long or longer than seven years. The question then was, What kind of years were these times to be? We concluded that if they were not literal years, they must be symbolical. Since a literal year, Jewish reckoning, contains 360 days, and since in prophecy a day represents a year of actual time (Ezek. 4:6), each symbolic "time" would be 360 years. So then, this period of seven times must mean 7 x 360 years, or 2520 years.

Thus we found that this was to be the period of time during which Israel was to be overturned (Ezekiel 21:25-27)—to have their kingdom and their government subject to the Gentiles. Meantime, while setting aside his own typical kingdom, God said to the Gentiles, I will not be ready to set up my kingdom for some time. In the interim you may have the opportunity to demonstrate what you can do for the world. Institute the best government that you can. Do your very best to rule the world justly and wisely.

EARTH'S GREAT UNIVERSAL EMPIRES

Full of confidence that they would rule the world in the best possible way, the Babylonians essayed to do so, but soon reached a sad climax. There followed a general program by which the rights of the people were disregarded, the wealthy getting everything and the poor practically nothing. Next came into power the Medes and Persians, who also started out very well, with just designs and every endeavor to do right. We recall that Cyrus, the first Medo-Persian Emperor, set free the Jews and gave them permission to return to Jerusalem; and that he also sent back the holy vessels of the Temple, which were very valuable, but which he would not retain because they belonged to God. Cyrus attempted to maintain a just and righteous government; and yet before long, the Medo-Persian Empire failed to bring satisfaction to the people or to prove to be a great blessing to the world.

Then came the turn of Greece. Alexander the Great, before he was twenty-one years of age, had conquered the world. For quite awhile Greece ruled the world. Grecian civilization and various systems of Grecian philosophy went out world-wide. Greek theories on all kinds of subjects have more or less permeated all the great countries of earth; even in our day the influence which went out from Greece is felt in every form of religion the world over, the religion of Christendom being itself a mixture of Grecian mythology and Christianity along with the teachings of the Mosaic law and the Jewish prophets. But Greece had her day, and had to bid farewell to the sceptre of power.

Next came the Roman Empire, with its various forms of government, each of which was tried with the endeavor to rule the world wisely and justly. The result of all this was the centralization of power to a greater or less degree, the wealth regathered into the hands of a few, and the masses of the people neither blessed nor satisfied. Then the Roman system began to fall.

By and by came in that mixture of Christianity and Roman civil power which was represented in the iron feet of the image, which were smeared with miry clay; the gloss of Christianity covering the civil power as the clay covered the feet of the image. The gloss did not make the nations really Christian, but has merely caused these kingdoms and governments to look upon themselves as though they were Christian; and this is what they call themselves—Christian Germany, Christian Great Britain, Christian France, Christian Russia, Christian Italy, and Christian Austria-Hungary.

A COUNTERFEIT OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

Miry clay looks very much like stone; and God used a stone to symbolize his kingdom in the same symbolic picture that he used the miry clay smeared over the iron feet to represent nominal Christians. Christ's kingdom has not yet been established; but it will be built on the wreck of these present institutions, which outwardly resemble Christ's kingdom, calling themselves Christian nations on all their coins and declaring that God is reigning in these kingdoms. Collectively they call themselves Christendom, which means Christ's kingdom; and they were led to do this through the teachings of the church during the dark ages—not the true church, but people who deludedly thought that they were the church of Christ and who persecuted the real church.

We include as sectarian churches all that are not the real church. There are many spurious churches; all cannot be right. The question is, Which is the right one? None will acknowledge the others to be the right one, all claiming to be right. Not one of them is the right one, as we have concluded from the Bible description of the church of Christ. God recognizes only the one composed of those who are consecrated to him—found in the Greek, the English, the German, the Swedish churches, amongst the Baptists, the Methodists, the Lutherans, the Presbyterians and amongst people who do not attend any church at all. All who are God's saints are members of his church; all others are merely imitation Christians. These great systems calling themselves his churches are without authority of God, without Scriptural recognition. They are merely human institutions, and in them only the saintly ones are recognized of God at all as his people.

The Bible sets forth that these spurious churches are Babylon, a term which signifies confusion. They are a confused mixture, not only of all classes of people, but of all classes of doctrines, and quite contrary therefore to anything that God

and his Word uphold. From this confused mass of people, God is calling out his people, saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4), and telling them that very suddenly a great calamity will come upon this great institution called Christendom, which will entirely demolish this system in every sense of the word.

THE END OF THE GENTILE TIMES

Studying God's Word, we have measured the 2520 years, the seven symbolic times, from that year 606 B. C. and have found that it reached down to October, 1914, as nearly as we were able to reckon. We did not say positively that this would be the year. We merely left every one to look at the facts of history and reckon for himself. Would this date be the time or would it be some other date? we asked. Many of us concluded that as far as we could see, October of this year would show the end of the Gentile lease of power; for when October comes we are getting down to the end of the Jewish year. The year 1914 actually ended Sept. 20, 1914, Jewish reckoning.

Now the question comes, Have the Gentile times ended or not? Some perhaps may be inclined to say, "No; they have not ended." Others would say, "When the Gentile times shall have ended, we would expect that the Gentiles would be entirely ousted from all power and control, and that Christ's kingdom would be established. Were there not a great many things that we expected would take place when the Gentile times would end?"

We find that some have one idea and others another. Some think that just the next hour after midnight would see a great, grand change everywhere—evil blotted out in sixty minutes or in sixty seconds. But would it be a reasonable expectation that the Gentile kingdoms would be snuffed out inside of an hour or inside of a day? If God had said so, it would be different; we know that God has all power to do his will everywhere. But are we in any sense of the word to expect such a sudden transition—that going to bed on the night of September 20, we would find, on the morning of September 21, all the kingdoms of the world destroyed and the kingdom of Christ set up, the saints in glory? etc. Such would be a lightning change! We do not think that any would have been justified in so thinking. If any had such expectation, it was unwarranted.

GOD'S TWO WITNESSES

Now look back and see what happened immediately after the expiration of different time periods. For instance, there are great day periods mentioned in the Bible, namely, the 1260 symbolic days, the 1290, the 1335 and also the 2300 days. (Daniel 12:7, 11, 12; 8:13, 14) We have not the time to go into details concerning all of these time periods. They are familiar to us, and are treated in detail in the volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. Therefore we merely refresh your memories.

The 1260 years ended in 1799. From their beginning to their culmination, the power of persecution held sway. When the 1260 years ended, was anything done in an hour, in a day, or in a year to stop the persecution? Nay! One of the results was that God's two witnesses were exalted to heaven. These two witnesses of God, the Old and New Testaments, were exalted to heaven, were lifted up in the sight of the people, taken up to a position of great influence and dignity which they never before had enjoyed.

EXALTED TO HEAVEN

Previous to that time the church held that the Bible went hand in hand with the voice of the church; that the voice of the church was the voice of the bishops and the popes; and that the Bible was only to corroborate the voice of the church. But after the expiration of the 1260 prophetic days, the Bible began to take a new position.

We remind you that it was between the years 1803 and 1813 that many of our great Bible Societies were organized. Only then the printing of the Bible in every language and in cheap form was commenced, and the Bible began to go out to all nations. The Bible was lifted up before the people—was exalted to heaven, in the sense in which our Lord meant when he said, "Thou, Capernaum, art exalted unto heaven." The Bible was greatly exalted in contrast to the degraded position which it had occupied during the dark ages. But several years were consumed in bringing it up to this high position.

"THE TIME OF THE END"

Of course, error all along has more or less combated the truth, but nevertheless the truth has been going forward, step by step. The year 1799 marked the beginning of the "time of the end," when various events were to occur. According to prophecy—"Knowledge shall be increased"; "the wise shall understand"; and "there shall be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." (Daniel 12:1-10) These various predictions, the fulfilment of which was to follow 1799, have been in process of fulfilment throughout the past century. The running to and fro did not reach any particular development for some time after the time of the end had begun. The progress in the use of steam power was gradual. First came the steamboat; then came the first railway train. These inventions of necessity had to precede the predicted "running to and fro."

Only within the past few years have we reached a maximum of speed on railways and steamships. Apparently they have begun to slow down. Very few trains now go faster than twenty-four miles an hour; and so with the great steamships Mauretania and Lusitania, which are types of the very swiftest steamboats. Indeed, these vessels might not have been built were it not that the British government wished to have some very swift cruisers in time of war.

These wonderful inventions which characterize our day have come gradually since 1799. After the first part of the period came the increase of knowledge, which is reaching its climax. We are now at the place where in civilized lands compulsory education is doing about all it can do for the people; and some nations are trying to restrain education. A prominent Russian statesman recently said that education is the basis of all the revolutionary spirit amongst the people, and that if the people had less of it there would be less trouble. In due time all the other nations will learn the lesson that without some restriction, education is a dangerous thing. To an unregenerate heart it means power in an unregenerate hand—which is not always safe.

DUE TIME FOR UNDERSTANDING CHRONOLOGY

The Prophet Daniel's statement that "the wise shall understand" apparently refers to the end of the 1290 days mentioned in the same chapter. This period terminated in 1829. Shortly after 1829 the message of the nearness of the second advent of Christ began especially to be promulgated by William Miller. As a result of the exaltation of the Word of God, certain doctrines were brought forth in a very prominent way.

We have all read about the great Miller movement started in this country. (See STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. III, pag 84.) We are not endorsing the teachings of Brother Miller. While he had some correct thoughts on Scripture, he also had some incorrect ones—just as had Brother Calvin and other brethren since his day. But the time had come for the announcing of the second coming of Christ; and while the second advent did not occur in 1844, as the followers of Brother Miller had anticipated, yet beginning gradually in the year 1829 certain doctrines were brought to the attention of the church which had never before been noted—certain doctrines respecting man's immortality, spiritual and human natures, etc. These subjects led to a careful searching of the Scriptures and to confidence in the Word of God above the traditions of men.

The increase of light has gradually progressed, and has by degrees been dispelling the darkness of error in both doctrine and practise, until today the Lord's people have a great deal of blessing. We are now more than a hundred years from the beginning of the time of the end; and this development of Christian knowledge has been steadily progressing, opposed in various ways, but nevertheless fighting on to victory.

Another prophetic period mentioned by the Prophet Daniel was the 2300 days. This period was to mark certain things, and at the expiration of these days the sanctuary was to be cleansed. This work of cleansing the true church, the sanctuary class, from the defilements of the dark ages culminated, we believe, in 1846, the time of the fulfilment of the 2300 days. But the work of cleansing was not accomplished in a moment or a day or even a year; and the cleansing was but limited.

We come now to the 1335 days, which culminated in 1875. Of these days the Prophet had said, "Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days" (years)! (Daniel 12:12) At that time great blessings came to the people of God; for at that time our Master returned, preparatory to taking up his great power and commencing his long-promised reign of a thousand years. The time for his parousia had come, and he was here! The nature of those blessings we need not repeat; in fact, they could not be explained in a few words. But ever since the presence of the Master we have had evidences of the great blessings coming to us, as foretold by the Prophet Daniel.

EVIDENCES OF OUR LORD'S PAROUSIA

In what way will the Lord take his great power and reign? The Scriptures show us very clearly. In line with the same chronology the Scriptures teach us that there is a time for the parousia, or presence of the Lord. That time, as far as we are able to calculate, began in 1874. Since that date we have been

living in the parousia of the Son of Man. Is there anything to corroborate this? Yes. In the first place, we look for the Lord's dealing with his people, the church. We should expect that at the time of our Lord's coming his people would hear his "knock"—the knock of the prophecies, and whoever would open his heart and receive the things in a consecrated attitude of mind the Lord would gird himself as a servant and would come forth and serve him.—Revelation 3:20.

All of the special blessings that we, as a company of Bible Students, have received during the past forty years have been the result of the Lord's presence. He has been our Servant and has been bringing forth things new and old out of his storehouse. These old things have been coming forth in a new way—not because of human ability or skill, but because it is the Lord's due time for these things to become clear—the doctrine of redemption, the ransom, the meaning of the term body of Christ, the explanation of how the death of Christ is justification for our sins, the imputation of his merit for the Church, the giving of the merit to the world, what the sanctification of the church really means, the begetting of the holy Spirit, the begotten ones becoming new creatures in Christ, and what this term, a new creature, signifies, how the new creature differs from the old creature, how the first resurrection is to bring this new creation glorious privileges and divine blessing—glory, honor and immortality.—SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. II., page 103; Vol. V., page 421; Vol. VI., pages 59-84.

Our Lord, present, but invisible, has brought us light along every feature of the divine plan, not only respecting those things that were old—justification, sanctification and redemption—but also respecting the philosophy of God's dealings—how our Lord became flesh and dwelt among us, how he was holy, harmless and undefiled, and yet was born of an earthly mother. All these things which were once confusing to us, but which are now brought to light, are evidences that the Lord is here serving his people. We know that we have received these things. We do not believe that we have received them from any human tongue or pen, but from the Lord, who is giving us "meat in due season." The result of receiving this spiritual food is that many people have been sanctified—have experienced a transformation of mind that leads them to rejoice in laying down their lives for the brethren and in walking in the footsteps of Jesus.

A gentleman recently called on us, and made the remark that after seeing the Photo-Drama of Creation he got his first glimpse of God's character and learned to love God. He had been an Episcopalian, then a Christian Scientist, and then for fifteen years an unbeliever; but now he has gotten clearer views of God and his plan. Although he is a very talented man, he is doing what he finds to serve the Lord—helping to fold the volunteer literature. The first intimation we had of his interest was his giving of $50 for the work. After seeing the Photo-Drama, he had gotten so much good from it that he wished to help it along.

This we mention as showing the power of the truth, in contrast with the opposite influence of error. While we cannot say that we number ourselves by millions, yet we can say that nearly fourteen thousand have taken a very special vow that implies their full consecration to the Lord; many others are writing in to say that they have taken that vow—some of them years ago; and there are some from whom we shall never hear—still others who have never taken the vow, but who are fully consecrated, as far as we know.

If we ask Christian people whether or not they have given up everything they have to the Lord, the majority of them will say, "No. I want to live a good Christian life; but I never made full consecration to the Lord." All these blessings enumerated are the result of the very precious truth that has come to us, and to thousands of others. These have been very greatly blessed and helped, even though they have not made a full consecration to the Lord. This is a good evidence that something unusual has occurred within the period of the harvest time. Moreover, this work has been growing. It has been supported in a way that is marvelous to ourselves and to our enemies. Possibly many of the dear friends wonder if there is not a miracle performed. But there has been no miracle, yet it is marvelous in our sight that so much has been done with a comparatively small amount of money; for amongst the Lord's people there are not many rich, not many learned. —1 Corinthians 1:26-29.

THE TIME OF HARVEST

Our Lord indicated that at his second coming all his servants who would be in the right condition of heart would hear his knock; and that if they would open to him immediately, he would come in and sup with them. What does this statement signify? It means that his knock showed that the time for the great representative of God—our glorified Lord—to be here had come; and that all who were ready would hear that knock, the prophetic knock, calling attention to the prophetic testimony that thenceforth we could look forward to Messiah's beginning his parousia, his harvest work, at once with all denominations.

When the year 1875 came, was everything accomplished within twenty-four hours? Surely not! Did everybody awake at the same minute? Have they not been getting awake all through the harvest time? And some of us have not been awake very long. Some of us did not hear the knock when first our Master returned; but just as soon as we did hear and opened our hearts, we got the blessing; for we were in the proper attitude of heart to receive. This is true in the United States, in Canada, in Great Britain, in Africa, Australia; true everywhere.

What has occurred during this time? We have had a harvest period, and the work of the harvest has been going on silently, gradually. The Lord has been judging amongst his people, just as he said he would. He said that he would call his own servants first and reckon with them. Of course, none of this was from anything that we saw with our eyes, but from an unfolding of God's Word.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE SAINTS

Through the testimony of God's Word we understand that the resurrection began in 1878; not that we saw anything by the natural sight of the eyes, but that through the eyes of our understanding we recognized that the time had come for that great transaction, the first resurrection, as far as the sleeping saints were concerned; and we understand that there commenced the time mentioned by the writer of Revelation, when he declared, "Blessed are they who die in the Lord from henceforth," marking a particular time, before which it would not be a blessing to die, but after which it would be a blessing. "From henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."—Rev. 14:13.

That particular time came, we believe, in 1878; then, not only the apostles were awakened, but all the faithful in Christ Jesus, all the sleeping members of the body of Christ. That was the beginning of the resurrection of the body of Christ—the Lord judging among his people first, before the judgment of the world. He foretold that when he would come he would call his own servants and reckon with them—not with the world—giving reward to those of his church who had gone before, giving them part in the first resurrection, and then afterward dealing with us, "who are alive and remain," so that each one of us who are of the Lord's people, may at death be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," during the sounding of the last trumpet—the seventh.

We are living now under the sounding of this great trump of God; not that we are hearing anything with our natural ears, but that we are hearing with the ears of our understanding that God's time has come, and that the great institution which he is arranging for the future is now being inaugurated.

The next prophetic period is the time of trouble. In one sense, perhaps, this began back about 1872. That was the time when Communism began to be broached afresh, when Socialism began to spread itself. We believe that many people are counted Socialists who are not really Socialists, but who might become such under favorable circumstances and conditions—which likely will develop before 1916 A. D. This development of Socialism is connected with anarchy. The hopes and methods of Socialists will prove failures and then they will be so wrought up as to bring on the great time of trouble. Meantime, also, arrangements have been going on gradually for the present war. While outwardly proclaiming (1872 A. D.) at the Geneva Peace Conference that all the nations would band themselves together and advocate the peaceful settlement of difficulties, and while yet crying "Peace! Peace!" nevertheless, notwithstanding all this, the nations of the world have progressed in the building of great warships and the drilling of troops.

We will not go into details further; we merely wish to impress the thought that these fulfilments of propheey did not come suddenly, but gradually—that they had a particular time for beginning, and were sure of accomplishment. In view of these lessons from the past, what should we think about the future? We should not conclude that everything would be transformed inside of one minute, or one hour, or one day, but gradually.

INAUGURATION OF MESSIAH'S KINGDOM GRADUAL

This leads us to expect that the remaining prophetic periods will have a similar fulfilment, and that September 20 of this year, 1914, probably marked the end of the Gentile times. If so, what we are witnessing now amongst the nations is a conflict to their finish. This is exactly what we should expect. Evi-

dently the Lord is behind the matter; the Lord's kingdom will manifest itself more and more. It will not be fully manifested, however, until the Church is with her Lord in glory. "When he shall be revealed, we also shall be revealed with him in glory."

Should we expect that the Lord would reveal himself the very moment Gentile times end? The Bible declaration is that he shall be revealed in "flaming fire." Just how long after the Gentile times close will be the revealment in "flaming fire" we do not know. Seemingly, following this great war will come the greatest "earthquake" that ever occurred—a revolution that will involve all the civilized nations. (Revelation 16:18) Then Socialism may loom up, but will be short-lived and develop into anarchy. That anarchy will be the "flaming fire" revealing the new kingdom, taking vengeance, bringing retributive justice upon the world—preceding its blessing.

If the harvest work of our Lord's presence (parousia) has been a gradual work for forty years leading up to the present time, and if the time of the end is a slow period, how long would this period be, in which present institutions will be ousted, and the present order of things be condemned and done away with, to make way for the reign of righteousness? We answer that according to such pictures we might expect the transition to run on a good many years. We might expect it to be five, ten or twenty years. But there is something, on the other hand, that leads us to anticipate that it will not be very long. The Lord has told us that he will "make a short work of it." Just how short the work will be would be conjectural. Every one may have his own opinion. At one time the Lord speaks of it as being "in one hour;" another time, as "in one day;" and the Apostle speaks of it as coming like travail upon a woman with child—suddenly.

We remember also that there is a certain parallel between the Jewish age and the Gospel age. The forty years' harvest of the Jewish age, which began with Jesus' ministry, 29 A. D., ended in the year 69 A. D.—just as we believe that the harvest of this age began with 1874 and ended with this fall, 1914. It was in the year following the expiration of forty years of the Jewish harvest that the end of the Jewish polity came—at the destruction of their city. And so the parallels would lead us to suppose that one year from the present time would finish this short parallel period, this great work of disaster upon the world, the overthrow of the nations, viz., the attempt of the different nations to gain supremacy—the failure of their efforts—then the fire of God's anger, anarchy, the destruction which will sweep the whole world and usher in Messiah's kingdom.

The Master tells us that unless these days were shortened there would be no flesh saved. (Matthew 24:22) It will be a part of Messiah's kingdom work, not only to dash those nations to pieces, but to stop the anarchy when it shall have done its work, when it shall have demonstrated to the human mind the fact that nothing that man can do will be able to help the race. Then when man's extremity shall have been reached, Messiah's kingdom will take hold; and the great disaster will be throttled, the blessings of the kingdom will begin, and mankind will receive them in proportion as they are in the right attitude of heart to respond.

PRELUDE TO THE TIME OF TROUBLE

We see that God gave the lease of dominion to the Gentiles. The words of the Prophecy were that Zedekiah's crown would be overturned, overturned, overturned, until he comes whose right it is, and God would give it to him. Has the kingdom begun in any sense of the word? We so believe. We think that the light now going forth is under the direction of the Captain of our Salvation. We think that the present distress amongst the nations is merely the beginning of this time of trouble. They did not wait for the time to come when they would be smitten. In their "anger" they got into trouble before their lease had expired.

At present the nations show such a bitterness toward each other, such a desire to conquer and destroy one another, that they are determined to continue the war, even if it result in the loss of their own wealth, the destruction of their own homes, and of one another. The spirit of competition, which was supposed to have died, had only been covered up for a little while; and the spirit of the adversary is still there. Although they are called Christian nations, they have not received the Spirit of the Lord; they have not received the spirit of meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly kindness and love, the fruits of the holy Spirit; but on the contrary, the spirit which St. Paul says consists of hatred, wrath, strife, murder—works of the flesh and the devil. For this reason they are angry and have involved themselves in the present turmoil.

The nations did not even wait for God's wrath to come, but began to bring it upon themselves nearly two months in advance. They became so angry that they began to destroy each other even before their lease of power had expired. God's wrath will continue in this great time of trouble to its completion—the "fire." The great dreadnaughts and superdreadnaughts, great guns and little guns, Czars and Emperors, will soon dash each other to pieces. The anarchy that will follow this war will be the real time of trouble.

THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON

Our thought is that the war will so weaken the nations that following it there will be an attempt to bring in Socialistic ideas, and that this will be met by the governments—the wealthy and all classes interested in the present order of things, "the world which now is," the present "heavens," or ecclesiastical system, and the "earth," the social order. The present order will be supported by the rich, by financiers, politicians, princes of industry, and the kings upon the thrones. All these will do their best to maintain present conditions, and will summon the clergy to their support. Then will come a general uprising everywhere; on one side those who are beneficiaries of the present institutions will be against any change. Against them, on the other side, will be the masses, who are striving to better their condition; for in God's plan, the time has come for a change.

Shall the Lord's people have any part in the struggle? Nay! Let us ever keep in mind that we are peacemakers. Not only are we peaceable ourselves and seeking to live peaceably with all men, but we are to be peace-promoters, and to help others to see things straight and right. That course would be tending toward putting away anarchy and strife; but anarchy will surely come, despite all endeavors to the contrary.

Nevertheless, the Lord shows us through his Word that there is to be a victory on the part of the new order of things, now coming in. The Socialists do not want anarchy; but they are not far from it. Anarchy is the worst thing that could be—a lack of some form of government being the worst thing the world could experience. The warring element will fight out this battle; and this will be the way in which God will promote the change, which is represented in the Bible as a great "fire," which will consume the present "heavens," or ecclesiastical ruling powers, and the "earth," or social institutions.

Following that great "fire," then, will be manifested the "new heavens and the new earth." The new heavens, the new ecclesiastical ruling power, will be the church of the future in glory, the bride of Christ, enthroned with him. The new earth will be the new order of things on the earth, which will be in the hands of the ancient worthies, "whom the Lord will make princes in all the earth," when his kingdom shall be fully established.

"THY KINGDOM COME"

Our text proceeds to say, "And the time of the dead, that they should be judged," that they should receive their proper rewards and punishments, and be righteously dealt with, is closely associated with this time of angry nations. The whole dead world will be dealt with during that thousand years of Christ's reign. The object of that dealing is that he "should give reward to his servants the prophets," beginning at the proper time. Their reward is that they are to be the earthly princes in the kingdom, in all the earth. "And to the saints." The saints will be changed in the first resurrection, "right early in the morning." (Psalm 46:5, margin) "Them that fear thy name, small and great," shows the reward of all those who will come into harmony with the Lord during the thousand years—this pictures the blessing of restitution coming to all mankind. These blessings they are to receive as they show their obedience to him in all things.

What will the consummation be? "And shouldest destroy them which destroy [or corrupt] the earth." Those that give forth a corrupting influence and that refuse to come into harmony with righteousness during the thousand years will be destroyed from amongst the people. Nothing will be left of them. Everything evil will be destroyed, root and branch; only the righteous will prevail throughout all eternity. All having sympathy with unrighteousness will be destroyed. We see, then, that the entire Millennial age will be needed to accomplish the work outlined in our text. It is not to be suddenly accomplished; we are not to expect a sudden fulfilment of that work.

Will the culmination of Gentile times bring in the kingdom by a very slow change, or how will it be done? September 21 did not bring any great change, but it saw this anger and this war-fever already begun amongst the nations. The spirit of anger has been brewing in them for the past forty years. They have been in preparation all this time, not spending money for amusement, but for foreseen war. They have built great navies knowing that the majority of these vessels were to go to the scrapheap as soon as new types of battleships came in, making all the older ones obsolete. They were not wasting their

money. They recognized that this great struggle was coming. In the German Navy, the custom is to instil into the men the thought that they will be the conquerors of the world, and they expect this great war to decide the matter.

We are treading upon what might be termed, perhaps, dangerous ground, in assuming the possibility, even, that during this year that has begun there would be such an upheaval of nations, such an attempt on the part of kings, rulers, political princes and merchant princes to hold things where they are; and that to do this they will probably raise up the churches to great power, in order that they may through them, if possible, hold back the new order of things. Whether this comes within this year or a longer period, no matter; we believe this is the way which the Bible indicates it will come. When the church systems shall be thus raised up, all who stand for the plan of God will be evil-spoken of, evil thought of, whereas they are the best friends of the world, the truest—just as the Lord is the truest friend of the whole human family. But if Jesus was crucified, so will these have trying experiences, and although the offenders may be of the household of faith, we must feel kindly toward them. As St. Peter said to his Jewish brethren, "I wot, brethren, that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."—Acts 3:17.

THE JEWISH QUESTION

Some one may say, We do not see the Jews back in Jerusalem yet. Is Jerusalem still trodden down of the Gentiles? In reply, we ask, What do you think our Lord meant when he said that Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled? Do you think that the walking over the stones and streets in Jerusalem was what the Lord meant by the treading down of Jerusalem? If so, you were very foolish in your thought. Jerusalem represents the Jewish polity, government, institution, people. The Jews had already been trodden down for centuries before our Lord's remark—in fact, they were under the heel of the Romans at the time Jesus uttered those words; and they would continue to be under the domination of those Gentile governments "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Gradually the Jewish people have been emerging from their down-trodden condition—persecuted for eighteen centuries. The time is here when the message has been and is still being delivered to them, as recorded in Isaiah 40:1, 2: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."—Isaiah 40:1, 2.

This prophecy was fulfilled, as pointed out in the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, in the year 1878; and ever since that time, the star of Judaism has been rising; the Jews have become more prosperous ever since, as they themselves realize. Nowhere have they been so prosperous as in these United States, where they have received their greatest blessing; while in Russia and Germany they have been persecuted to some extent, but not in the same degree as formerly.

JERUSALEM NO LONGER DOWNTRODDEN

The treading down of the Jews has stopped. All over the world the Jews are now free—even in Russia. On September 5, the Czar of Russia issued a proclamation to all the Jews of the Russian Empire; and this was before the times of the Gentiles had expired. It stated that the Jews might have access to the highest rank in the Russian army, and that the Jewish religion was to have the same freedom as any other religion in Russia. Where are the Jews being trodden down now? Where are they being subjected to scorn? At present they are receiving no persecution whatever. We believe that the treading down of Jerusalem has ceased, because the time for the Gentiles to tread down Israel has ended.

As to a government in Palestine, the Jews have just as much of a government as any other people there. Nominally, the Turkish government has the rule. When we have the opportunity, we intend to call the attention of our Jewish friends to the fact that the time of their disfavor and the times of the Gentiles have expired, and that they may re-establish their kingdom in Palestine; for there is nothing now that intervenes. Some years ago, we called their attention to the fact that the Gentile times were fast closing; and the message, by the way, went all over the various countries of the world where Jews live, it having been printed in the Yiddish and the German languages. That Message has carried peace to them, telling about their restoration and pointing out to them this very time. Now we are able to tell them that the Gentile Times have expired, and that they may go up and take possession of the land. We do not know how soon they will take possession. According to their faith it will be unto them.

A proper conception of the divine plan and arrangements shows that now is the time for the Jews to get the land of Palestine from the Turkish government. The Turks are anxious to get some money, and, as they do not have very much at the present, it seems as though they would be willing to get rid of something that is not doing them any particular good. Now would be a good opportunity for the Jews to offer to buy Palestine: and they would probably get their country for a few million dollars.

The Turks realize that if they lose in the present war, they would lose Palestine; in this favorable time the sale of that country would be of some value to them. There is nothing in our Lord's statement, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," that would militate against this thought. On the other hand, everything is in its favor; for the treading down of the Jews has ceased. Now it is merely for them to go up and possess their land.

THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE CHURCH

Some one may ask, Since the fulfilment of the various time prophecies demonstrates that God's methods of operating are slow, may it not be that the kingdom will not be ushered in for five, ten or even twenty-five years? Our reply is, we are not a prophet; we merely believe that we have come to the place where the Gentile times have ended. If the Lord has five years more for us here, we shall be very glad to be on this side of the veil; and we feel sure that all the Lord's truly consecrated children also will be glad to be on this side if it is the Lord's will. If the Lord has even one more year for us as good as the past year has been, what more could we ask?

Nothing could induce us to part with that knowledge of God and his plan in which we rejoice today. All the world over, that which makes the Lord's people appear happy is not special beauty on the outside, but the light on the inside, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, the light of the knowledge of the divine truth in our hearts. This light shining through these earthen vessels is heart-cheering and comforting. We cannot imagine anything better. As the poet says,

"It satisfies my longings, as nothing else can do."

We are happy to be coworkers with God; and by and by we shall be coworkers with him on the other side of the veil.

Look back now and see how the Lord's promises have been fulfilled—how during this time of harvest it has been, as he said it would be, a blessed time. Listen to the words of the Prophet concerning the time since 1875, and note how his prophecy has been fulfilled: "Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days"—the blessedness of those who have been living from 1875 onward.

What blessings have we received? Just as the Bible has said to us, so has it been. Those who open their hearts to the Lord find that he not only comes in and sups with them, but that he becomes their servant, comforts them, and serves them with "meat in due season." This accounts for all these blessed truths upon which we have been feasting since we have entered into the light of present truth; and it proves that this divine plan of the ages is not from any human being nor is it a human plan or scheme; for no human being is capable of bringing such glorious things out of the Word of God.

Looking back over the past eighteen hundred years at the futile efforts of able, good men and women to bring something reasonable and harmonious out of the Bible, we find nothing satisfactory. On the contrary, we are ashamed of all the creeds of the past. Even those made in the past century do not satisfy anybody's longings. Those who are paid to preach them are ashamed to do so, and cover them up as much as possible.

Our Lord said that at his second coming he would serve things "both new and old"; and this has been so. Not merely are new things coming to our attention respecting the glory of the coming kingdom and the work throughout the thousand years of Christ's reign, but old things are coming to us in a clearer, better light. Among these is the doctrine of justification by faith, about which Brother Luther preached centuries ago, and which we thought had been correctly defined and thoroughly understood. Now we find that we did not understand justification by faith at all. Sanctification was preached by good people, too. When we came to a Biblical understanding of the subject of sanctification, all that we knew before seemed childish and contradictory. How beautiful and harmonious these doctrines became! Then there are the types of Leviticus, which picture all the glorious features of the divine plan. All these familiar subjects are now shining as new, having been brought forth by our great Master, who is doing

the serving, who is giving "meat in due season," "things both new and old."

Take the doctrine of baptism, which has been preached about for all these centuries past. Now we are finding out that what we did not know about it has filled volumes. When we come to an understanding of the subject of baptism, it is beautiful, grand! We never supposed that it had so much meaning. The reason for all this increase of knowledge is that we are living in the blessed time mentioned by the Prophet Daniel, "Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 days"—in other words, as aforesaid, those who are living after the expiration of the 1335 days. We are living in the time during which God has been pouring in upon our hearts and minds all this joy, peace and blessing mentioned by the Prophet; but it did not happen in one hour, in one day, or in one year. It has been a gradual unfolding of divine truth. The path of the just shines more and more.

"WISE AS SERPENTS—HARMLESS AS DOVES"

We all agree that with the end of all of the different prophetic periods of the past, evidently there was no sudden explosion of new things; but that, on the contrary, the new conditions came in gradually. Now, however, in respect to this time in which we are living, there seems to be a little difference; for in speaking of this great time of trouble coming upon the world and about the changes to take place at this present time, the Lord everywhere represents it as coming suddenly. "In one hour," is a frequent expression; not meaning necessarily a literal hour, but a very short space of time. "In one day" is another expression, indicating a brief period of time. The Lord says he will make a "short work in the earth." We believe it. We remember again that the Master says, "Unless those days should be cut short, no flesh would survive; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

What did he mean? We believe that this spirit of frenzy that is now manifesting itself in the Old World is bound to spread, and that this national anger, hatred, malice, of one nation against another will extend to persons. We think it very wise, then, that the public press and the various officials of this country are seeking to have all recognize the fact that we are a mixed people, and that we have our natural sympathies with those of our kinsfolk who are beyond the seas, and any special activity in seeking to defend any particular nation now at war would cause malice and hatred, would tend toward the condition spoken of in the Bible when "Every man's hand will be against his neighbor and his brother."

We think it very wise on the part of the government officials to advocate that we take no side in the present war; for to do so would foster the spirit of anarchy; and we think that so far as all religiously-inclined people are concerned, they should do all in their power to prevent the spread of this spirit of anarchy, even though it will surely come. In this way we shall be doing our duty, even if our endeavors to bring peace to the world are thoroughly ineffective. We should always bear in mind that we are representatives of the Lord of Righteousness and of the great King of Peace, who will ultimately take the throne of power.

RE THE DELIVERANCE OF THE CHURCH

What shall we expect concerning this great change coming in the next year? It seems to us possible that one year might work all this great change that we are expecting. But perhaps it will not be so. We must wait and see. We merely suggest the possibility that in one year all these great things will come. That will be very sudden, as travail upon a woman with child—without warning. This war came without warning, and very speedily the nations were fighting one another; for the time has come.

As these things were previously held more or less in restraint, now the Lord is letting them loose gradually; and he will let them loose more and more until the great anarchy comes which would entirely destroy our whole human race unless it was arrested. In the meantime the kingdom class will have been glorified, and our great King will have taken unto himself his great power, and with the elect, the body of Christ, the church, he will bring in peace and blessing to mankind, as soon as the world shall have passed through the fire of anarchy and the present order of things shall have been dissolved in the great heat—not a moment sooner. Then the elect of God will interpose that the world may not be destroyed, that humanity may not destroy itself; and then will be the beginning of the blessings that are to come to all people through Christ, through the merit of his sacrifice, through the channel of The Christ glorified—Jesus and his joint-heirs in the kingdom.

As we look at these things, we realize that we have every reason to do all in our power to prepare ourselves for this glorious work. We remember also what our dear Redeemer told us to do: "When ye see these things begin to come to pass [do we see them? We think so!], then lift up your heads and rejoice, knowing that your deliverance draweth nigh." Just how nigh, the Lord did not say. Therefore, we may not attempt to say.

But we cannot be far from our change; and we advise that all of the Lord's people live day by day just as though this was the last day on this side of the veil, and that tonight or tomorrow would usher us into the glorious things beyond the veil. Living in this way will surely be at least a good experience for us, bringing blessings and ripening of character. What a blessed way to live!—every day in anticipation of seeing our Redeemer and sharing in his wonderful work! The things connected with this present time seem less and less important to us, on account of which our names are cast out as evil by those who are living for all they can get out of the present life.

"DRINK YE ALL OF IT"

What may be done to our mortal bodies? None have the power to injure us as new creatures. We are waiting for our change, which will come to some in one way and to some in another. God be praised! His will be done! Our Master had a cup at the conclusion of his experiences, and it was an especially bitter one, his suffering as an evil-doer and as a blasphemer being especially severe. Under the Jewish law, blasphemy of God's name was really one of the most grievous crimes, and was especially punished by ignominious death. Jesus was not the blasphemer, but the scribes and Pharisees were the blasphemers. Yet Jesus was to die as the blasphemer, while those who were really doing the blaspheming were the ones who put him to death!

We should not wonder if in the divine arrangement God might have some such bitter cup for the feet-members of the body of Christ. Why should we think so? For various reasons. We have so much favor from God, that it would seem that we would deserve to have severer testings and a fuller and more bitter cup than others have had. Furthermore, the Scriptures seem to imply that it will be so.

Elijah was a type of the church, and we remember that at his departure he went in a chariot of fire; and we believe that this symbolically represents the time of trouble on the church when the time of our departure shall come. Then, again, John the Baptist was a semi-type, the semi-antitype of Elijah. John's experiences were very bitter. He was imprisoned for a while and not permitted to do any preaching; and he no doubt wondered in the time of his imprisonment whether or not he had been mistaken in his glorious expectations in regard to the Messiah. Then came the sudden edict for him to be beheaded. Herodias and Salome were anxious to get rid of him, but King Herod was not. We remember that in our interpretation of this type the king represents the civil power, Herodias represents the Roman Catholic Church and Salome, the daughter, represents the Protestant Churches Federated. These are more or less united to the civil powers, the "Mother" especially. We remember that there was some special dancing on the part of Salome before the king, who was so pleased with her that he told her that she might have anything she desired, even to the half of his kingdom. After she had conferred with her mother, they decided that the best thing that could happen for them would be the death of John the Baptist.

So it was in the Master's case. The religious rulers decided that the best thing that could be done was that he should perish. We remember that it was the last high priest of the Jewish nation, Caiaphas, who prophesied respecting Jesus that it was expedient that one man should die for the people rather than that the whole nation perish. So it was in the case of John. Herodias and Salome concluded that John the Baptist should die, and thereby they would cease to have his continual reminder of their wrong course; and so they would have him beheaded.

Whether or not this is to be a part of the antitype remains to be seen. It would not surprise us if it will be so. We are not speaking positively; but we wish to be "wise as serpents." Let us not be surprised at whatever things the Lord may permit to come. Let us remember that our Master was given a bitter cup of suffering in his closing hours, and that the Father did not seek to remove it from him. But Jesus meekly accepted it, saying, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" So we should be well prepared for whatever cup of bitter experiences and ignominy the Lord may have for us. At the same time we should have in our minds the refreshing thought given us by the promise in the Scriptures, that the Lord will not permit us to be tempted, or tested, above what we are able to bear, but will with the temptation provide a way of escape. The further assurance is that "All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose."—Romans 8:28.

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Have we heard the call to be the bride, the Lamb's wife, to come out of the world, to be dead to the world, to give our wills to him, to sacrifice our earthly treasures? Have we become footstep followers of Jesus? "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself [give up his own self-will], take up his cross and follow me." Have we been following the Master, and will we continue to follow him? In our hearts we should be saying, Yes.

The Master said that in the regeneration those who would now follow him would have glorious bodies, like his own. "We shall be like him, and see him as he is"—sharers in his glory. May that be the portion of all of us! Let us rejoice together in the glorious things that our God has arranged for those who are his church—first for the great Head of that church, our Lord Jesus, and later for us, his humble followers, who are seeking to become joint-heirs with him in his kingdom.

Let us remember that it is not knowledge alone that sanctifies. Knowledge is valuable to the sanctifying of the spirit only when we comply with the conditions that we shall mortify the self-will of the flesh and cultivate more and more of the Spirit of our Lord, about which St. Peter tells us. We are exhorted to put off all these: malice, hatred, wrath, strife, etc.; and to put on all these: joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, brotherly kindness and love. The Apostle Peter says, "If these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ"; and "thus an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:5-11) Let our ambition and aim be to have a share in that kingdom!

"WHO SHALL STAND?"

Let us remember that we are in a testing season. The apostles had a similar one during the interim between our Lord's death and Pentecost. After our Lord's resurrection he appeared to his disciples a few times, and then they did not see him for many days. Then they became discouraged and said, "There is no use waiting"; "I go fishing," said one. Two others said, "We will go with thee." They were about to go into the fishing business and leave the work of fishing for men. This was a testing time for the disciples. So also there is one now. If there is any reason that would lead any to let go of the Lord and his truth and to cease sacrificing for the Lord's cause, then it is not merely the love of God in the heart which has prompted interest in the Lord, but something else; probably a hoping that the time was short; the consecration was only for a certain time. If so, now is a good time to let go.

Very probably it is now as it was when Jesus said to his disciples on a certain occasion, "Will ye also go away?" The answer was, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." We would starve spiritually if we went to any other than the Lord's table. We know not anywhere else to go. We shall stay right at the Lord's table. He has been feeding us on the message of truth and life, and we believe that he will put on the table everything necessary for those who are hungering and thirsting for the truth; and that the truth on every subject necessary for us will be given as the Lord is pleased to reveal it; for he has promised, "they shall be filled."

JESUS TRIED BY PILATE

NOVEMBER 22.—Matthew 27:11-26.

"Pilate saith unto them, What then shall I do unto Jesus who is called Christ?"—Verse 22.

Pilate was the Roman Governor of Judea, the representative of Caesar's government. We are not inclined to blame him seriously for the death of Jesus. He acted as he was expected to act. He was in Judea, not to settle Jewish theories or religious disputes, but to keep the people of Judea quiet, orderly, subject to the government of Rome. It was policy, so far as compatible with the peace and quiet of the country, that he should rule justly; but justice was to be sacrificed at any time in the interests of the Roman Empire. Tradition has it that Pilate had heard previously of Jesus, and had even met him by appointment privately, making inquiry respecting his teachings.

Our last lesson showed us Jesus before the Jewish Sanhedrin as early in the morning as possible, before the people would be generally astir, before therefore there could be any general co-operation on the part of Jesus' friends, by the people, respecting his arrest, etc. As quickly as possible the high priest and representatives of the Sanhedrin hurried Jesus to the Praetorium, asking Pilate to condemn him. Pilate inquired as to what charge they had against Jesus. They evasively answered that of course he was a wicked man, worthy of punishment; else they would not be there at all accusing him.

Pilate reminded them that under the Roman usage they had great liberty in dealing with all disputes of a religious kind, that he was not posted in Judaism, and that therefore they should deal with the case themselves. The priests responded that they knew this; but that they had no power to inflict the death penalty. Thus they revealed the depth of their wickedness—that they had been plotting deliberately to have Pilate inflict the death penalty upon an innocent person. Then they began to accuse Jesus, claiming that he was perverting the nation—turning it away from loyalty and obedience to the Roman government—that he was telling the people that they should not pay taxes to Caesar, and that he was claiming himself to be the Jewish King Messiah.

These were serious charges before the Roman Governor, which he was bound to consider; and we have noticed that they were totally different charges from those brought against Jesus by the Sanhedrin trial. Although the charges were false, Jesus made no defense. He knew that the time had come for him to die. He would not attempt to turn aside that which he knew to be a part of the divine program for him.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE

Pilate looked upon Jesus, no doubt thinking that one so gentle in appearance would not be at all likely to raise an insurrection that would be injurious to the interests of the Roman Empire. Another account tells us that Pilate perceived that the chief priests and scribes were moved with envy in making their charges. Pilate perceived that something in Jesus' teachings appealed to the people more than did the teachings of these religious rulers, and that he was being asked to perform a mean and unjust act for persons who sought to shirk their own responsibility.

However, Pilate must not appear to be sympathetic with the Nazarene. He must not appear to treat lightly the charges made respecting another king than Caesar. He therefore demanded of Jesus, "Do you not hear the things witnessed against you? Why do you not answer, and plead guilty or not guilty?" Jesus said nothing.

Pilate then went out to the scribes and Pharisees, who had refrained from entering the Praetorium because the day was the beginning of the Passover. After conferring with the chief priests and hearing from them, apparently, Pilate asked the question, "Art thou the king of the Jews? Do you acknowledge that?" Jesus responded by asking, "Is the question because of anything that you see and know of my teachings, or is your question merely based upon the assertion of my enemies?" Pilate replied that the chief men of Jesus' own nation had delivered him, and now he would like to know what he had done that was the cause of this opposition.

Jesus answered that his kingdom was not of this world—this present age or order of things. He was, therefore, not in conflict with Caesar's kingdom. This would account to Pilate for the fact that neither Jesus nor his friends made any manifestation of rebellion against the civil government, as would have been the case if his had been an earthly government. His kingdom, he declared, was of the future. Pilate replied, "You do, then, claim to be a King, and that some time and somewhere you will exercise dominion?" Jesus answered that he was a King and that to this end he had been born, to this end he came into the world. He must bear witness to the truth; and all who were of the truth, and only such, would be able to appreciate his testimony.

"Ah," said Pilate, "that is a question with everybody: What is truth? Nobody seems to know." Then he went forth to the Jews and said, "I find no crime in him. He is in no way a malefactor against Caesar or his laws. He has done nothing that could lead me to interfere justly with his liberty or his rights."

The high priests and the Doctors of the Law were alarmed. Was it possible that just at the moment when they had hoped to crucify Jesus, he would escape from them! Then they vehemently charged that Jesus was stirring up the people, preaching everywhere, and that his preaching had begun away off in Galilee. When Pilate heard the word Galilee, he asked, "Is he a Galilaean?" Being told that he was, Pilate said, "Then I can easily transfer this whole troublesome matter to Herod, King of Galilee," the latter at the time also having his palace in Jerusalem.

Jesus was sent to Herod, who had a curiosity respecting him. He had heard many things of Jesus, and would have liked to see him do some miracle. Herod asked our Lord

questions, but there was no response. The chief priests and scribes violently accused Jesus to the king. Herod and his soldiers mocked him, and sent him back to Pilate with a gorgeous robe on, a mocked King. This act of deference on the part of Pilate, and the return of the courtesies by Herod, bridged over an enmity which had existed between the two for some time.

NEITHER PILATE NOR HEROD CONDEMNED

Addressing the accusers of Jesus again, Pilate said, "Ye brought unto me this man as one that perverteth the people. Behold, having examined him before you, I have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him; no, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him (and he sent him back unto us) and behold, nothing worthy of death has been done unto him. I will therefore chastise him and release him." Evidently the chastising, or whipping, of Jesus was done to save his life—with the thought that the Jews would be appeased in having Jesus suffer to this extent.

At this time of the year on several occasions Pilate had released prisoners in honor of the Passover. The multitude at this time cheered Pilate, and inquired whether or not he would release some prisoner. Thinking this a favorable opportunity to dispose of Jesus and get him out of the hands of the chief priests and leaders of the people, Pilate said to the people: "Shall I release this One to you who is in prison claiming to be the King of the Jews?" The crowd looked to their religious leaders and were incited to urge the governor to release Barabbas, the highway robber. Pilate said to the throng, "What, then, shall I do with Jesus, called the Messiah?" And the multitude, influenced by their clergy, cried out: "Let Jesus be crucified!" Pilate asked: "Why, what has this man done? I find no cause of death in him. I will therefore chastise him and release him." Jesus was therefore delivered over to the multitude, only too willing to mock him, as well as to scourge him. Pilate said to the waiting Jews, "I will bring him out shortly, scourged, and you will know that I find no crime in him."

PILATE'S ENDEAVORS TO FREE JESUS

Jesus, therefore, came out wearing the crown of thorns and purple gown. Pilate said unto them: "Ecce homo!"—Behold the Man! See the One whom you are trying to have me put to death. Behold that he is one of the noblest specimens of your race or of humanity. See him in his sorrow and humility. Behold the beautiful dignity of his character. Whatever you have against him, you will feel placated now that you see his humility. But they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate answered: You may crucify him if you choose, but I find no fault in him—I find no crime in him. Then the Jews came to the real point of the matter, the real reason of their opposition, namely, that Jesus had declared himself to be the Son of God and that they considered that blasphemy. When Pilate heard that he was all the more afraid and returned the question to Jesus: Whence art thou? But he got no answer. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. Then Pilate thought again to release Jesus, and yet it might stir up tumult in the city, which his office obligated him to keep in peace and quiet. But the Jews cried out: If thou release this man thou art not Caesar's friend; everyone that maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. This was putting Pilate in an awkward position. To release Jesus would seemingly make him the supporter of Caesar's opponent—the more strange, because Jesus was accused by his own countrymen and really had nobody to defend him except Pilate himself.

To add to Pilate's perplexity he had at this time received a message from his wife, urging him to have nothing to do with opposition to Jesus, and informing him that she had had a special dream respecting the matter. Again Pilate had recourse to the people, as in contradistinction to their rulers. Presenting the noble personage of Jesus before them he exclaimed, "Behold your King!" But this seemed only to incense the multitude, who cried the more vehemently, "Away with him! Crucify him! We have no king but Caesar."

In desperation Pilate had water poured upon his hands and washed them in the sight of the people, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man! See ye to it." The people cried, "His blood be upon us and upon our children!"

And has it not been so! For more than eighteen centuries the Jews have suffered—aliens from God! without prophet! without priest! without sin-offerings! without Atonement Days! (Hosea 3:4, 5) Ah! but the time nears when, their iniquity being pardoned, the Lord will pour upon Israel the spirit of prayer and supplication; the eyes of their understanding will be opened and they shall look upon him whom they pierced and they shall all the more praise him!—Zechariah 12:10.

Complying with the demands of the people in all things not contrary to the interests of the Roman Empire, as was his bounden duty, Pilate surrendered to the demand and delivered Jesus to death and released to them Barabbas, the robber.

THE SAME SPIRIT PREVAILS

Let us not think that human nature has changed during the past eighteen centuries. Rather let us believe that, the circumstances being the same today, Jesus or his disciples might be executed in any land, provided the civil magistrates desired their death and deemed it expedient in the interests of peace, and especially provided their religious rulers and teachers demanded such a sacrifice of the innocents, considering it necessary to their own hold upon the credulities of the people.

Let us not be surprised if similar experiences should come to some of God's saintly people in the near future. The pages of history show that so-called interests of religion, voiced by religious rulers, have been powerful with civil rulers to the subversion of justice and the death of the innocent throughout the age. The course of God's people at all times should be that marked out by the Master—full resignation to the will of God—full realization of God's supervision of all the interests of his cause—and full trust that the results will work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

"Though all the world my choice deride.
Yet Jesus shall my portion be;
For I am pleased with none beside;
The fairest of the fair is he.

"Thy sufferings I embrace with thee,
Thy poverty and shameful cross;
The pleasures of the world I flee,
And deem its treasures only dross."

THE PRUDENT HIDETH HIMSELF

"A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself."—Proverbs 22:3.

Let no one suppose that it will be possible to escape the difficulties and trials of the great time of trouble, whose shadow is now clouding the earth. The most and the best that could be hoped for in this direction would be an amelioration of the conditions by the exercise of that wisdom which cometh from above, described by the Apostle, who says that it is "first pure, then peaceable, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good fruits." To whatever extent any individual, anywhere, shall follow this prescription of heavenly wisdom, to that extent we may be sure he will have God's favor. And that favor guarantees to the recipient that "all things shall work together for his good."

The most valuable lessons that any parent or counselor can give to those subject to his direction would be, first, the Golden Rule—inculcating absolute justice—nothing less; secondly, in addition to justice as represented by the Golden Rule, should be the lesson of mercy, compassion, sympathy, the spirit of helpfulness. The third lesson in the series should be meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering. The fourth lesson should be economy in everything—avoidance of waste—the realization that what he does not need, some one else does need.

In suggesting the foregoing lessons, we are presupposing a Christian basis—that our readers are themselves children of God, who have been feeding at the Lord's table upon spiritual, heavenly food; and that they have been seeking to bless their families by training them in harmony with the Lord's Word.

For the dire distress which we see nearing, such character preparation is the best heritage that any parent could leave to his child. Bonds and stocks will be unavailable for food; bank accounts may become uncertain, and the possession of money may become a temptation to the vicious to rob and to murder; but a good character cannot be taken away. Its possession will give a measure of peace and security and confidence in the Lord that is beyond all price.

We recommend that none be urged unduly to make a full consecration of their hearts, their lives, their all, to the Lord and to his service. The lives of God's people should in every case be "living epistles, known and read of all men"—especially by their own families. Those lives should testify not only to the completeness of the consecration to the Lord, but also to the peace and joy and comfort resulting. "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts; and be ye thankful." (Colos-

sians 3:15) Your being a living epistle, without a single word of exhortation, will be powerful in its lessons to all those directly under your influence. Additionally, at a suitable time, it would be proper to intimate to your family, friends and neighbors the comfort and joy, peace and blessing, which you have received through a full acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ and the message of his Word, and what pleasure it would be to you to see your dear ones similarly blessed, comforted and spiritually healed.

It is better, however, that your children and friends should refrain from any profession of consecration to the Lord which would be a mere hypocrisy. There are too many hypocritical professors already. They are doing harm to the cause of Christ as well as harming themselves; for hypocrisy seems to be especially disdained of the Lord, and an insurmountable wall of hindrance to the hypocrite himself. Our influence, therefore, should always be on the side of honesty, not only in matters financial and social, but also, and particularly, in respect to God and religion.

ALSO PROVIDE THINGS HONEST

The Apostle urges God's people to provide for their own—for their own families—their necessities, and he urges that such provision shall be honestly made—if not honestly, then not at all. Again he exhorts the Lord's people to "labor with their hands," that they may have to give to others who may be in need. These exhortations are not to be understood as recommendations to lay up earthly treasure—an earthly fortune. The Lord's people are to live in harmony with their faith—to lay up their treasure in heaven. These suggestions, therefore, respecting temporalities, are not recommendations to hoard wealth, but merely to "use this world as not abusing it."

In harmony with the text at the head of this article, and in accordance with our views of the possibilities of the future, we have some recommendations to offer to our readers. While we are not certain that all the dire calamities of the day of the Lord will befall the earth within the next eleven months, nevertheless, there seems to be a sufficient possibility of this to warrant us in making certain provisions against the distress of that time—in the interest of our families, our friends and our neighbors.

We recommend to those having dry, clean cellars, or other places suitable and well-ventilated, to lay in a good stock of life's necessities; for instance, a large supply of coal, of rice, dried peas, dried beans, rolled oats, wheat, barley, sugar, molasses, fish, etc. Have in mind the keeping qualities and nutritive values of foods—especially the fact that soups are economical and nourishing. Do not be afraid of having too much of such commodities as will keep well until the heat of next summer begins, even if it were necessary to sell then, at a loss, to prevent spoiling. Think of this hoard to eat, not too selfishly, but as being a provision for any who may be in need, and who, in the Lord's providence, may come your way —"that you may have to give to those who lack."—Eph. 4:28.

Do not sound a trumpet before you, telling of your provisions, intentions, etc. "Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God." Only your own family should know of this storing of food, and they should be under strict injunctions not to tell it to others. At most, suggest to your friends or neighbors the wisdom of keeping a stock of staple foods ahead in view of the possibilities of storms and strikes, etc., during the winter. Do not attempt to go into too great details respecting the time of trouble; for the majority of people are blind and deaf anyway on this subject.

Do not make these purchases on credit if you have not the money. Leave the matter, and exercise the more faith; but remember that the Golden Rule is the very lowest standard that can be recognized by the Lord's people and that it comes in advance of any kind of charity.

"Though troubles assail and dangers affright
Though friends should all fail, and foes all unite,
Yet one thing secures us, whatever betide;
The promise assures us, 'The Lord will provide.'

"When Satan appears to stop up our path,
And fills us with fears, we triumph by faith;
He cannot take from us, though oft he has tried,
The heart-cheering promise, 'The Lord will provide.'

"When life sinks apace, and death is in view,
The word of his grace shall comfort us through;
Not fearing nor doubting with Christ on our side,
We're sure to die feeling, 'The Lord will provide.'"

"IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS"

We thank thee, Lord, for raiment, and we thank thee for our food,
We thank thee for our shelter, O, thou Giver of all good;
We thank thee for the day on which our eyes first saw the light.
We give thee thanks for every sense, for hearing and for sight.

We thank thee for the sunshine, and we thank thee for the rain,
We thank thee for the pleasure and we thank thee for the pain.
We thank thee for the friends we've won, and for the friends we've lost,
We thank thee for the heart-aches which these separations cost.
We thank thee for the tender love which makes us clearly see
That every severed heart-string hath but drawn us nearer thee.
We thank thee for forgiveness when we fail in word or deed,
We praise thee for sufficient grace in every time of need.

We thank thee, blessed Father, for the gift of thy dear Son,
We thank thee and we praise thee for the victory he won.
We thank thee for his righteousness, his robe so pure and white,
We praise thee that, when clothed in it, we're blameless in thy sight.

We thank thee, oh, we praise thee for thy good and precious word,
We bless thee for the wondrous faith its promises have stirred.
We thank thee for the glorious hope of immortality—
Our hearts are longing, Lord, with thee to dwell eternally!

We thank thee for "that servant," for the love of each dear saint,
We bless thee for their fellowship when heart and strength grow faint.
And thus we give thee thanks, dear Lord, for each and every thing,
And pray that thou wilt keep us safe beneath thy sheltering wing!

INTERESTING LETTER

GREATER IS HE ON OUR PART

Dear Brethren:—

I wish to tell you of a strenuous experience I had soon after leaving Atlanta, Monday morning following the close of the Convention. Soon after the train started, I went to the rear of the coach to hand out literature; and nearly everyone accepted the papers until I had almost reached the end of the car. I offered a fine-looking man one; he refused, attacking me violently, saying he "wanted nothing whatever to do with Russell's devilish literature." Said he knew all about Russell, lived in Brooklyn, had read his books and THE WATCH TOWER, knew all about the libel suit. He spoke loudly enough for all around us to hear him. And I saw we had the attention of nearly all in the car. So, while he raged with slander against our dear Pastor and all his followers, I lifted my heart to God to direct me, and quietly waited until he had subsided sufficiently for me to speak; and I said, "Sir, you are mistaken; all you have said about Brother Russell is as base and false as Satan himself, and you know it, and because you can't find fault with his teachings, or combat him with Scripture, you try to slander his character behind his back."

He replied, "I am a Baptist minister myself, and know all about Russell and his methods; and furthermore, you are paid $125 to hand out this stuff; and I have been offered $165 to do the same." I replied, "You are mistaken, sir, I am not paid a cent, have not been offered a cent, have not asked for a cent, and do not want a cent—as it is a glad and willing service for the Lord." "For Russell," he hotly and quickly replied.

I said, "Furthermore, sir, no member of the I. B. S. A. has ever made you any such offer as you claim, and if you will prove it to me, I will sign a check for a thousand dollars in your favor. All you have said about Pastor Russell is as

base and false as Satan himself." He made no reply, and grew silent. I said, "Brother, you say you are a Baptist minister and a professed mouthpiece of God, who tells us in his Word to 'speak evil of no man' (whether good or bad). Now, do you think you are showing the spirit of Christ, or of Satan, in your false and slanderous remarks just uttered? We know that there are but the two Masters."

He made no reply and grew very red in the face; and a gentleman sitting two seats ahead of him, who had been facing him and listening to all that had been said, and who knew him, said, "John, would you like to have some hot water?" to which the reverend (?) gentleman replied, "No, I'm in hot water enough now;" and the listeners simply roared with laughter, which made him madder and his face crimson. I then left him, saying, "Brother, I fear you will be in still hotter water before the Lord gets through teaching you some needed lessons." As soon as I got back to my seat, a young man came to me, offering me money, "for some more tracts like the one you gave me, if you have any more." I told him I did not want any money, that freely I had received, and freely I gave, and he was welcome to all he wanted. He took four or five and went back to his seat.

Another young man came with his Bible, asking me to explain some things he did not understand in Revelation. A sister sitting in front of me had a Bible with the I. B. S. A. Comments, which she handed me, and I turned to them and read to him. He looked at the Bible and said he must have one like it, and gave me his name and address, and promised to read some literature I would send him.

Then another young man came with his Bible, and asked to sit down by me and asked me to explain some Scripture texts he did not fully understand. He also gave me his name and address; and I promised to send him some literature. Both are traveling men and live in Atlanta. When I got home I mailed them each a copy of THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES, Missionary Report, several different tracts, etc. Yesterday I heard from one of them, saying he was reading the PLAN OF THE AGES, and was deeply interested, and thought he would subscribe for THE WATCH TOWER if he was as much pleased when he finished reading as he now is. I see from his letterhead that he is a very promising member of the ——— Baptist Church and a leader in its Bible Class. His name is ———.

All this was the result of one man's prejudice and opposition to the truth; and shows how God can make the wrath of man to praise him. I certainly felt honored, and thanked him for the opportunity of witnessing for him, though in an unpleasant and unexpected way. That preacher looked at me as though he could chew me to pieces, and I suppose he thought he would in a few words silence and put me to flight; but with the dear Lord's help I stood my ground and came off victor. Pray for me, dear brethren, that I may be used more and more to honor and glorify his precious name, and show forth his praises unto others; for I do delight to do his will, and I do so want to gain that most glorious of all prices—immortality, beyond the veil, and be forever with my God and Saviour.

I am realizing more and more the shortness of the time in which to prepare for the kingdom. When I think of the change that is just ahead of us, I think of some fairy dream; and yet I know that the Gentile times are ended and the new dispensation is being ushered in.

I am glad that I shall not be here and have an inheritance in the flesh, but I shall be glad to see the work of restitution begun, to see the earth blossom as the rose and to see man made perfect, a fit ruler for the restored Paradise.

I want to see the dead come back and to hear the shouts and songs of joy. And to be where we can see all this and to help to bring it about and to know that our efforts are wise, that our Lord directs and will succeed in the great undertaking, is a prospect most transporting.

Yours humbly in Christ's dear Name.

MRS. DR. E. Y. WALKER.

["This honor have all his saints"—to bind their kings with chains and their princes with fetters. (Psalm 149:8, 9.) We are inclined to believe that this sister effectually bound a princeling of ecclesiasticism. No doubt the Lord will grant special opportunities and aid to others worthy of the honor —saints indeed.]

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We suggest that the above name be used by all classes locally in newspaper advertising and otherwise instead of the title, International Bible Students Association, which name properly belongs only to national and international use.

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"THERE SHALL BE SHOWERS OF BLESSING"

"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain [kingdom]."—Isaiah 11:9.

Accustomed as all mankind have been to misrule and misgovernment, it was necessary that assurance should be given to Israel that the kingdom of Messiah which God would one day set up in the earth would not only have good motives and intentions, but would also possess superior power of knowledge and judgment. And this is what the Prophet Isaiah pointed out. The new King will not need to rely upon the common channels of information in the giving of his blessings and in the administering of his reproofs and chastisements, but will have a superhuman endowment of power by which he will know the very thoughts and intents of the heart. He will not need to judge after the hearing of the ear or by the sight of the eye, as must all earthly rulers, however well intentioned.—Isaiah 11:3, 4.

It was proper also that Israel and all others should know that the kingdom of God to be established would be absolutely just and impartial; for their experiences have demonstrated that even the wisest and best of their rulers, lawmakers, judges, etc., have been largely governed by selfishness. The world's great ones have amassed wealth at the expense of their subjects, and have made their special friends wealthy and have granted them special privileges, often-times at the expense of the poor, the helpless, the despised. Hence the Lord through the Prophet assures us that earth's new King will administer equity toward all; that the meek, the backward, the modest and unassuming, those who are indisposed to press their claims and to assert their rights, will have his particular assistance; and that the poor, who have few to sympathize with them or to encourage or help them, will find in the new King a Friend.

MILLENNIUM NOT THROUGH EVOLUTION

Those who expect the Millennial kingdom to come as a result of present efforts, under the order of society now prevailing, and who believe that the world is gradually approaching the Millennium by an evolutionary process, should carefully consider this Word of the Lord through the Prophet, as shown in our text and context. The Prophet declares that when Messiah shall take the reins of government, his first step will be to judge the poor, and to reprove the rich in equity, in the interests of the meek of the earth. How could this be possible, if equity had already prevailed by a gradual process, so that there were no poor and no rich, and so that all had become meek?

Other Scriptures in harmony with this testimony of the Prophet Isaiah, show that the very work which our Lord is to do at the beginning of his reign will be to correct the wrongs then prevailing. Our Lord himself implies that the earth will be far from being a blessed condition at his second advent, when he asks the question, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find The Faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) The Revelator also gives no uncertain testimony on this subject. He says: "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever. . . . And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them that corrupt the earth."—Revelation 11:15-18

BIBLE HARMONIOUS AND CONSISTENT

Many Scriptures are of like import. The position of the Bible is throughout harmonious and consistent. It describes the present time, while sin is prevailing, as "the present evil world," in which "the prince of this world" rules, and in which the Lord's true people, the body of Christ, the heirs of the kingdom, "suffer violence," and declares that this violence is working out for those who are rightly exercised by it a character which will be approved by the Lord. The Scrip-

tures point out that to God's faithful saints who suffer now will be granted this glorious new kingdom in joint-heirship with Messiah. They shall be given the dominion "under the whole heavens," as declared by the angel to Daniel the Prophet. (Daniel 7:27) This dominion Jehovah will wrest by force from the "prince of this world," Satan, and will give it to his Son, whose bride will share her Bridegroom's kingdom. This transfer will be accomplished in a great time of trouble, which is to end this present world, the present social order.

In our context the Prophet goes on to say, "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." It is very evident, then, that at the time of the establishment of the kingdom there will not only be poor needing assistance and succor, but there will be the wicked also. The rod of Messiah's mouth signifies the judgments which he has already expressed, and which have very largely gone unheeded by Christendom. We remember his declaration: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath One that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48)—the day of judgment, now present, since 1874. Christendom in general has admitted the righteousness of the Lord's Word, but those who attempt to live in harmony with that Word are remarkably few. Consequently, when the time shall come that "judgment shall be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet," and when this judgment shall begin at the nominal house of God, the nominal systems will fall—condemned by that Word.

Only the faithful few, the Lord's jewels, shall "be accounted worthy to escape those things coming upon the world," when, as elsewhere described, "He [The Lord] shall speak to them [the world] in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure"—when he shall render vengeance to his enemies, and recompense to those who have known the Master's will, yet have done it not. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." "Wait ye upon me, saith Jehovah, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. For then will I turn to the people a pure language [message] that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." (Zephaniah 3:8, 9) "Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." (Isaiah 11:5) The girdle represents diligence, service, and the proclamation here is that Messiah will be a faithful, diligent Servant of God, accomplishing all the work entrusted to his care.

GREAT CHANGES IN ANIMAL CREATION

The reference in this 11th chapter of Isaiah to the change of disposition in the animal kingdom, so that the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the calf and the lion, will dwell in harmony, is in full accord with the general Scriptural outlines of "the times of restitution of all things." Not only is mankind to be restored, to be brought back to his primeval condition of human perfection and harmony with his Maker, but the lower animals will also share in the blessing and the restoration of order to be accomplished by the Reign of Christ, now, we believe, very near at hand.

In the Genesis account there is no intimation that the animals over which Adam had control were wild, vicious, at enmity with man. On the contrary, the implication is that they were in complete subjection to their perfect master. We may reasonably suppose that while the race, under the disintegrating influence of man's death sentence, gradually lost more and more of the likeness of their Maker in which the first man was created, they at the same time lost the power of control over the lower animals.

The nature of the power possessed by the perfect Adam may still be imperfectly traced in the superior ability of certain of the fallen race to control the brute creation. Thus we see that some men can exercise mental force and control, not only over wild horses, but also over the ferocious beasts of the jungle. Adam was declared by the Lord to be the king of earth, and as such he was recognized by the lower orders of creation. After mankind had lost his original mental power to control the lower animals, a warfare sprang up between them, in which man has been compelled to pit force against force, as he has lost his hold upon the animal creation.

The restoration of mankind to that exalted position which was lost by sin implies naturally, therefore, a restoration of the brute creation to primeval conditions, such as is suggested in the prophecy which we are considering. The same thought is conveyed in the statement that "a little child shall lead," or control, the wild beasts, when these are brought into their proper relationship with mankind. In chapter 65:25 of Isaiah's prophecy, it is stated of the Millennial conditions that "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together." The reference may be to men who were formerly of wolflike and of lamblike dispositions, or character; or it may refer to animals, or to both. The expression in either case signifies a blessed reign of peace. The Prophet continues, "And the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and the dust shall be the serpent's meat." If this refers to literal lions, it would imply that they will lose their carnivorous dispositions, and that they will undergo some change which will make them herbivorous, as animals were originally created. (Genesis 1:30) It would seem to imply that animals will not then prey upon one another.

DAWN OF HOPE FOR THE WORLD

The expression, "Dust shall be the serpent's meat," is similar to the statement in Psalm 72:9, regarding Messiah's coming dominion: "His enemies shall lick the dust," signifying the destruction of the serpent, or rather, of the great adversary, Satan, whom the serpent symbolizes. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain [kingdom], saith the Lord."

The birth of the true Zion, the church of Christ, will be the cause of rejoicing among all who truly love righteousness; for, though it will at first dash in pieces all their long-cherished hopes, it will be the dawn of a real hope for all the world. It will humble their pride and despoil them of all their cherished possessions and of what they have come to consider their rights. It will break down their boasted institutions, civil, social and religious, and completely wreck the present social order. Yet it will be the necessary prelude to the establishment of the grand New Order, which will come to be "the desire of all nations," as soon as they shall see its vast superiority to the old order.

TWO CLASSES BORN OUT OF ZION

In describing the birth of the "Man-child," The Christ, whose head was born more than eighteen hundred years ago, and the body of whom is now soon to be born, the Prophet Isaiah exclaims (chapter 66:7, 8), "Before she travailed she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man-child! Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children." The especially marvelous thing that the Prophet here records is that a "man-child" is to be born out of Zion before Zion travails. This is a striking reference to the fact, elsewhere clearly taught, that the ripe "wheat" of the Gospel church are to be separated from the unripe wheat and the "tares" at the end of this age, that they are to be exalted and glorified before the burning, the consuming, trouble shall come.

This "man-child," then, is the little flock, the body of Christ, the true Zion. Out of nominal Zion will come this first-fruits class, before the nominal system will be overthrown; for she will die in her travail pains, and in dying, will bring forth her later children, the great company. In this great day of the Lord, nominal Zion will bring forth the man-child and these later children.

"Shall I bring to the birth and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord. Shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb? saith thy God." Ah, no! As surely as the Head was brought forth, so surely shall the body also be born. The birth shall certainly be completed. The great composite Christ shall come forth entire, not one member lacking—and before Zion's travail has begun. But "who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such a thing?" And so, after the man-child is delivered, the mother system will give birth, when her travail pains come on, to a great company of children! This great company is described in the Apocalypse as coming up out of "the great tribulation," and washing their robes, spotted and soiled, and making them white, "in the blood of the Lamb."

Following the birth of these two classes of the Lord's people, will come the birth of the Jewish nation. They shall be awakened from the sleep of hades, in which as a nation they have been for over eighteen centuries. All this will take place in the early dawn of the day of Christ. O what rejoicing there will be! Fleshly Zion and spiritual Zion will rejoice together! Then soon the poor, chastened world will begin to join in the songs of praise to the God of all grace. What wonderful times are just before us! Though clouds and darkness for a brief time obscure the bright beams of the blessed Millennial dawning, soon the glorious "Sun of righteousness" shall rise in splendor, and its beams will rapidly spread over all the earth, scattering the darkness of sin, dispelling the fogs of error and superstition, and bringing the world into the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.

RESTITUTION NOT CHANGE OF NATURE

The entire testimony of Scripture in regard to the blessings

to come to the world in the new age show that they are all to be earthly. The declaration that even the brute creation shall be changed in nature is a promise that in that blessed day there will no more be a condition of antagonism and enmity between mankind and the lower orders of God's creatures, but all shall be peace and harmony. It would be wholly unnecessary to change the disposition of the animals, to bring them into subjection to man, if all the race were to be changed into spirit beings, and become like the angels. Many prophecies speak of mankind in the times of restitution as human beings, adapted to the earth and enjoying the blessings of the earth. They are to "sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid." (Micah 4:4) "They shall build houses and inhabit them. . . . They shall not build and another inhabit; . . . they shall long enjoy the work of their hands."—Isa. 65:21-25.

These promises for the world in general have no reference to the class being chosen out of the world during this Gospel age. The promises to these are all spiritual. They are to be made like Christ, and "see him as he is." (1 John 3:2) They are called to the obtaining of his glory. As they "have borne the image of the earthy," so shall they "also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Corinthians 15:49) They are promised a share in Christ's resurrection—the first resurrection. They are to reign as kings and priests in a kingdom which earthly beings cannot inherit. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." (1 Corinthians 15:50) They have been called with a heavenly calling. They are not of the world, even as their Lord and Head is not of the world.—John 17:16.

WHY MANY FAIL TO UNDERSTAND THE WORD OF GOD

With many the difficulty in understanding these distinctions is a failure to rightly divide the Scriptures, as St. Paul counseled Timothy, saying, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." (2 Timothy 2:15) This process would enable them to discern that the kingdom of God per se consists only of our Lord Jesus and his "little flock" of overcomers, to whom he says, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) These are to constitute the reigning class, as many Scriptures point out. At first the world of mankind will be subjects of this spiritual kingdom, and afterward become citizens, or members, if they come into harmony with its laws and regulations and into a condition of reconciliation with God, becoming the children of Christ, who will be the age-lasting Father of the world during the Mediatorial age. He will be the One who shall bring the entire race of Adam—both those who still have a measure of life and those who have gone down into the tomb—back from the condition of death into full perfection of life, if they then prove willing and obedient. Otherwise they shall be cut off in the second death—everlasting destruction.

The Prophet Daniel, in explaining Nebuchadnezzar's dream regarding the Great Image, shows that the kingdom of God when first set up at the introduction of the Millennial age will be but a small stone, which has been "cut out without hands," but which will become a "great mountain and fill the whole earth." (Daniel 2:31-45) This stone kingdom is quarried out of the "earth" by the Lord. It is at first insignificant in size, and it seems to the world as powerless. But as soon as set up in power, this kingdom will smite the "great image" of earthly rulership, and shall grind it to powder (in the coming time of trouble), and the wind shall carry it away. This stone kingdom is the holy mountain referred to in Isaiah 11:9. A mountain is the Scriptural symbol of a kingdom. Hills seem to be symbolic of the smaller governments of earth.—See Isaiah 2:2; 40:4; 51:5; 59:18; Psalm 46:2, 3; 97:5.

Nothing shall be permitted to do violence or to work injury throughout all God's holy kingdom, after it shall have been established. Love will be the law, and divine power will be the means which will enforce that law. All who do not conform to it will be "cut off from among the people," as the Lord declared through the Apostle Peter. (Acts 3:23) How evident it is that this kingdom has not yet come, when we see that amongst mankind selfishness is the rule, individually and nationally, and that there are many influences of evil which hurt and destroy throughout the world today. So we continue to pray: "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." And we believe that this petition so long offered by the Lord's saints is very soon to be answered.

After Messiah has crushed the power of evil, after he has overthrown all the great systems of error and vice, and has set the people free, he will accomplish the blessing of humanity by the spread of the knowledge of Jehovah's character. The Apostle Paul also assures us that it is the will of God that all men shall come to a knowledge of the truth in order to be saved. He assures us that there can be no salvation without knowledge. None will ever be saved by ignorance. As yet only a comparatively few of earth's millions have come to such a knowledge of God as to be able to exercise faith in him and in the great sacrifice which he has provided for the whole world.

COMPREHENSIVENESS OF PLAN OF SALVATION

But the fact that but few in the present life come to this saving knowledge shall in no wise thwart the great divine plan, nor make the death of Christ on behalf of the entire race of Adam of no avail. The Lord assures us in his Word that, in due time, the true light shall lighten "every man that cometh into the world." (John 1:9) This includes all the heathen and all those of imbecile mind, who could not in this life grasp the truth, as well as all infants who have died before reaching the age where they could know of God and his truth in Christ. It includes the dead, as well as the living. For "there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby they must be saved," by the name of Jesus. God has thus made ample provision for all.

Nor are we to suppose that the knowledge which is to become world-wide during Messiah's reign is merely a little sprinkling of knowledge, such as has come to a very limited portion of the world here and there in spots, up to the present time. The Lord's people have received the droppings of grace and truth, but the provision for the next age will be abundant and universal. The knowledge of the Lord shall be ocean deep—like the fulness of the sea. Showers of blessings shall come down upon the world in copious measure. The effect will be "like rain upon the mown grass." (Psalm 72:6) When the grass has been freshly cut and its roots are thus the more accessible, how quickly it responds to the refreshing showers! And how rapidly does it spring up in renewed vigor! So it will be with mankind, after they have been shorn of all that has encumbered them and prevented the showers of grace from reaching their hearts. How quickly they will respond to the refreshing rains and showers of blessing so copiously bestowed upon them, and will spring up into life and beauty as they drink in the rich supplies of grace!

A WORD TO COLPORTEURS

The European War is causing many people to think seriously. It so closely agrees with what they have from time to time seen in THE WATCH TOWER publications or have heard from WATCH TOWER subscribers, that they are now wondering if there is not some truth connected with our presentation respecting the Millennium and the great time of trouble with which the Millennium age will be inaugurated.

Pastor Russell's sermons on "Armageddon," "Distress of Nations," "The Financial Outlook," etc., have also stirred many thinking people. They are wanting to know more about these things. The present is a very opportune time for calling to their attention the true Gospel of the Bible, as it is presented in the six volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

Colporteurs who a short time ago had difficulty in getting the attention of the more well-to-do people, are finding matters different now. They are selling the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES in complete sets (six volumes, and a year's subscription to THE WATCH TOWER, for $2.65) where formerly they sold a single volume.

Poverty or, at least, lack of wealth, has generally been a stimulant to Bible study. Now the wealthy are feeling themselves poor, or in danger of becoming poor by the depreciation of their stocks and bonds. These, therefore, are in a more favorable condition to hear the Word than they have been for a long time.

The STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES are still going forth. The October average sales amounted to over thirty-six thousand volumes. We mention this by way of encouragement to those who are in the colporteur work, as well as for the benefit of those who are contemplating engaging in this most profitable section of the harvest work. We have the message which the people need. We have the heart to give it to them. And have we not confidence in God and courage sufficient to enable us to do all reasonably within our power in the divine service?

CREATION-DRAMA AT HOME

Notice in our issues of August 1 and 15 the description of the Eureka Drama X. Many of our readers may like to buy for themselves, their families or their friends, one of these outfits as a Christmas gift. Records and all cost little more than an ordinary "victrola" without records.

If you have a "victrola" or graphophone we can supply the entire set of 96 Drama Lecture and 9 hymn records for $29.

THE SCOPE OF THE ANGELS' SONG

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!"—Luke 2:14.

The song which the angels sang at the birth of the Savior has been seized upon and misapplied by some who do not see the plan of God for the salvation of the world. Becoming discouraged by the seemingly poor prospect for the world's conversion, these have put forth a version of this passage more in harmony with their own doubts and misconceptions. To these the prayer which our Master taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven," has lost its meaning; for they see no hope of its fulfilment except in a very limited sense. Hence they prefer to translate the latter part of the verse, "And on earth peace, among men of good will." Were this the proper rendering, our hopes for the ultimate good of all, as far as this passage is concerned, would surely suffer eclipse; for very few thus far in the history of the race have been "men of good will," men who unselfishly endeavored to any appreciable degree to bring about the good of their fellows.

But we do not believe this to be the thought of the original. It is not in harmony with what we have clearly seen to be the plan of God for mankind. Such a translation eliminates the thought of God's eventual good will toward all the world, and greatly minimizes the scope of this glorious song. It implies merely that men who have a feeling of good will are or will be at peace among themselves. How utterly barren of hope for all men would such an expression be! And how little the song of the angels would mean if this were its burden!

On the contrary, this song was a prophecy of God's purpose to bring about through the newly born Child the abrogation of the curse and the establishment of peace and sinlessness among mankind, in which God and man would become at-one. It was an expression of God's good will, his good purpose, to bring man back to the image and likeness of himself, in which Adam was created. When this shall have been accomplished, then peace will dwell in all the earth; for the causes of inharmony will have been eliminated.

The world of mankind came under the curse, or sentence, of death because of the sin in Eden—because our first parents disobeyed God's righteous command. All humanity, therefore, are members of an accursed race—under penal servitude, which ends in the tomb. The race has been learning the lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and its terrible effects. But God has promised to take away the curse and to bring a permanent blessing in its place. This will mean a return to his favor, to full harmony with himself.

PROGRESSION OF GOD'S GREAT PLAN

We speak of this song as a prophecy because the peace has not yet come, nor the good will, in the sense that God's face is as yet turned toward man. It is a declaration of what God purposes to do. He has not good will toward the present sinful, rebellious attitude of the race. He has never good will toward sin. We are not to understand that God was expressing his good will toward man when he pronounced the sentence of death upon him. God's curse indicated his ill-will toward man —in other words, his displeasure because of man's sin. He wished man to suffer ill as a just punishment for his wilful disobedience. God cut him off from fellowship with himself. He was not bound in justice to do anything more for the race. But in his infinite mercy he provided a deliverance for mankind. He foreknew man's fall, and planned his redemption from before the foundation of the world.

Through all the ages since the fall of Adam God's plan has been slowly, steadily progressing. While men have been learning in pain and tears and trouble the nature and results of sin, God has been selecting his saintly ones, his elect—first, the elect who are to be the earthly princes in his kingdom of blessing; lastly, the elect who are to reign over all as kings and priests of God on the highest plane of existence. The chief of all the elect is his well-beloved Son, the Savior of the world, whose birth the angels proclaimed to the shepherds watching on the plains of Judea, nearly nineteen centuries ago. (Isaiah 42:1) When all the elect ones are chosen and prepared, then the blessing of the world at large will be inaugurated. "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God [the church]. For the creation was made subject to frailty, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God."—Romans 8:19-21.

The coming of the Son of God to earth was only preliminary to his offering of himself as a ransom for the forfeited life of Adam, the father of the race, in whom all his posterity fell. But even when our Lord had died as man's ransom-price, God's favor did not come to the world. Jesus was next raised from the dead a glorious, divine being. Then he ascended up on high, and appeared in the presence of God for those who were to be of the spiritual elect. Thus the last became first in God's plan. The merit of Jesus' death was utilized first on behalf of these. It has not yet been applied for any others. The church of Christ now have this promised peace and good will. It is granted only to those who have come into vital relationship with God through Christ—the fully consecrated ones.

The Scriptures show that after these are all selected, prepared and glorified, the next step will be the application to all men of the merit which has been imputed to these elect, and through whom it is to go to the worthies of old and to the entire world of mankind. This spiritual class have been chosen to be members of the body of Christ, joint-associates with him in the Messianic kingdom. All of these who prove entirely faithful are to attain this exalted position. As soon as all the spiritual class have been glorified, the sins of all the world, those living and the dead as well, will be legally canceled by the application of the virtue, the merit, of the sacrificial death of Jesus. Then they will be freed from the condemnation of the sentence of death. The death penalty will be lifted. They will be turned over to The Christ, Head and body, the Great Mediator. The curse will be removed.

The great work of the Millennial age will then begin. It will be a work of gradual uplift during the entire thousand years of the reign of The Christ. The dead will be gradually awakened and brought to a clear knowledge of the salvation of God in Christ. All will then have the opportunity of coming into the blessed condition of peace and good will proclaimed by the angels. By degrees they will be brought, if they will, to where they will be ready to be received by the Father, to be introduced to him. This will be the blessed experience of all who will be obedient to the rules and requirements of the kingdom. If they prove unwilling and disobedient, after being brought to a clear understanding, they will be "cut off," destroyed, as not worthy of further effort on God's part for their reclamation.

CHRIST'S DEATH A BLESSING TO THE UNIVERSE

We understand that the sacrifice of the Son of God will be a blessing also to the inhabitants of worlds not yet peopled, who will not have had any personal experience with sin. God apparently purposes that after mankind have been restored, and all the incorrigible destroyed, he will allow no further infringement of the divine law. Indeed, we can see that if at the beginning of his deflection Satan had known the results of his own course, he would probably not have taken the step which he did. We are not to think of Satan as being foolish by nature. He was a glorious being, Lucifer, "the son of the morning." If Father Adam and Mother Eve had foreseen the results of their disobedience, they would not have taken such a course; for to have done so with foreknowledge would have meant that they were very unwise, foolish, of unsound minds, whereas they were created perfect, in the image of their Creator.

We believe that if the angels who kept not their first estate had known the end from the beginning—if they could have looked down the ages and seen the direful consequences of their course of sin and disobedience—they would have been appalled, and would have taken no such disastrous step. The fact that they have gotten into sin, and have developed such sinful tendencies, proclivities and preferences, is no proof that this would have been their course if they had known as much in advance as they now know. It is our hope that some of these may yet be reclaimed, if they are properly repentant, in their great judgment day, now at hand.

God seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. Our thought is that all these worlds surrounding us are designed to be homes to many intelligent beings yet to be created. We believe that it is God's delight to give joy and blessing to many creatures, on various planes of existence. And God is making of this experience of mankind with sin a valuable lesson, a lesson that will be beneficial, not only to themselves, but to all the worlds that will ever be populated. These might be instructed and informed in advance of their developing any sinful tendencies just what the nature and tendency of sin is. They will probably be told the story of the tendency of sin—what it did for the people of earth, what it cost to redeem and restore them. They will be told, probably, that sin degrades mind, body and morals; that its influence is only deteriorating; that once deteriorated, one learns to prefer sin, notwithstanding all the misery and degradation it brings; and that God will never grant everlasting life to any except as they gladly co-operate to that end—that he will never influence any against their own will.

It would seem, then, that the great work accomplished at Calvary will have an influence as wide as the universe. And

this thought might be applied to the first part of the song of the angels, "Glory to God in the Highest!" God will be glorified by all the angels, by every rank of spirit beings. He will be glorified by his exalted church, then of the divine nature; by restored humanity, by all the intelligent creatures on every plane, in every age! Yea, more and more glorious will be his honor as the years of eternity roll on, and as other peoples of other planets are brought into being and brought to know him and to share his wonderful bounties and blessings, and to learn the blessedness of loving and serving him.

"MY PRESENCE SHALL GO WITH THEE"

Almighty God, the Lord of heaven and earth,
O thou, the source and centre of each sphere,
The Lord of being, throned afar, whose hand
Upholds the weight of worlds, yet, wondrous thought!—
Nor day nor night too occupied to note
E'en when a sparrow falls to earth, whose eyes
A watch-care keep o'er every child of thine;

Whose guardian angels daily shape the course
Of those who love thee more than life itself;
Whose chastening rod doth guide them in the way
That leads to endless life! How sweet to feel
Thy presence ever near, to know that thou
Dost never sleep nor slumber while thy child
In time of need doth cry for help from thee!

O thou, in whom no shade of turning lies,
Thou changeless and unvariable One!
Though all unfaithful prove; yea, though the earth
And heavens depart, by faith we clasp thy hand,
We calmly rest our weary hearts on thee,
Assured that thou wilt ne'er forsake, that we
Shall be forever precious in thy sight!

October 19, 1914. G. W. SEIBERT.

SMITTEN OF GOD, AFFLICTED

NOVEMBER 29.—Mark 15:22-37.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted."—Isaiah 53:4.

There is no room for dispute respecting the facts associated with the crucifixion of Jesus. The only room for contention is in respect to the divine limitation and reason for the crucifixion. The Prophet Isaiah gives the divine explanation to us.

SORROWFUL WAY!

The Savior was greatly weakened by his three years of ministry, in which he had given forth his vitality freely to the people in the healing of their diseases. Besides this, he had been on a constant strain, without sleep, from the time he had sent his disciples to prepare the Passover. This period had included the trying experiences connected with the Passover and the institution of the Memorial Supper, the journey to Gethsemane, the hours of agony and weakness there, the experiences following, the trial of the Sanhedrin by the high priests, the trial before Herod and before Pilate, the scourging, etc.—all had been a constant strain on him. Now, condemned to crucifixion by those for whom he had sacrificed his heavenly home and glory, he was additionally required to carry his own cross. He did so until finally his weakness under its weight hindered, and a passing farmer was compelled to assist—whether by carrying the cross entirely or by walking behind Jesus and carrying a portion of the weight is not made very clear by the original text.

Where were Peter, John, James, Thomas and the other apostles, that they did not volunteer assistance? Doubtless they were deterred by fear. But oh, what a blessing they missed! Tradition has it that the Cyrenean farmer who bore the cross by compulsion afterward became one of the followers of the Nazarene, through having the truth of the Savior's message borne in upon his heart by the experiences of that hour.

Crowding around were weeping women, and we wonder that none of them lent a helping hand. Turning to them, Jesus said, "Weep not for me. Weep for yourselves and for your children." The Master's words in this connection, respecting their seeking the mountains and hills for covering and protection, are assumed by some Bible students to belong in part to the great trouble which came upon the Jewish people thirty-seven years later in the destruction of Jerusalem. And it is assumed that that destruction of Jerusalem and this trouble were types which foreshadowed the greater distress which will occur in the closing time of this age.

Certain it is that the same expressions in respect to the mountains and hills is used in respect to the end of this Gospel age. When at his second advent Christ shall be revealed in flaming fire of judgments, it will consume the present order of things and prepare the way for the new King. We are not to assume that any one would pray for mountains to fall upon him when he could take his own life in a much easier way. Rather, the thought seems to be that many will seek and desire and pray for hiding, for protection against the raging troubles. The rocks of society are its social organizations, each of which seeks to protect its own membership.

"If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" said Jesus. He here seems to liken the Jewish nation to the fig-tree which quickly withered away under his curse, or sentence. So, five days before his crucifixion, Jesus, riding upon the ass to Jerusalem and weeping over it, had said, "Your house is left unto you desolate." Now, in so short a time, while the fig-tree was still green, its rulers had reached a desperate place, so that they were willing to violate all law and set aside all conscience in his crucifixion.

If so quickly the evil worked to such a horrible outrage of justice, what might not be expected later on, when that Jewish fig-tree had thoroughly dried and all the sap (spirituality) had gone out of it? Similarly, in the end of this age we may expect that the church, the body of Christ, the saints, will suffer violence, that thus the salt of the earth will be removed, and that quickly thereafter a general putrefaction will set in—anarchy.

THE SON OF MAN LIFTED UP

Jesus had foretold his crucifixion, saying that "as Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up"—be crucified. The brazen serpent was thus used as a type of Jesus. He was actually holy, harmless, undefiled; but he took the sinner's place—he was treated as the sinner. The severest penalty under the law was crucifixion—"Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree." And so, says the Apostle, Jesus was made a curse for us. (Galatians 3:13) Although he knew no sin, he took the place of the sinner. Jesus died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.

The words of our text that say, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," are not to be taken into account, because they are not found in the oldest Greek manuscripts. Besides, Jesus must have known that the sin of the Jews would bring a penalty. He had foretold in his parable that God would punish them and burn up their city. (Luke 20:14-16) In the context the statement, "Weep for yourselves," implied a punishment upon the Jews for their sins, and that this sin would not be wholly forgiven them. As a matter of fact, we know that the Jews have been cut off from divine favor for now eighteen centuries. It is proper for us to assume that Jesus was in full harmony with the Father in respect to all this divine arrangement, and that he did not ask something contrary to the divine will.

St. Paul refers to this matter also, saying respecting the trouble which came upon the Jews at the time of the rejection of Jesus. "Wrath is come upon them to the uttermost, that all things written concerning them should have fulfilment."—1 Thessalonians 2:14-16.

On the other hand, we may well be assured that Jesus, who was giving his life for the Jews, would not wish that they should not have punishment that would be due to them for the great sin of destroying the One whom Jehovah had especially sent to them, as his representative, his Son. A just penalty for such wilful sin would undoubtedly be utter destruction. But the Apostle points out that "the blood of Jesus speaketh better things"—not justice. (Hebrews 12:24) His blood speaks forgiveness of sins, not only for the remainder of the world, but also for the Jews. It speaks a full opportunity for reconciliation with God during the Messianic kingdom.

St. Peter corroborates the thought that the Jews were not wholly responsible for their course because of (at least) a partial ignorance. Addressing some of them afterwards he said: "I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers"; for if they had known they would not have crucified "the

Prince of Life." (Acts 3:15-17) The Prophet Zechariah shows us that in God's due time the eyes of understanding of the whole world will be opened. All will see things differently enough, and the Jews are especially mentioned—"They that pierced him." Then the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him (Zechariah 12:10), realizing that they maltreated their best Friend, their Redeemer.

THEY PARTED MY GARMENTS

The stony-heartedness of the Roman soldiers is indicated by the fact that while Jesus was dying they cast lots for his seamless robe, dividing his outer garments amongst them. We have God's promise that the result of the Millennial kingdom will be to take away the stony heart out of the flesh and to give instead tender hearts. Oh, how much all mankind need full restitution to the image and likeness of God, originally represented in Adam and subsequently represented in the Man Jesus!

The attitude of the world is further represented in the two culprits who were executed at the same time, one on each side of Jesus, who by the inscription over his cross was styled King of the Jews. One of these companions in tribulation railed at Jesus as a fraud, bantering him to manifest any power he had by saving himself and his associates. Little did he realize that if Jesus had saved himself he could not have been the Savior of the world!

The other thief befriended Jesus, declaring that he had done nothing amiss and was unjustly accused. Then, turning to Jesus, he expressed his faith in him by asking a reward for his kind words. He said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." The poor thief knew that Jesus claimed to be a King. He was standing near when Jesus was asked the question, "Art thou a King," and heard the answer, "My kingdom is not of this age." The thief recognized that Jesus was worthy to be a King, so noble of character and of appearance was he. What if he were really what he claimed to be? What if finally, in the great beyond, this One should prove to be the Messiah? He would at least tell the truth and declare a word in his defense, and he would at least ask kind remembrance if this One ever reached his kingly power.

The answer of Jesus seems to have been very generally misunderstood by us all in the past. We thought that he promised the thief to be with him that same day in the kingdom. Yet we knew that, according to other Scriptures, Jesus himself was not in the kingdom that day, but in Joseph's new tomb; that he did not rise from the dead, from sheol, from hades, the tomb, until the third day; and that even then he said to Mary after his resurrection, "I have not yet ascended to my Father and your Father, my God and your God." Evidently, then, Jesus could not have said that he and the thief would be together in paradise that same day.

The true explanation is at hand. Paradise, lost through the fall six thousand years ago, is about to be restored by Messiah in his glorious kingdom. It was then that the thief asked to be remembered—"when thou comest into thy kingdom." The thief has been sleeping in death since, waiting for the time for Messiah's kingdom to come. The answer of Jesus was in full accord with this: Amen. So be it. "Verily, I say unto thee, this day [this day when I seem not to have a friend, and when nothing seems more unlikely than that I would ever have a kingdom, I tell you today], Thou shalt be with me in paradise."

Jesus' kingdom will quickly begin the work of turning the world into a paradise. And, in the resurrection of the hosts who have fallen asleep in death, that thief will be remembered by the Master. Undoubtedly a great blessing will be his in paradise, because of his comforting words spoken on the cross, and especially because those words indicated that he had a tender and contrite heart, such as will be the first to have blessings in the kingdom.

Jesus commended his mother to his disciple John, which implies that the husband, Joseph, was no longer living. It shows us, too, the Master's careful thoughtfulness of the interests of his loved ones in his own hour of extreme suffering.

The Master's dying cry, "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?" attests to us the fact that he did not claim to be the heavenly Father, but the Son of God. It also shows us how the Master endured to the very limit the penalty of the sinner. The penalty of sin was not merely to die, but also to be cut off from fellowship with God. Jesus, in taking the sinner's place, must for a moment at least have the full experience of the sinner's alienation.

The Master's cry, "It is finished," reminds us of his statement of the day previous, "I have a baptism [into death] to be accomplished, and how am I straitened [in difficulty] until it be accomplished"—until it be finished.

"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," reminds us of the fact that Jesus was laying down his life, that the spirit of life which he possessed was that which had been transferred from a previous condition. He had not forfeited his right to life, as had Adam. He might therefore still speak of it as his own spirit, his own right to life—merely surrendered for the time, merely laid down under the divine promise that it should be given to him again in the resurrection.

THE RISEN CHRIST

DECEMBER 6.—Mark 16:1-8; Matthew 28:11-15.

"Why seek ye the living amongst the dead? He is not here, but is risen."—Luke 24:5, 6.

The resurrection of the dead is an astounding proposition. Its accomplishment will be the greatest manifestation of divine power ever made to angels and to men. The awakening of Jairus' daughter, of the son of the widow of Nain, and that of Lazarus the friend of Jesus, are nowhere styled resurrections of the dead. They were merely awakenings, the last of these being the most wonderful because, Lazarus had been dead four days, and putrefaction had set in.

The resurrection of the dead promised in the Bible is to bring back the personality and the consciousness of thousands of millions of humanity who have died, who have gone to dust under the divine sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die." "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." There could be no resurrection—no escape from that divine sentence—except in the way God has arranged; namely, that Jesus took the place of the original sinner, Adam. Purchasing him back from the death sentence meant the purchase of all who died in him. Thus we read that Christ died, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."—1 Peter 3:18.

Fallacious ideas have gone abroad to the effect that it will be the body merely that will be resurrected—that God will collect from the four winds every particle of dust which once composed a portion of a human body, and will reorganize the race out of the same particles of matter which once composed it. The absurdity of this proposition grows upon us as we consider that the carcasses of the dead have more or less gone into vegetation, and thus into other animals and other humans. This is well illustrated by the story of the apple tree, the roots of which penetrated a coffin and assumed the shape of the corpse. The apples were eaten by various people, and some of them by swine, which in turn were shipped to various parts of the country.

This anecdote well illustrates the unreasonableness of the common misunderstanding of the Bible teachings. The difficulty has been that we lost sight of the fact that the Bible declares that it is the soul which dies. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4, 20) Our bodies are being changed and renewed, science tells us, every seven years. The body in which Adam sinned, therefore, passed away—and many other bodies—during the nine hundred and thirty years of his experience. But his soul, his personality, himself, died but once, nine hundred and thirty years old. It is the soul that dies, that has been redeemed, and that is to be resurrected. "Thou sowest not that body which shall be."

OUR LORD NO LONGER HUMAN

Christ, as the Logos with the Father, was a living soul, or being, on a high spirit plane. For man's sake he humbled himself and became a bondsman—"took a bondsman's form, and was found in fashion as a man"—a human soul. As a human soul, or human being, he died—"he poured out his soul unto death." He made "his soul an offering for sin." "He shall see [the reward of] the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied."—Isaiah 53:10-12.

It was Jesus the human soul that died, but he was raised from the dead a soul of a higher order. At that time, as he foretold, he ascended "where he was before"; that is to say, on the spirit plane. He was "put to death in flesh, but quickened [or made alive] in spirit." (1 Peter 3:18) He took the fleshly nature merely for the great purpose of giving man's redemption-price; and after he had surrendered that ransom-price by giving himself up to death, the Father raised him up to glory, honor, the divine nature—"far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named." (Philippians 2:9) He that ascended thus in his resurrection was the same that had previously descended from the heavenly to the earthly condition, as St. Paul says.

Because in his resurrection Jesus was so different, from this viewpoint we are prepared to understand why he conducted

himself so differently after his resurrection from what he had done before. After his resurrection he appeared and disappeared, we read. He showed himself to his disciples for a few moments at a time, and then vanished from their sight. Never before had he done anything of the kind. After his resurrection he appeared in different bodies, different forms, different clothing. To Mary he appeared as the gardener. To the two walking to Emmaus he appeared as the stranger. He appeared not only as a different person, but also in different clothing; for his clothing had been parted amongst the soldiers.

Now evidently he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened in spirit! It was the Spirit Jesus who showed himself, assuming different human forms and clothing, as best suited the occasion. This spirit being could, and did, come into the assemblies of the disciples when the doors were shut and fastened for fear of the Jews. He created, or materialized, a body and clothing in their presence; and after a few moments he vanished out of their sight, dissolving the body and the clothing, while he, the spirit being, remained invisible. Thus he was with the disciples for forty days before he ascended; yet they saw him not, except a few minutes at a time on seven different occasions.

Those forty days were very necessary for teaching the Jewish disciples, and all of the Lord's followers since, two great lessons:

(1) That he was no longer dead, but alive;

(2) That he was no longer a man, but a spirit. "Now the Lord is that Spirit."—2 Corinthians 3:17.

IMPORTANCE OF OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION

That our Lord was no longer flesh, but a spirit being with celestial glory, is clearly established by St. Paul's narrative of his own experiences. He explains that it was necessary that the twelve apostles should be able to bear witness to the fact that Jesus had risen from the dead. There could have been no Gospel message of hope of divine favor through a dead Savior. If Christ had not risen, then who would there be who could ever establish the Messianic kingdom? Who would there ever be who could give to the church a share in the first resurrection and make them sharers in his heavenly glory? If Christ had not risen, who would there be who could call forth from the tomb the sleeping billions, awakening them, through the voice which speaks peace through Jesus Christ, to the opportunities of everlasting life through obedience to the kingdom?

The Apostle calls all this forcibly to our minds, saying, "If Christ be not risen from the dead, your faith is vain; and all who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished." (1 Corinthians 15:16-18) From this we see that St. Paul in no way shared the views of those who unscripturally claimed that Jesus, while dead, was really alive; and that the resurrection of the dead is a mere formality, quite unnecessary to the carrying out of God's plan. The divine teaching is that the dead know not anything, and that the resurrection of the dead is an absolute necessity to any future life or hope or blessing.

The fact that Christ has risen from the dead is a guarantee of God's power to raise the dead. Additionally, it is a guarantee that Jesus accomplished the work which he came into the world to do. It proves to us that he must have kept the divine law perfectly; else he would not have been worthy of a resurrection from the dead. It proves, additionally, the value of his death—the efficacy of it as the offset of Father Adam's sin, and thus as the ransom-price for the sins of the world.

POST-RESURRECTION MANIFESTATIONS

St. Paul tells that he saw Jesus after his resurrection. He tells us that our Lord's appearance to him was as that of a bright light shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday. He tells us the effect that it had upon his character and upon his eyesight—that one glance at the glorious Jesus destroyed his sight, which was afterward partially restored by divine mercy. This was the eighth appearance of Jesus to his disciples. In seven of them he appeared in flesh; in one he appeared in glory above the brightness of the sun. He was the same at all times, but the manifestations were different.

The manifestations in the flesh during the forty days correspond exactly to those manifestations which Jesus had made long previously, one of which was to Abraham. He ate and talked with Abraham; but Abraham knew not that he talked with the Lord, and thought of him only as a man, because he appeared in human form and ordinary clothing. He vanished from Abraham's sight as he vanished from the apostles' sight and from Saul's. He was a spirit being when he appeared to Abraham; and he was a spirit being after his resurrection, when he appeared to his apostles. It was in the meantime that he was made flesh for the very purpose of suffering, the just for the unjust.

Having accomplished the suffering, there was no further reason why our Lord should remain flesh. The Lord of Glory in heaven is not flesh, not a man. If he were, he would be "a little lower than the angels." But the Apostle assures us that in his resurrection he has ascended far above the angels.—Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 1:3, 4.

It was just as easy for Jesus to appear in one form as another, in one kind of clothing as another. He appeared in various forms, that the double lesson might be impressed that he was not dead, and that he was no longer a man. His second appearance with the wounds to convince St. Thomas is especially noteworthy. He was ready to give any demonstration that was necessary, because, unless his disciples really believed in his resurrection, they could not do the work that was before them, nor could they even receive the holy Spirit at Pentecost. The holy Spirit was not given except to those who believed in Jesus—who accepted the fact of his death as the sacrifice for sins and who trusted in him as the Savior through whom would come the divine blessing, begetting them of the holy Spirit and restoring them to fellowship with God as children of God.

FURTHER SCRIPTURAL PROOFS

If further evidence be necessary that Jesus is not a flesh being—that he is no longer a man—that evidence can be found in the Apostle's assurance that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and that therefore every member of the church must be changed before he can enter into and share Christ's kingdom. The change will be from earthly state, or condition, or soul, to spirit condition, or soul, or being. The Apostle declares that we must all be changed, that we may be like our Lord. If our fleshly body must give place to a spirit body in order that we may be like our Lord, it is manifest that he is a spirit body, a spirit being, a spirit soul. This also agrees with St. Paul, respecting the resurrection of the church. He says, "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised glory; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spirit body."

A totally different thing, however, is brought to our attention by the same Apostle in Philippians 3:21, where he declares that the Lord Jesus will "change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." The thought here is in respect to the church as a whole, and not the individual bodies of the church. The Apostle is speaking of our vile body, in the singular. The thought is that Jesus, the head of the church, had his experiences of humiliation prior to his death and his resurrection. The Head of the church was exalted, was glorified, more than eighteen centuries ago. Since then, all who have espoused his cause have become identified with a body, or company, that is despised of men, a humiliated body, of which St. Paul says, "We are counted as the filth and offscouring of the earth." But at the second coming of Christ the humiliation of the church, his body, will cease, because the Lord will gloriously change his body in the first resurrection. Thereafter it will no longer he a church, or body, reviled but glorified.

SCRIPTURAL PROOFS OF SPIRIT-BEGETTING

"Of His own will begat he us with the Word of truth."—James 1:18.

The Scriptures tell us that our Lord left the glory which he had with the Father before the world was and came to earth, becoming a man, "for the suffering of death," that he might give himself "a ransom for all." At the age of thirty, we are told, he went to Jordan and presented himself as a sacrifice to God. After his baptism, as he came up out of the water, the holy Spirit descended upon him, "the heavens were opened unto him." He was then led of the spirit (this newly begotten spirit) into the wilderness for forty days, to commune with the Father, to study the types and prophecies of the Scriptures, and to be tested of the adversary. Thereafter, he was able to see clearly the course which the Father had marked out for him, as shown in these types and prophecies.

In inviting his disciples to follow him, our Lord made it very plain that in so doing they must of necessity be baptized into his death and partake of his cup of suffering, that they might live and reign with him. Throughout the Scriptures it is pointed out that the church are to be members of the body of Christ, of which he is the Head. They declare that he is our Forerunner, the Captain of our salvation; that "as he was, so are we, in this world"; that his experiences are to be our experiences. They declare that he is "leading many sons"—his brethren—to God, to glory.

The steps that we are to take, then, are exactly the steps that he took whom we are to follow. He is our great pattern. We are enabled by faith to see, under divine guidance, the

redemption which Jesus accomplished for us, and our opportunity of becoming his disciples, of being baptized into his death. Baptism into death would be far from desirable, unless there were some way by which it might be made a gateway unto life; and this way was provided by God. It was opened first for his Son.

JESUS' HUMAN AND SPIRIT NATURES TYPIFIED

In the type of the Atonement day, our Lord's human nature was represented in the bullock, which was offered for sacrifice. The high priest, clothed in the white linen garments of sacrifice, represented him as a spirit-begotten new creature, after his human sacrifice was accepted, and while the actual consuming of his human body was in process. The high priest, clothed in the "garments of glory and beauty," represented him after his resurrection to the divine nature, after he was born of the Spirit and highly exalted to glory, honor and immortality by the Father, as a reward for his faithfulness.—John 3:3-8.

So at the time when we present ourselves to God in consecration, and our sacrifice is accepted of him, we die as men; but we are likewise begotten to the new nature, the new life. And this new life, begotten from above, continues to grow by the assimilation of spiritual nourishment, until it will, in due time, be born a fully developed spirit being, like unto our Lord. (1 John 3:2; Romans 8:29) This process and its outcome are brought to our attention in the Scripture which declares of our Lord that he was "the first-born from the dead." And this word born [*gennao*, in the Greek] is the same word which is translated begotten. It relates to the entire process of bringing forth. This is a progressive matter; first there is the beginning, then the period of gestation, then birth.

Our Lord's baptism to the new life was at the time he made his consecration unto death at his baptism. The new creature there begun was growing during the three and a half years thereafter. This period, as before mentioned, was represented in the high priest in the type. At his baptism he was begotten as a Son of God on the highest plane—the divine. John the Baptist here bore witness of him, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him." The record of the Scriptures is that only those who are begotten of the Spirit can see spiritual things.—1 Corinthians 2:9-16.

DEEP TRUTHS NOT VISIBLE ON THE SURFACE

It is asked: Why is it that a fact of so great importance as the Lord's begetting of the Spirit is not stated in so many words, but must be proven by deduction? We reply: To those who are spiritually minded there is very strong evidence indeed, yet it might be passed over by others and not recognized at all. This is likewise true of other important Scriptural doctrines. There is one Scripture which declares that through the exceeding great and precious promises we may be made partakers of the divine nature. Other Scriptures state that the followers of Christ shall share his glory, honor and immortality. These latter Scriptures imply the same thing as the first, though only the one text (2 Peter 1:4) states the matter in just those words.

In respect to our Lord's resurrection, it is declared that "He was put to death in flesh, and made alive in Spirit." (1 Peter 3:18—Diaglott) This Scripture does not say that he was raised a Spirit, but this is the evident meaning; and we know that this was the case: "Now the Lord is that Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:17) In Colossians 1:18 we read of our Lord: "And he is the Head of the body, the church, who is the beginning [of this new creation], the first-born from the dead." As our Lord was born from the dead a spirit being, he must have been previously begotten of the Spirit, as birth is always preceded by begetting.

In speaking of the resurrection of the church, which is declared to be Christ's resurrection (Philippians 3:10), the Apostle Paul says: "It is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body." So it is "here a little and there a little" that we must find these precious truths. This seems to be the way in which the Lord has prepared the Bible—giving here a little and there a little of these jewels of truth. Those who are superficial in their search will overlook the most important features of truth, to find later that they have only a small part.

CLEARER LIGHT NOW SHINING

As we search the Scriptures, we learn how to rightly divide and rightly combine its various elements, now that the dawning light of the new dispensation is shining on the Word, making it more luminous to our view, we see the wonderful whole—the great plan that we and others had previously passed over and failed to discern. Those who are not of the right class will not be able to see the truth in all its wondrous clearness, beauty and harmony. If we have the right spirit as children of God, we shall want to know what God has in reservation for his people.

This gives an opportunity for the operation of the Spirit of the truth upon our hearts and minds. This desire leads us to come together for Bible study, when the worldly would say: Let us play billiards or chess or pool. They complain to us: You have already read that Bible several times. We tell them that we have and with a great deal of blessing.

Thus, as we are desiring to know the Lord's plan and his will concerning us, he reveals it to us more and more; and thus, little by little, we gain a great aggregate of truth, which greatly rejoices our hearts, gives us an intelligent understanding of the wonderful day in which we are living, and gives us calmness and confidence, while the hearts of others are failing them for fear.

INTERESTING LETTERS

LONDON DRAMA EXPERIENCES

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

We feel sure you will be glad to hear of the splendid witness that is being given by means of the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION at The London Opera House, Kingsway. The guiding hand of the Lord has been so wonderfully manifest in every detail of this exhibition that the brethren are rejoicing greatly in the privilege of having a share in it. In fact, they are realizing that the message of the PHOTO-DRAMA is the only one that can bring comfort to the hearts of the people in these distressing times.

It had always been our desire to secure the Opera House for the presentation of the PHOTO-DRAMA, as it is, without doubt, the most suitable building in London for that purpose; but the state of our treasury did not admit of the payment of the large sum required to rent the place. We had, however, given the Solicitor of the Opera House to understand that we should be glad to enter into negotiations for the house if he could make a more favorable offer. About the beginning of October a letter was received from the Solicitor, stating that they had a period free from October 12th to October 27th which they could offer us. On receipt of this we immediately called upon them and told them that we had spent most of the money allotted for this particular purpose, that their offer had come too late. Upon going thoroughly into the matter, an offer was made of £100 for the hire of the building. Mr. Wylie, the Solicitor, who had lately evinced considerable interest in our work, closed with the offer. He has since visited the exhibition on two occasions, and states that the interest aroused in him has led him to read his Bible after many years of neglect.

It was resolved to advertise this presentation by means of a distribution of 400,000 DRAMA tracts. Although only a week elapsed between the definite booking of the Opera House and the commencement of the exhibition, the brethren entered into the work of distribution with such a zeal that practically all the tracts were given out before the opening day. In addition to the ordinary means of advertising by posters, circulars, etc., a large number of window-cards were produced and these proved very effective. Some of the brethren called upon large business houses, warehouses, stores, hotels, hospitals and all places likely to engage a large staff, with the show-cards and supply of tickets, which they were generally pleased to accept. Some houses desired as many as 500 tickets, which they guaranteed to distribute amongst their staff. In the same manner they called upon P. S. A.'s, Men's Bible Classes, Sunday Schools, etc., requesting them to announce the DRAMA to their members and providing them with tickets; it was reckoned that 90% of the places thus visited co-operated with us in this matter. As there were a great number of boxes available in the Opera House, special invitation cards for these were sent out to the aristocracy and persons of good address in London; and, as a result, our boxes were nearly always filled by a class of people that the DRAMA has not hitherto touched to any extent.

Having done our utmost the make the presentation public, we anxiously awaited its first exhibition on the afternoon of Monday, October 12th. A large number of brethren were required for ushering, stewarding and other duties connected with the exhibition; and all realized their great privilege of service and fulfilled their duties faithfully and well. Many of the public commented on the orderly and gracious manner in which everything was carried out. One gentleman who attended was so greatly impressed by the dignified and courteous manner in which the sisters performed their duties, that he particularly asked his mother to come to see how the DRAMA was conducted, as he felt sure that all who were tak-

ing part in it were Christians. At his suggestion she came the next day and enjoyed a time of fellowship with several of the ushers, and also on the succeeding Sunday at the Tabernacle. Another gentleman stated that he had been grossly misinformed regarding Pastor Russell and his teachings; for he saw the effect they had upon those who were helping to present them. He is a leader of a large Men's Bible Class, which he intends to bring to the DRAMA. Another stated that the spirit of the workers showed him that it was not a theatrical display, but that the work was being done for the glory of God. Each day, before the commencement, the brethren assembled to sing a hymn of praise and to request the Lord's blessing upon all the proceedings.

The audiences on the first day were not large, but the two following days noted good increases, while on the evening of the fourth day our house was completely filled, as was the case almost every subsequent evening. The public seemed so eager to witness the DRAMA that many hundreds waited in a queue outside for a long time, in order to gain admission and even then, because of the limitations of the house, we were compelled to turn away a great many. Quite a crowd, however, waited at the door for nearly an hour in the hope that some of the audience might come out at the intermission, when they would take their places. It was deemed wise not to admit children; but on Saturday and Sunday afternoons they were permitted to come in if attended by adults.

Our audiences were made up from all classes and kinds of people; we have noted many of the clergy in attendance. One vicar wished to know the object of the PHOTO-DRAMA. When we explained this to him, he seemed intensely interested and expressed his joy that this beautiful building should be used for such a worthy purpose. He asked for tickets that he and his wife might come and see it again. A Church of England rector has attended the DRAMA several times, and found it so interesting that he has purchased five bound scenarios and has brought many of his friends to witness it. Two bishops have also been present, and several titled people.

Each day we receive, by mail, a great number of requests for tickets; and many of the applicants express their appreciation of the PHOTO-DRAMA. The following letter is from a gentleman who sends us a donation for the work: "I beg of you to accept the enclosed token of my appreciation of the beautiful pictures being shown by you at the London Opera House. I am convinced of the vast amount of good that is being done by the films and lectures. Let me add that I cannot but admire the disinterested spirit in which this good work is being carried out, especially in this self-seeking, commercial age." We had a letter, too, from a minister who, after seeing the DRAMA, writes, "While I could not see eye to eye with all Pastor Russell's views I must testify to his faithful Scriptural delineations. As a Biblical student I feel bound to wish him and his workers God-speed in their attack on the anti-Scriptural and God-dishonoring doctrine of eternal torment." He further requests that, if possible, one of our speakers come and address his Bible class on the topic, "Pastor Russell's Message to the World."

We have been impressed by the manner in which the public assist us in advertising the DRAMA with the least expense. Many apply for window-cards that they may exhibit them in their shops, etc.; and others take supplies of tickets to distribute amongst their friends. Practically all who attend seem to be deeply interested in what they see and hear. The serious times in which we are living seem to be preparing the hearts of some to receive the truth. At the conclusion of one session a lady came to one of the stewards and said, "I have been to all the pictures and lectures, and I feel I must thank somebody. I do not know whom to thank; there seems to be nobody. so I want you to convey my message of thanks and appreciation to the right quarter." Another lady told us she had inquired at the Religious Tract Society's office respecting the PHOTO-DRAMA, and was strongly urged not to go; but she was evidently so impressed by the advertisement that she decided otherwise. She was delighted with the message and considered it the finest thing that had yet been done to bring the people back to the Bible—which fact she did not fail to impress upon the R. T. S. officials.

At the intermission the lady ushers give opportunity of purchasing the Scenario to any one who desires to do so; and, as a result, a great number of these have been sold. Altogether we have disposed of nearly 2,300 scenarios during the fifteen days. We enclose a detailed report of the attendances and scenarios sold for each day, from which you will see that very few of the latter were sold on the Sundays. The reason for this is that we did not mention the sale on Sundays, as a great many Christian people object to the sale of books on Sunday, and this might prove a stumbling-block to some who might otherwise have received the truth, as well as giving a better impression to the people in general.

Remarks regarding the beauty and acceptableness of the exhibition are frequent, and surprise is often shown at the generosity of so good a show being free. Expressions of appreciation have been offered by people of standing. One such lady stated, after the Finale, that it was good to come in touch with those who had a message of comfort and hope. Another expressed her intention of attending the Tabernacle. Both had signed cards.

These, and many other evidences of interest amongst those who were attending the DRAMA, gave us great encouragement and reason to suppose that we would have a most successful Finale. This took place on Tuesday, the 27th of October; and our hopes were realized in every way. In the afternoon, over a thousand people were present, while in the evening, the house was completely filled and hundreds were turned away, being unable to gain admission. Brother Hemery gave the lectures on both occasions; and at the conclusion many seemed eager to sign their cards, a total of twelve hundred being received.

Owing to the increasing interest in this particular presentation, we have arranged to continue at the Opera House for another twelve days, report of which will follow later.

Truly, the people appreciate the message that the DRAMA has to give. It demands even the respect of openly avowed agnostics and is making many realize that Jehovah is their Rock and their Fortress, their Strength, in whom they will trust. With much love in the Lord as ever, we are,

Your brethren and fellow-laborers,

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSN.

THE BRETHREN IN SWITZERLAND, ETC.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—

After a long, but unintentional silence, I will write to you again, hoping these lines will find you in good health, as they leave me.

Many things have happened over here since I last wrote to you. The newspapers in America must keep you posted about them. Respecting our personal experiences I can tell you, dear Brother, that the Lord has kept us wonderfully; we cannot thank him enough for his goodness toward us.

Our dear friends at Muelhausen have passed through dreadful times; the city and surroundings have been twice the scene of very hot battles, where thousands of French and German soldiers have lost their lives. Within four weeks Muelhausen has been twice in French and three times in German possession, and even today the fights about Alsace continue. As the border between Switzerland and Germany, e. g., between Basel and Muelhausen, was closed for several weeks, we were left entirely without news from them. Lately, venturing to cross the border in order to visit the brethren, I learned of their wonderful preservation—for not one was hurt. They send you special greetings and ask you to continue to remember them in prayer that they may be kept faithful unto the end.

Our dear friends in Belgium and North France must have suffered much, too; I am sorry to say it is quite impossible to communicate with them.

Here in Switzerland, and especially in Basel, there was very great excitement; many people thought the "end of the world" was coming. All our army was called in and still guards the borders against invasion. Spiritually we had a good season, for very many who didn't believe our message before are now on our side. The meeting halls are always overcrowded, and we have to look for larger halls. All public lectures are under the military censor; but they are not so strict here as in Germany.

By all these practical experiences we are more than ever convinced that the end of the present order of things is at hand and the Messianic kingdom will soon be established. How we all do long for the realization of this grand hope and sure expectation! How true is the chronology and how precise its fulfilment! We are glad that we never gave up our expectations for 1914.

Re PHOTO-DRAMA: As the slides came so late, we were only ready for public presentation in Berne the very day the mobilization decree came out, disturbing the whole arrangement. Brother Krull will no doubt have given you an oral report of our experiences.

The first two weeks in August everything seemed upside down; but when the people became a little more quiet we profited thereby and started the Drama—though still under many difficulties. While all other cinematographic shows were shut by the Government, I succeeded in getting a permit for two weeks, but we were allowed to operate only four times a week. We had the large, magnificent hall on the Exhibition

grounds packed full every time (1,400 visitors), so that more than 12,000 people saw and profited thereby.

Tomorrow we start again in Zurich (largest city in Switzerland). As we have no phonograph records I must read the lectures.

In France we were not able to do anything. Many of the brethren are in military service, and I might be called in any day.

The bank in Berne, where you sent the money, and which was, under normal conditions, a safe one, shut its doors, like all other banks, allowing only very small sums to go out. I succeeded, however, in getting more than half of the money by the following transaction: As the Government had put its hand over the banks, and as the brethren needed food, we put up a large stock of the most necessary articles, and the merchants, presenting their bills for this cause to the bank, received payment, as this was in the interest of the Government. As the social conditions will be still worse in winter we may be glad to have this lot of rice, dried bread, beans, condensed milk, etc.

I hope you approve this action, and would be glad if you could advise us of other good means for ameliorating the great tribulation which came so unexpectedly upon Europe. Many people have no work and many brethren in the truth have lost their positions. We tried to employ some as Colporteurs, but the people of the cities have little money and cannot buy books. In the country the people are in better circumstances and the colporteurs sell a few books every day. So we are trying to continue the harvest work until our Master calls us to the harvest beyond the veil.

We may not be able to communicate with each other much longer, and I take this opportunity to say again how much I love you, including with myself my wife and many other dear friends, all of whom appreciate the love and interest you have always manifested toward us.

Soon you will hear the blessed words, "Well done, good and faithful servant! Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will now make thee ruler over many things, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

With hearty greetings to you and the household of faith at Bethel, I remain,

Your thankful brother in the Lord.

EMIL LANZ.—Switzerland.

I. B. S. A. EUREKA DRAMA

Dear Brethren:—Greetings in the name of the Lord! Enclosed find report to date. The beginning of our Drama was on Thursday. We did not have time to advertise it, or we should have done so; but the Lord permitted us to be greatly blessed in an advertising that we knew not of.

A lady had advertised a Lodge meeting for the same night and at the same hall, not knowing we had rented the hall. She had secured a number of new members to be initiated. When she came she found the "picture-show" in progress, and began to devise means of getting the people out of our meeting.

She sent the Town Marshall to notify them to come out. He saw the pictures and sat down and stayed until the close. Finding the Town Marshall did not return, she asked our doorkeeper to help her. He replied that he could not see how he could get the people out; so she sent another man up. After looking over the shoulders of about thirty who were standing, he returned to the lady and said, "Lady, you had better go home; they have the finest pictures I ever saw, and there is the 'talkiest' man up there I ever heard!"

She had six gallons of ice cream to treat her crowd, but she didn't get a chance to use it. "God moves in mysterious ways his wonders to perform."

Our prayers go up daily for the Heads of the various departments of the Tabernacle Office, that they may have more grace and wisdom in the work that remains to be accomplished. Love to all.

Yours by His grace, B. A. GARR.—*Ky.*

INTERESTING DRAMA EXPERIENCES

Dear Brethren:—

We are having some glorious encouragements in the work. There are wonderful crowds out here in Demorest. One man said, "It disgusts me to see how some of the very people who have misrepresented you folks are on hand early, and crowd forward to get the best seats."

The Methodist minister was present on Sunday when part three was shown. During the crucifixion scene the power was temporarily shut off. While waiting for its return he got up and spoke of the wonderful impression made by the pictures, and told the people that they ought to have a deeper realization of what the Savior had done for them as a result of the Photo-Drama of Creation.

Truly our God is a wonder-working God. What faith these things should develop in us!

A brother was telling at Convention about some ministers at a certain place where Drama was being shown, who were worrying for fear people would think they had something to do with it. A merchant present remarked, "There is no danger people will connect you with it, because it is conspicuously announced there will be no collection."

Yours in Christian Love, B. H. BARTON.

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SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN SONS OF GOD AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT

"If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Romans 8:13, 14.

Only those who have the right spirit, disposition, will or intention, can keep the divine law, and only those who are in perfect harmony with God will he recognize as sons. The holy angels are sons of God on the angelic plane; cherubim are sons of God on their plane of being; and Christ and the church in glory are sons of God on the divine plane. All these are sons of God, yet they exist on different planes. They are all governed by the Spirit of God; and unless they had that Spirit, they could not be recognized as sons; for no one can keep the divine law except those who have the divine disposition.

Before Adam fell he was a son of God. (Luke 3:38) He had the Spirit of God, in the sense of having the right spirit, disposition, will, intention. But after he had become a transgressor of the divine law, he was considered a sinner. All of Adam's race are still sinners except those who have come into Christ. In the Millennial age, however, Adam's race will have the privilege of coming into Christ. He will be The Everlasting Father, the Father who will give everlasting life to all those who will obey the instructions given under the Messianic kingdom.

In order to reach that condition of divine approval, mankind must have the spirit of the truth, and must be developed along that line. Before they will be counted, or recognized, as sons, they must have the spirit, or disposition, of righteousness. Until they attain that spirit, they will not be able to render acceptable service; for the Lord seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. In their fallen condition mankind are not able to keep the divine law. Even during the Millennial age they will keep it only in part, until they shall have been brought back to the image of God in the flesh.—Genesis 1:26.

WHO ARE THE SONS OF GOD?

Thus far there has been a very limited number of sons of God on earth, according to the Scriptures. Throughout the Jewish age God was the instructor and guide of his people through Moses and the prophets; but the Israelites were not sons of God, and they did not have the Spirit's begetting to sonship. On the contrary, they were only a house of servants. (Hebrews 3:5) The holy Spirit of God was not yet given to any of the fallen race; for Jesus was not yet glorified.—John 7:39.

The Scriptures speak of the Spirit of God as a special influence coming from God upon a special class, in a special manner, since a particular event—and not before that event. This coming of the Spirit was made manifest at Pentecost, so that it might stand out separate and distinct from anything that had ever before occurred. This power, or influence, is variously called the holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of a sound mind, the Spirit of sonship. The various qualities described by these appellations are all applicable to the same class; namely, those who are begotten of the Spirit.

These spirit-begotten ones are a particular class who have taken up their cross and become followers of Christ, and who are on this account recognized of the Father by the begetting of the holy Spirit. This Spirit of truth so illuminates the Bible that the Revelation of God may be better understood by those who have the holy Spirit. They are able to comprehend

the deep things of God, which cannot be comprehended without it. While others not having this Spirit of God might get some truth from the Scriptures, this special class have the very essence of the truth.

SOME NATURALLY DRAWN TO GOD

We call to mind certain Scriptures which speak of a leading of God's people prior to their begetting of the holy Spirit. Speaking of a kind of drawing that came to those who afterward became his disciples, our Lord said, "No man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him." (John 6:44) This drawing is not the work of the holy Spirit of begetting, which comes to those accepted of God through Christ and received as sons. On the contrary, that which the Scriptures speak of as a drawing of God, and which we have all experienced, seems to be a natural drawing along the lines of the flesh, not toward things sinful, but toward holiness, yet along lines which belong to the natural man.

For instance, when God created Adam, naturally he would love God, naturally he would desire to serve God, naturally he would desire to be obedient to God and to worship him. These desires were all natural to him because he was in a natural condition—the condition in which he was created—pure. Sin has made mankind unnatural. But even after sin had entered in and had perverted the original character which God gave, certain longings for God remained in the human heart—even amongst depraved people. They would rather be in harmony with him, be related to him, have him as their protector and friend.

God does not draw mankind by any other means than that original power which he implanted and which has not been altogether lost through the fall of the race of Adam. All mankind have degenerated from the image of God; but the desire for worship, for righteousness, for harmony with God, is much stronger in some people than in others. In proportion as one desires righteousness, in that proportion that one is drawn toward God, feels after God, if haply he might find his Creator. He is feeling after God because he wishes to find him.

HOW THEY ARE DRAWN

This is the drawing, we believe, that comes to every one of us. Before we gave ourselves to God in consecration, we had a desire to come to him, and that desire was something awakened in us. But it was there before it was awakened. Then something occurred that turned the thoughts toward God. Perhaps it was some great sorrow, some calamity, which drew the heart to God; and with it came the feeling that our grief should be taken to him. Along with that desire, probably came the thought, "God will not hear me." This is a very proper conclusion, for there is no way of approach to God except through the Redeemer, who said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

Just as the Roman centurion Cornelius needed instruction as to how to approach God, so the soul feeling after divine assistance also needs instruction. We verily believe that thousands upon thousands have been turned away from God because of the creedal misrepresentations of his righteous character. When people begin to realize that our God is loving, just, merciful, they will turn to him. We find that some are now being attracted toward God through the Photo-Drama of Creation. Recently we heard of a lawyer who felt that he had lost his hold upon God altogether; but, as a result of seeing the Drama, he drew nigh to God and made a consecration of himself.

This, we believe, is the way in which we are drawn to the Father, whose influence is related to everything beautiful and harmonious in nature. Not until we have the desire to go back to God are we ready to be directed by the great Advocate; for when we come to the Advocate, He very pointedly says, "I cannot receive you except upon one condition." That condition, he tells us, is that we take up our cross and follow him. (Matthew 16:24) Consequently it would not be wise to tell any one about the narrow way unless he had some drawing toward God.

We see, then, quite a clear distinction between the drawing of the Father—that drawing which persists everywhere—and what in the Scripture is called the Spirit of God. That Spirit is given only to the sons of God. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Romans 8:14) That Spirit takes hold of them, guiding them in various ways —sometimes by putting property into their hands, sometimes by taking it away from them, sometimes by permitting sickness to come. The experiences of these sons of God enable them to grow in grace, in knowledge and in love, that thus they may be fitted and prepared for positions on the spirit plane.

THE SPIRIT POURED UPON ALL MANKIND

During the Millennial age things will be somewhat different from what they are now. Christ will have representatives in the earthly phase of the kingdom, and through them the Word of God will go forth to the people. As many as will then be drawn toward God will be privileged to come into relationship with him through consecration. They will then receive the Spirit of God in the sense of blessing, but not in the sense of begetting, as the church receives it now.

The ancient worthies will be the earthly representatives of the Messianic kingdom. The Christ, however, will be the great Teacher in glory, from whom all instruction will come through these earthly representatives. As people begin to get the true, the real knowledge about the glorious character of God, they will begin to see how inferior they are. Then they will be in condition to receive instruction.

No one will be compelled to have instruction, however; but whoever is out of accord with the kingdom will have restrictions put upon him. The Prophet Zechariah, speaking of earthly affairs under the kingdom, says, "And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain." (Zechariah 14:17) If we interpret the word rain symbolically, we perceive that the thought is that upon such nations there will be no divine blessing—if there were no rain, there would be no fruitage. But the rain, the blessing, would be upon those who would be in harmony with the Lord.

When people come into harmony with God, they will consecrate their lives and their bodies to his service. Then they will begin to get the blessings in their minds and bodies; and in this sense of the word they will get more of the Spirit of the Lord—the Spirit of his mind. So through his Truth and through the Divine judgments of that time, the Lord will "pour out his Spirit upon all flesh." (Joel 2:28) In proportion as they receive his Spirit, they will come into the attitude of sonship.

But even then they would not be sons in the full sense of the term. We might say that the church are not sons in the full sense of the word, but that we shall be sons indeed when we shall have experienced our resurrection change. So in the Millennial age, as people come into harmony with the divinely arranged Messianic kingdom, they will be coming nearer and nearer to the standard of sonship. By the end of the Millennial age they will have attained that condition of mentality which Adam had when he was perfect. All this blessing they will get through Christ and his associated church.

THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH

Because our Lord will give everlasting life to the world of mankind, he is called "The Everlasting Father," the Father who gives everlasting life. (Isaiah 9:6) All the willing and obedient will become his children during the Millennium. Then at the close of the Messianic kingdom the children of The Christ will be introduced to their Grand-Father. Since they are to be sons of Christ, who is the Son of God, the heavenly Father will be their Grand-Father. Then the whole world will be back into harmony with God as the sons of Christ.

During this Gospel age, however, God is not operating upon the world. Whatever there is in the world of natural beauty is the result of the operation of the power of God in a general way. Our text does not refer to this operation of God's power, or Spirit, but to his influence upon the hearts of men. In the New Testament writings it refers to those who have become his people by making a full consecration of themselves and then being begotten of the holy Spirit as new creatures in Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17) All such are recipients of special divine care.

The Scriptures speak of the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of Christ. All these are synonymous terms, which represent the divine influence exercised upon the people of God. Having been begotten of the Spirit, we should remember that, as the Apostle suggests, we are to be perfected. We must make a certain development. We progress until finally we are born in the first resurrection. Perfection will be attained then, not before. Meantime, in order to be ready for that resurrection, a certain development must take place.

MAKING READY FOR SPIRIT CONDITIONS

In our context the Apostle is telling how we may attain to this life condition, how to make ready for the birth of the Spirit in due time. He says that such a development will be attained through the Spirit, or power, of God. This Spirit operates in various ways. For instance, God's message applies to the church. Therefore the more we understand the plan of God, the greater will be that power in our hearts; and the deeper our consecration to the divine will, the more sympathy

will we have and the greater will be our desire to do the divine good pleasure.

The change going on within our hearts is neither by men nor of men. God began this work in us. Therefore we must look to him to complete the work which he has begun in our hearts by the message he has given us. So we go to him in prayer, and we study his Word, to know the meaning of that Word and thus to be enabled to put it into expression in our lives. Just as we require food to strengthen our mortal bodies, so we must also have spiritual food to strengthen the new creature. This spiritual food God has given us abundantly, in order that we may get spiritual strength to understand his will better than before.

This operation of God through the holy Spirit is a gradual work. So beclouded are we by the errors of our former beliefs that we are not prepared to see the deep things of God at the first glance. Therefore we need to study, to meet together with those of like precious faith. Thus we are helped to see the deep things.

GOD'S WILL CONCERNING US

As we come to understand the matter more clearly, our thought on the subject changes gradually. When we first came to God, we had the thought that God's will toward us was that we should enjoy ourselves, live good, moral lives, and take care of our bodies; and that if we are God's people, we should have abundance; and that those who could not live in harmony with God would be destroyed. This would be the thought of the natural man. The Apostle says that the natural man cannot see the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. But this is not at all God's way of dealing with us.

By and by we begin to discern that our heavenly Father prepares us for the spiritual things by showing us how to destroy the earthly condition and how this will be brought to an end. This is a new thought to us; and we ask ourselves, Does God wish me to mortify, deaden, destroy, the earthly condition? Am I not to seek to cultivate my talents and to live a natural life?

The natural man says, Follow natural things; do as you please so long as you are not interfering with the rights of others. But the new creature is not to heed the natural inclinations of the flesh. We have asked the Lord to transform us, to renew our mind, and ultimately to give us what he has promised. Therefore we do not belong to the world at all, and our course is to be that which is marked out in the Scriptures.

THE WORK OF THE NEW CREATURE

Our text does not mean that we are to mortify our bodies in the way that some have thought. According to history, there have been earnest souls in the past who have used whips on their bodies until they produced severe pain, and then have worn hair jackets, etc. Sometimes these bodily tortures have been carried so far that the skin would be covered with sores. Others have undertaken to mortify their bodies by lying down to be literally walked on, etc. We cannot question that whoever would do these things must have a motive for so doing, and we cannot think it a bad motive; nevertheless, we believe that those who do such things have a wrong conception of the meaning of our text.

By the expression, "Mortify the deeds of the flesh," the Scriptures mean that the people of God are to put to death in themselves all natural practises that are not in harmony with the Spirit of God. We are all born sinners, the Bible declares, and therefore we are not to follow the bent of our fallen nature. We are to have the Spirit of God, the holy Spirit, which will guide us in the way in which we should go. We are to mortify every inclination of the body that is not indorsed by the new mind.

There are certain qualities of the mortal body that are to be destroyed, and therefore are to be warred against at all times. Then there are other qualities which are to be utilized in the service of righteousness. Once we were under sin; but now we have a new mind. Henceforth we are to treat the old creature as an earthen vessel merely. Under the direction of the holy Spirit, we are to know how to do this. The first step in the process is to reckon our body dead. Having reckoned it dead toward sin and toward everything of an earthly nature, we are then to reckon it alive in the sense of awakening, quickening, all the tendencies, attributes, that can be brought into the service of God. This is the second step.

THE DAILY BATTLE OF THE SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

After we have been begotten of the Spirit, we are new creatures. In every sense of the word we are free from our body. Whatever parts of our human nature we find to be in opposition to God and his will we are to mortify, deaden, as soon as we discover them. This process is a continual warring against, fighting against, the old nature. The Apostle distinctly calls it a warring between the flesh and the Spirit. But while warring against certain elements which are legally dead, we find that the flesh is not dead actually. But if we live according to the Spirit, and not according to the flesh, God will not recognize the flesh, nor shall we. We shall recognize only the new creature.

The battle is a daily one. All our members must be brought into harmony with God and his will. We are to endeavor to see everything from the divine standpoint. The thought is not that we shall ever perfect these mortal bodies, but that while we are living on the earth and have to do with these bodies, it is our duty and our privilege to make the body do the will of the new creature.

Our bodies were slaves to sin. Now we say, "I have the right to control this body. I am a new creature, but this is my body. I shall increase my power over this body, and use it more and more in the service of the Lord. It is not my intention to do foolish things—to leap from a pinnacle to see whether my body will remain alive; but under the guidance of the holy Spirit, I am to get out of it the most that I can, in the service of the new Master."

All this is necessary to our development in character. God has called the church to glory, honor, immortality and joint-heirship with Christ. If we do not prove overcomers, we shall never be ready for so great an exaltation. This exalted position will not be given to any mortal merely because he says that he desires to be something different from what he is. On the contrary, we must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. Those who profess entire consecration to God must demonstrate this by putting away everything that is contrary to the divine will. As these seek to build character, they will be growing "strong in the power of his might." Those who will pursue this course to the end are the class that he is calling for, and those alone will prove worthy of the place to be given to the "more than overcomers."

REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

The world will have a thousand years during which to bring their bodies into harmony with the will of God. Gradually mankind will come to the place where they will be thoroughly loyal to the Lord. The stony heart will be taken away. To all those who through obedience reach this condition God will be pleased to give life everlasting.

But with the church it is different. During this Gospel age the Lord is selecting and directing those who of their own will desire to lay down their lives in his service. They love him, and he is pleased to call them his holy ones. No good thing will he withhold from this class. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, what God hath in reservation for those that love him—those who have through consecration been begotten of the holy Spirit, and who are going forward from grace to grace, living not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For this class God has provided his very best things.

To this class the Scriptures declare that "through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God." Some might say that these have a hard time. But all Christians can agree that it is possible to reach that degree of development where one can rejoice in all these experiences in which the flesh is being mortified, deadened. This is not because we are so different from other people that we like what they dislike, but because we see a reason why this tribulation is permitted. We know that this is God's plan for us; and by these evidences of mortification of the will of the flesh, of the things of the flesh, we see that we are growing in the favor of our heavenly Father.

These have the peace of God ruling in their hearts. They know that all of their affairs are under divine supervision. The world have their troubles and fears and forebodings. But those who have put their trust in the Lord have a peace which the world can neither give nor take away. But we cannot explain this to the world; for they cannot understand it.

"Go, labor on; spend and be spent—
Thy joy to do thy Father's will;
It is the way the Master went;
Should not the servant tread it still?

"Go, labor on; enough, while here,
If he shall praise thee—if he deign
Thy willing heart to mark and cheer;
No toil for him shall be in vain."

TEMPTATIONS PECULIAR TO THE NEW CREATION

"We have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."—Hebrews 4:15, 16.

St. Paul had been speaking respecting the antitypical priesthood, and had been showing that Aaron had been only a typical priest, that the Levitical priesthood never really took away sin, that a better priesthood was necessary, that this higher priesthood was represented in Melchizedek, and that God had declared that Jesus would be "a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." Jesus is a heavenly High Priest —not an earthly high priest. The thought, then, might be gathered that if our Lord is not an earthly priest he would not know how to sympathize with us. But the Apostle assures us that our great High Priest can fully sympathize with us, because "he was tempted in all points like as we are."

We are not to understand the Apostle to mean that our Lord was tempted in every manner that the world is tempted. He had none of the temptations peculiar to a drunkard, etc. His was not an unbalanced mind. He was tempted "like as we are"—the church. Like our Master, we are not, as new creatures, tempted as are the world. The world has its own kinds of temptation. We are not of the world. We are being tested as spirit-begotten children of God. We are tested as to our loyalty to him, as to our faith and obedience. Of course, while still in the flesh, we are liable to temptations along the line of our natural tendencies as members of the fallen race, but these are not our temptations as new creatures.

THE WORLD NOT ABLE TO UNDERSTAND US

The world knows nothing of our peculiar trials as new creatures. They know merely about the common trials and weaknesses of humanity. But we, having been justified in God's sight, and set apart for his service, desire to carry out our new aims. We are no longer of the world. The world, the flesh and the devil seek to turn us aside, to draw us back into the old ways; and these temptations are liable to make us forget our covenant of special relationship to the Lord, and what we have agreed to do and to be. It is in this respect that we are being especially tempted and tried, and we must ever be on our guard. We know that Jesus, our great Head, was tried in like manner with us.

When Jesus told his disciples that he was going up to Jerusalem, and that he would be betrayed into the hands of the chief priests and the scribes, and they would condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles, who would mock and scourge and crucify him, St. Peter said: Master, do not talk that way—it is discouraging. And why speak of these strange things about eating your flesh and drinking your blood? Lord, do not say these things! God forbid; this shall not be your lot!

So even his chosen twelve could not understand the Master. Jesus answered (but not in the crudity of the Common Version), "Get thee behind me, adversary"—you are becoming my opponent. You would undo the very work I am doing. Instead of helping you are hindering me, because your thoughts are not God's thoughts, but men's.—See Matthew 16:21-23.

And so it is with many who seek to show us kindness, who think they are serving our best interests. They say that we are foolish in thinking so much about religion. They mean well. They do not realize that we must be about our Father's business. This is the kind of temptation that comes to us as Christians, as followers of the Master. The special temptations of the Lord's children are not temptations to commit gross immoralities; and the temptations of Jesus were not of this kind. But he did have the temptation to withhold the truth and to give something that would be more palatable.

Some of our nominal church friends may say to us: Why do you not engage in slum work, or in social uplift work? You are continually talking about the kingdom! the kingdom! As God's ambassadors we are here for the very purpose of telling men about the kingdom, about the glorious things God has in reservation for his saints, and also his purposes for the world. We know that human "slumming" methods will fail to save the world, but the kingdom will save it. The temptation is to do something that others would applaud, instead of doing and saying things of God's Word that bring disapproval from the world and the nominal church people. The Editor has friends who say to him, If you would not talk as you do, and write as you write, more people would listen to you. You could be very popular if you would speak a little differently. You are putting too much religion into your sermons. We reply, Yes, but we are speaking and writing to instruct the people respecting God's Word, character, plan; and respecting his present call to the church.

THE CHARACTER OF THE MASTER'S TEMPTATIONS

The Master probably had presented to his mind the suggestion: Now take an easier way. This way that seems to be indicated is the crudest possible one. Go to God and tell him that it does not seem right to you, who have been loyal through all these ages, that you should be subjected to such treatment; that this seems a very strange way to treat a faithful Son; that there can be no good reason for it, and nothing can be gained by it. Ask God if he cannot make some change. Ask him if he is not overdoing the matter.

And so we, his followers, may sometimes have similar suggestions. But a murmuring, rebellious spirit would prove that we are not in the right attitude of heart; it would prove that we had either never really submitted our will to the Lord or else had withdrawn it, and that we lacked confidence in him. Any such temptations must be promptly resisted by the child of God.

When St. Peter sought to defend our dear Master from the soldiers and officers who came to arrest him, though knowing what the end would be, Jesus said: "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" He did not think for one moment of yielding to any temptation to use his superior power to prevent his enemies from taking him. He showed them that he possessed such power; for they all went backward, and fell to the ground. Thus he made it manifest that had he chosen to exercise his supernatural power he was infinitely stronger than they, and submitted not because he must, but because he was in reality voluntarily submitting himself to death. This was a demonstration of his previous declaration: "No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself." (John 10:17, 18) He steadfastly refused to yield to any appeals from his flesh to escape or to lessen his sufferings. "He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin."

We might weaken sometimes; we might come short—and we do come short. We cannot fully live up to the glorious standard. Christ was without sin. We have sin abounding in our flesh, and we have weaknesses which he did not have. But if we are to follow in his steps, we are to overcome, and to prove overcomers to the end. We are not to say to ourselves: I cannot live as Jesus lived, even if I try ever so hard; what is the use of setting up so perfect a standard? But there is use in it; and we should earnestly strive to come as near as possible to that standard. By keeping this glorious pattern ever before us, we shall be able to come much nearer perfection than if our standard was lower. We must have no less than this perfect standard as our aim, if we expect to win the prize for which we have entered this race.

If Jesus had sinned and had come short in any way, it would have meant failure complete. He would never have had a resurrection. This was typified in the Jewish high priest when he passed under the veil with the blood. The high priest who had not followed every instruction of the law in the offering of his sacrifices would have died under the veil. This was what Jesus feared in Gethsemane, when "he offered up strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save Him out of [Greek *ek*] death"—not to save him from dying, but to save him out of death by resurrection. And the record is that he was heard and was strengthened, comforted. (Luke 22:39-45; Hebrews 5:7) As soon as he had the Father's assurance that he had not violated any conditions, and that he would not go into eternal death, he was content to suffer any other experience that might come to him.

OUR SYMPATHETIC HIGH PRIEST

From the fact that our High Priest was tempted and suffered, we may know that he is not one who is cold and indifferent. On the contrary, he is one who is full of sympathy, who has had the largest kind of experience. (Hebrews 2:18; 5:8) If then, we have temptations, what must we do? We are to come to our great High Priest; and as we come to the throne of heavenly grace, we may come with boldness (or, more properly translated, with courage, not doubting), knowing that the one who meets us there is fully able to sympathize with our every sorrow and need, and with our every temptation.

If we have not sinned wilfully, if our sins have been those of imperfection of the flesh through besetment, so that at the time we were not able to overcome and to control the flesh properly, we may come with courage, knowing that the Lord understands all about the weaknesses of our fallen human nature—He remembers that we are but dust. (Psalm 103:13, 14) St. Paul says we cannot properly judge

even ourselves as respects our own weaknesses. He says (1 Corinthians 4:3, 4), "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self; . . . but he that judgeth me is the Lord." He knows how to make all due allowance. Then let us not hesitate to come to him in prayer, pleading his promises. Let us seek for the mercy of the Lord, knowing that we shall receive it, when we are truly striving to be faithful to him.

Our Father knows all about these experiences we are having, and he made the provision for our covering. He provided succor from our difficulties, that we might come in as members of the body of Christ, even though imperfect. He knows that we cannot fully control our imperfect bodies. But as we become stronger, we should be better able to control the mortal body. The new will should subjugate the old mind, and have better success in conquering the flesh. We must scrutinize ourselves and our progress; we should not be satisfied nor feel that we are proving overcomers, unless we can from time to time see growth in ourselves in Christlikeness and in ability to subdue the old nature with its impulses and tendencies.

No other arrangement would have been so good for us as the one the Lord has chosen. We have our weaknesses and imperfections charged up to us; but God has provided a way by which we can have them all forgiven, if they are unavoidable or if there has been no wilfulness connected with them. Any measure of wilfulness in a child of God requires expiation by stripes. If we judge—closely inspect or scrutinize—ourselves, our thoughts, words and actions, we shall require less judging and disciplining by the Lord to correct our faults. If we realize that we have been remiss in any way in keeping our vows, if we think that we have been lax in some particular at any time, it is helpful to impose some penalty upon ourselves that we shall feel. We should go to the Lord in earnest prayer, asking forgiveness, and promising him by his grace to strive to be more watchful in the future. We should daily scrutinize ourselves along this line, and never lightly pass over any failure.

How precious and comforting the realization that our merciful High Priest is touched with the feeling of our infirmities! We should never, however, relax our vigilance because of this knowledge, or take any advantage of his mercy. But we rejoice that we have a Mercy Seat to which we can go as soon as we are conscious of our inability to be all that we would, and rejoice to know that we shall not be turned away.

"A LITTLE WHILE"

How long, O Lord, till I am meet
To hold with thee communion sweet?
How long until thine eyes shall see
The Spirit's fruits complete in me?

When shall I come to thee, my Lord,
As promised in thy blessed Word?
When shall I see thee as thou art,
And satisfy my longing heart?

Ah, then, how mean will seem these toys,
These transitory, earthly joys!
How short appear this dreary way,
When night hath turned to endless day!

Then, peace, my soul, be strong, my heart,
And bravely strive to do thy part;
"A little while," he soon shall come,
And say, "Enough, my child, come home!"

Nov. 22, 1914. GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

EUREKA PROGRAM—FAMILY PROGRAM

In some of our back issues we have explained what constitutes the Eureka Drama X, without pictures—only phonograph and Drama records, including musical records; also the Y Drama, with tinted slides, Drama lectures, music, etc.

Now we have a third suggestion, viz.: Eureka Family Drama. It consists of a phonograph of good, clear tones and a choice selection of records from the Drama and some musical records. A few of these records might be said to be a little shop-worn, but none of them are bad—most of them are strictly new. They are priced so as to bring them within the reach of many of our readers who could not afford to purchase the regular Drama, but who would like to have some of the records for their own family use and for such of the public as might choose to hear our most wonderful records.

The entire outfit represents twenty of the short lectures of the Scenario, four beautiful hymns and a disc-phonograph (concealed horn)—all for $12, or if all new $15. You would need to count on cost of expressage according to distance.

SEEING THINGS AND BEWILDERED

Few realize the wonderful change that has come over public sentiment during the last forty years—the harvest time of this age. The increase of knowledge prophesied for our day came on time and is doing its work. It is opening eyes of understanding long blinded by ignorance, superstition, false doctrines. Not only is this true in respect to God's consecrated people, who are now so much more clearly understanding the Bible and its message, but it is true in large degree of the intelligent people of the world who make no profession of Christianity, yet have a good respect for the principles of righteousness, justice and mercy.

Misled by the errors which have adulterated Christianity, these well-disposed people wonder to what extent the Church's claims might be true, to the effect that present kingdoms constitute Christendom—Christ's kingdom. Naturally they would doubt it, wondering why Messiah's kingdom would make so little progress in the earth and exhibit so little power. This leads on to a double confusion:

(1) They wonder why all Christian people do not undertake the political, social and financial problems of the world and bring harmony out of confusion, and thus accomplish the world-wide uplift which should be expected if Christ's kingdom is controlling the world and if Christian people are commissioned of the Lord to convert the world and uplift it socially, etc.

Many preachers and professed Christians are similarly led astray from the real commission of the church by these errors —so that they abandon the preaching of the Gospel, and instead preach Sociology, etc., etc.

Thus it comes that the comparatively few Christian people who are following the Scriptural lines carefully, and preaching the authorized Gospel of Christ, are discredited, hindered, rebuked, made to appear to the world as neglecting their commission.

On the other hand, how plainly the Bible presents the subject! The true church is commissioned by the Lord, not to convert the world, but to take out of the world a little flock of faithful footstep followers of the Lord. These are to pass through great tribulation, in order that they may enter into the kingdom, which is still future. They are not to mix in politics, etc., but to throw their entire influence on the side of the preaching of the Gospel to all who have hearing ears to the intent that, thus drawn, called and sanctified by the truth, an elect class of one hundred and forty-four thousand shall finally be completed and, by the "change" of the first resurrection, pass from the earthly nature to the heavenly and become the bride of Christ, his associate in the great kingdom which he will then establish world-wide, to the blessing and enlightment of all the families of the earth.

(2) The world's second difficulty growing out of the adulteration of Christian doctrine could not be better illustrated than by the following article which we clipped from *The New York Call*. Evidently the writer is genuinely puzzled, as thousands of Christian people are puzzled, by the present war and by the fact that professed Christians are fighting on all sides, under every government except the Turkish. What are they fighting for and what are they fighting against, if so be that all of these kingdoms are Christ's kingdoms—Christendom? Surely this war and the more terrible conditions which the Bible shows us will follow it will gradually open the eyes of mankind more and more. By and by, when the "flaming fire" of anarchy shall sweep the world, every eye of understanding will have discerned the gigantic error of the creeds which for a time misled us all. Their eyes will see through the trouble; and gradually they will understand the facts, the great lesson, that all the kingdoms of this world are human and are in large degree associated with the empire of the "prince of this world," and that these are being overthrown to the intent that Messiah's kingdom shall be established under the whole heavens. The article from *The Call* follows:

A SLUMP IN SALVATION

"It is not only Socialism that has gone under in the European fracas, but the Salvation Army has also disappeared on the continent. Ten thousand of its most active members and workers are now fighting under literal banners of 'Blood and Fire' instead of the metaphysical symbol known by that name, under which the army conducted its warfare against 'the devil.'

"The organization and system have completely collapsed on the continent, and in neutral countries the army is financially broken. A reconstruction of the entire army will, it is said, become necessary after the war is over. Its officers declare that it has suffered more than any religious organization in existence except that of the Catholic church. In this country the well-to-do are closing down on their donations, the churches give nothing; the industrial plants, from which most of the money was extracted, have mostly gone out of business and collections at street meetings have fallen to the vanishing point.

"The report seems to show that this concern was no different from thousands of others based frankly on material considerations. When economically affected, it disappeared as they did. The metaphysical signboards and trademarks under which it carried on business became utterly useless and impotent in the face of material collapse. Actual, physical warfare, simply blotted out the abstract conflict between 'Sin and Holiness,' which the army was supposed to continually wage, and 'salvation' became a drug on the market. Those to whom it is offered without money and without price have no use for it, and those who formerly put up the price so that it might be brought to 'perishing sinners' have quit; and both the sinners and those who carried them the glad tidings are equally perishing on the battlefields of Europe, fighting the 'battle of the Lord' on opposing sides.

"But in this respect, the army is by no means unique. There is nothing which purports to represent 'religion' today that can stand up against war, from the haughty ultra-respectable, established state churches to the 'religion' of the gutter. The universal impotency of all of them suggests that they, too, should be sent to the scrap pile along with 'militarism.' If the world needs 'religion' of any kind, it needs an utterly new and different one, instead of one that serves 'the devil' in war time, and pretends to oppose him in time of peace."

THE CHURCH'S ORDINATION

DECEMBER 13.—Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:36-49.

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Matthew 28:20.

Today's study relates to the commission, or authorization of service, which Jesus appointed to his church in his discourses during the forty days following his resurrection. First we have the Master's words on the evening after his journey with two of his disciples to the village of Emmaus, near Jerusalem. Then we have a part of the general commission which Jesus gave just before he parted from his disciples and was received up into heaven.

The lessons of that journey to Emmaus and of subsequent appearances must have been very valuable to all the followers of Christ at that time. He said, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you [while I was yet the Man Christ Jesus, before my resurrection change], how all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

The Evangelist sums up in few words conversation the Scriptural exposition which probably occupied at least an hour. We are not told what these expositions were which opened their eyes of understanding, but we can surmise. He probably explained to them the significance of the Passover lamb that was killed at that time of the year, and showed that he was the antitype of that lamb. He probably explained to them the true significance of the Passover—that in the type the first-born of Israel were passed over, and subsequently represented by the tribe of Levi, including the priests; and that the antitype of these first-borns is the church of the first-borns, whose names are written in heaven—all the saintly followers of Jesus who will be of the royal priesthood, and the antitypical Levites, their servants, in the work of the world's uplift during Messiah's kingdom.

The Master doubtless also gave them some suggestions respecting the antitypical Atonement day and "the better sacrifices"—that he himself began "the better sacrifices," which would be continued in his disciples; and that, the sacrifices being finished, the Atonement blessings would go forth from the High Priest to all the earth, during Messiah's kingdom of a thousand years.

POWER FROM ON HIGH PROMISED

Whatever features of the great plan the Master unfolded, we have the assurance that his auditors were deeply interested. Their sadness disappeared. Their first thoughts were merely that they had lost their blessed Master, his counsels, his instructions; but now, through this enlightenment, their hearts burned with a fresh inspiration of knowledge. They saw heights, depths, lengths and breadths that they had never dreamed of in God's plan. They saw that the death of Jesus was necessary for the carrying out of all the hopes and prospects inspired by the promises of God. They saw that they themselves were privileged also, not only to suffer with him, but also to be glorified.

The concluding part of the Master's message on that occasion was, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you." The Father had promised in various types that the church, the bride of Christ, would receive the holy Spirit from Jesus, their Head. It was typified, for instance, in the holy oil which, poured upon the head of Aaron, typifying Jesus, flowed down upon the body of Aaron, typifying the anointing of the church.

This promise of the divine acceptance of the church was all-important. Without it the disciples would have no commission, and could not be ambassadors for God. Jesus indeed had sent out the twelve, and afterwards the seventy; but they were his personal representatives, and he had given them of his own spirit, his own power, by which they worked miracles, cast out devils, etc. But they had never been recognized of the Father. As we read, "The holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:39) They must wait for this begetting and anointing of the holy Spirit. It alone could imbue or qualify them for the divine service—to be God's ambassadors and representatives.

"LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAY"

St. Matthew's account of our Lord's benediction upon his disciples and his commissioning of them to declare his message, is full of interest to us. By his appointment the eleven met him in a mountain in Galilee. For a few moments only he appeared to them. They worshiped, some fully convinced, others wavering. It was for the convincing of such waverers that Jesus remained during the forty days. And we are sure that he fully accomplished his work of convincing the eleven; for they were all of one heart and one mind when they waited in the upper room for the Pentecostal blessing.

Jesus came near to them, and declared that full authority had been given unto him in respect to both heavenly things and earthly things. Unless they could realize this, it would be impossible for them properly to represent him before the world. He had not this power and authority previously, during his earthly ministry. He was then in process of trial as respects his faithful loyalty even unto death, even unto the death of the cross. But after he had demonstrated his loyalty, the Father had raised him from the dead to a glorious fulness of power. He was thus declared to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead. He wished his disciples to know that he was no longer under the human limitations or under the limitations of the death covenant. That work he had finished. He had entered into the blessings, the reward. He had experienced his change and now had all power, not only in respect to earthly things, but also in respect to heavenly things.

Prophecy had declared that unto him all would bow, both those in heaven and those on earth. He had entered into the condition where this prophecy would soon begin to be fulfilled. He had ascended up on high, where all the angels worshiped, gave heed to him as the Father's exalted One. Not yet is the latter part of the promise fulfilled—that all on earth should bow to him. The time for such a recognition will be during his Messianic kingdom of a thousand years. As now, all who come to a true knowledge of Jesus as the Son of God gladly bow their knee to him as the Father's representative, so gladly the world will come to recognize the Only Begotten and render obedience to him.

Eventually every knee shall bow and every tongue confess; for, according to the divine arrangement all who fail to ap-

preciate the glorified Son of God at that time will be destroyed —counted unworthy of any further blessings and favor of God, who has bestowed upon Christ all the blessings which he designs for the fallen race.

"GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH"

Here is the commission. Primarily it belonged to the eleven apostles, but subsequently it included St. Paul, who took the place of Judas and who was "not one whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles." (2 Corinthians 11:5) The apostles, and they alone, are authorized as mouthpieces of the Lord Jesus Christ and his church to the world. All that has been told us of apostolic bishops being successors of the twelve is false, unscriptural. They had no successors; they are with us yet. The Master's message through them is given us in the New Testament, of which one of them wrote, "The Word of God is sufficient, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished." (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) To the apostles was given the great work of inaugurating the church. They were endued with the power at Pentecost.

But while Jesus appointed especially the twelve apostles to be his mouthpieces to the church, and declared that whatsoever they would bind on earth we might know was bound in heaven, and that whatsoever they would declare was not bound on earth was not bound in the sight of heaven, nevertheless the Lord arranged that each member of the church should be his representative, and that each in proportion to his opportunity and ability might have a share in proclaiming the Gospel message. Whoever receives the Spirit of begetting, the anointing, is included in the statement of Isa. 61:1-3 as a member of the body of Christ, under the anointed Head, Jesus.

Thus we read, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath appointed me to bind up the broken-hearted," etc. Everyone who receives the holy Spirit is thus ordained, or authorized, to preach, according to his or her opportunity or limitation of circumstances or conditions. One limitation of the Apostle is that the sisters are not to teach in public. (1 Tim. 2:12) Nevertheless there are plenty of opportunities for all.

Evidently, therefore, a great mistake has been made in the arrangement of a clergy class, who declare themselves to be the only ones who are ordained, or authorized, to preach or to teach God's message. Jesus and the apostles knew nothing of a clergy class or of a laity class. On the contrary, our Lord declared, "All ye are brethren; and One is your Master, even Christ." And the Master and his twelve apostles especially forbade anything approaching a lordship amongst his followers, anything like a clerical class.

THE CHURCH'S COMMISSION

The message given is, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples from all nations." The commission is not to make the nations disciples, but, as elsewhere expressed, to gather out of all nations those willing to be disciples of Christ, whether rich or poor, learned or ignorant, noble or base. A disciple of Christ is a follower, one who learns, one who copies. Jesus defined this discipleship, saying, "If any man will come after me [be my disciple], let him deny himself [set himself aside, ignore himself, his talent, his will, his wealth, his everything—discipleship first], and let him take up his cross and follow me."

The intimation is that all true followers of Christ, all true disciples, will find the path in which the Lord will lead a difficult one, in which their own wills must be continually crossed, opposed—a way in which they will continually have difficulty according to the flesh. However, the promise is that eventually, "Where I am [in heaven or in kingdom glory], there shall my disciple be."

While the church of Christ has properly viewed water immersion as a symbol of death to the world, death to self, and of rising to newness of life as members of Christ, the body of Christ, nevertheless the water baptism is only a picture of the true. So here it is stated that our commission is not water baptism, but baptism into the name of the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit. "Into the name of" signifies into accord with, into fellowship with. All of Christ's disciples are to recognize the Father's name as standing for righteousness; and they are to become dead to every other principle than that which his name represents, and to be thoroughly immersed into that name of righteousness, justice, truth.

Ignoring all other names, such as Lutherans or Wesleyans or Calvinists, or State church names, such as Roman Catholics or Anglican Catholics or Greek Catholics, these are to be thoroughly immersed into the name of Christ and to recognize his name and to be his members, his body, his church. Furthermore, they are to be immersed into the name of, the recognition of, the holy Spirit—their own spirit, their own wills being dead. Their own aims, hopes and prospects are to be ignored. God's holy will, God's mind, God's holy purpose, are to be their will and purpose.

Thus we see our commission as respects all people of all nations who have an ear to hear our message. We are to make them disciples and to immerse them into the name of the Father, the Son and the holy Spirit. We are to teach them to observe all things whatsoever Jesus commands. This is the extent of our authority. We are not to organize human systems and to call them kingdoms, churches, or other names. We are merely to prepare the followers of Jesus, co-operating with God, who will work in them to will and to do his good pleasure.

"UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD"

"And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." His words have been understood to signify that the world is to come to an end; whereas what the Master really said, according to the Greek, is that he would be with his people, even to the end of the age—down to the time when this Gospel age will have accomplished its divinely purposed mission of gathering out a sufficient number of disciples of Christ to complete the divine purpose—until the Gospel message shall have accomplished the sanctification through obedience to the truth of a proper number to complete the bride of Christ in glory, the royal priesthood. Then the end of the age will come. Then will come the Master himself, to gather his elect, to glorify them with himself, to establish his kingdom, to bless the world of mankind—the non-elect.

"WHERE HE WAS BEFORE"

DECEMBER 20.—Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11.

"What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?"—John 6:62.

The forty days which followed our Lord's resurrection were sufficient time for the divine purpose. The disciples had lost their first bewilderment, created by the crucifixion of the One whom they supposed was about to take the throne to rule Israel and the world. We can see the wisdom of the divine method of communicating the facts to the disciples. They were not alarmed, as they would have been if Jesus had appeared to them in a light above the brightness of the sun, as he afterwards appeared to Saul of Tarsus. Gradually they learned that their Lord was no longer dead, but alive; and that he was no longer a human being, but now a spirit being —that he was no longer confined, therefore, to the usages of humans, but, like the angels, could come and go like the wind, appearing and disappearing at pleasure.

It was a slow lesson. After the three appearances of the first day, they looked for him each day until the following Sabbath, when the fourth appearance, or manifestation, was made. This delay only whetted their appetite, their craving, for knowledge respecting him. Meantime they could, and did, think over all the things which Jesus had said to them during his earthly ministry. They perceived wherein they had mistaken a heavenly kingdom for an earthly one—or at least mistook the time of the establishment of Messiah's kingdom.

The lesson given on the way to Emmaus must have been very impressive. It dealt with the prophecies which related to Jesus, and explained to them how these prophecies were already in fulfilment—some of them already fulfilled, and some of them still future. Well did they remark that their hearts burned within them when he made these explanations!

AN IMPORTANT LESSON

After the four appearances, apparently two full weeks passed without any manifestation. In that time the tension relaxed, and the affairs of earth began to assert themselves. What would the disciples do? Privately they had been thinking of the wisdom of returning to their former employment, from which Jesus had called them to be fishers of men; but none of them cared to broach the subject to the others. St. Peter, always a leader of thought and action, finally declared himself: "I go a fishing"—I am going back to the fishing business. A word was all that was necessary. The others were of the same mind, and the old firm was reorganized.

For just such a decision Jesus had delayed his ascension. He would show them that their continuance in the work of fishing for men could go on in his absence with his blessing. The Master oversaw their interests, and that night gave them

"bad luck." They caught nothing. They were discouraged, but it was "good for them." As is written, "All things work together for good to those who love God"—even their financial disappointments.

In the morning Jesus stood on the shore and called to them, asking them whether they had any fish for sale. They replied that they had caught nothing. The Master said, "Cast the net on the other side of the boat." They might have said that such advice was foolish, but they were in the mood to do anything to get rid of their "bad luck." They cast the net as directed, and quickly it was filled with great fishes. Then they knew that the One on the shore must be their risen Lord, who had thus made a new manifestation of himself to them.

The fishermen hastened to the shore. They had known only one experience like this ever, and that was when on a previous occasion the Master had given them a similar great catch. The boat moved too slowly for St. Peter. He was afraid that somehow the Master would disappear. Girding upon him his fisherman's coat, he swam to the shore. The Master did not leave, but invited St. Peter and companions to breakfast from fish already on the fire.

Here was a great lesson. Their Master could provide cooked fish when necessary, and could give them just as much success as he saw best in respect to their fishing business. He who could thus provide for their needs on this occasion could do so in the future, should he send them forth again, authorized to speak in his name. None of them asked the stranger his name; for, although his features and his clothing were different, they knew that it was another manifestation of their Lord, who was no longer a human being and who was able to appear in various forms, as he had done.

The lesson taught, Jesus vanished. He had one other meeting with his followers in Galilee. It was a pre-arranged meeting. Jesus had sent word that he would meet his followers there. St. Paul says that about five hundred brethren saw him, and were witnesses of the resurrection.—1 Corinthians 15:6.

OUR LORD'S PARTING INSTRUCTIONS

Our lesson today relates especially to the ascension of Jesus. This took place near Jerusalem—at Bethany. Apparently he met with his followers in the Holy City—perhaps at a very early hour, by appointment. He led them out to Bethany, talking the while, explaining the things that would be to their advantage to know—the things they would need to be thoroughly convinced of before he would leave them, and before they would be in a proper attitude of faith to be prepared for the blessings he had yet to send.

St. Luke, who also wrote the Book of Acts, tells us that the essence of Jesus' teaching during the forty days was in respect to the kingdom of God. Still they understood not; indeed, it was not possible for them to understand fully until they would receive the begetting of the holy Spirit. It was toward that point, therefore, that Jesus directed their attention, saying that they should not depart from Jerusalem nor engage in any work of preaching, but should simply wait for the promise of the Father, of which he had previously told them—the gift of the holy Spirit. He explained that John the Baptist had indeed used the water baptism, but that he intended that all his followers should receive a superior baptism and qualification—the baptism of the Spirit at Pentecost.

On this last occasion, which was probably the seventh manifestation, the disciples had gotten their bearing to such an extent that they asked the very significant question, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" The kingdom had been taken away from Israel away back in the days of Zedekiah, king of Judah. At that time Jehovah had said that he would overturn the kingdom until Messiah would come—"until he comes whose right it is, and I will give it unto him."—Ezekiel 21:25-27.

The disciples considered Jesus to be the Messiah, and thought that the Father's time had come for giving him the kingdom. But they had been witnesses to the contrary—that the kingdom of heaven had suffered violence at the hands of the rulers, that the rightful heir to the throne had been slain, and that he had risen from the dead. They had regained their confidence that there would be a King, and they were now inquiring whether it would be at this time or at some future coming of the Master that his kingdom would be established. —Acts 1:6, 7.

The Master's answer was significant: "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath kept in his own hand"—in his own power. The Master had already intimated to his disciples that at the appointed time they would know the times and the seasons, but it was not due for them to understand those things then. They must wait patiently. The development of patience would do them good, would strengthen their faith, would strengthen their character in general.

For the Father to have made known the long interval of nearly nineteen hundred years before Messiah's kingdom would be established would not have been wise—would not have been for the good of his people, who would have been discouraged in view of the long delay of their hopes. The Master therefore merely indicated that they must walk by faith and not by sight, and especially that they must not expect to understand anything respecting God's program until after they would receive the anointing of the holy Spirit.

After receiving the Spirit, they would be fully qualified to be God's representatives and to speak the message; and from time to time they would be given the "meat in due season." Thus they would not be in darkness with the world, and the day of the Lord would not come upon them as a thief in the night or as a snare. The Pentecostal blessing which they received qualified them fully for the work of the ministry, even though it did not cover their natural blemishes; for it was after they had received the holy Spirit that we read, "The people perceived that they were ignorant and unlearned men, and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus."—Acts 4:13.

OUR LORD'S ASCENSION

Our Lord's ascension was a spectacular one, so far as his church was concerned, but not in respect to the world. Of the world he had already said, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more." The world did not see our Lord during the forty days in which he manifested himself to his disciples; for he showed himself to none except his faithful, consecrated ones. The ocular demonstrations so helpful to his disciples culminated with an actual ascension of the Lord into the air in the body in which he had just been with them. Because they were not yet spirit-begotten, they doubtless needed just such a manifestation to help their faith, to lead them to understand that they would see the Master no more until he would come with power and great glory to assemble all his saints to himself and to bless the world.

Our Golden Text reminds us that Jesus spoke of this ascension beforehand. The ascending up where he was before should not, however, be understood merely to signify a return to a previous place. Rather, it should be understood to signify a return to a previous condition—a spirit condition, which the Master had left to be made flesh, that he might ransom the world.

As Jesus parted from his disciples into the clouds out of their sight, we assume that the body in which he had just appeared was dissolved, or dematerialized. The use of it was merely to help to establish the faith of the disciples and to be a means of instruction, an assurance that Jesus had gone permanently—that they need not expect to see him further in any kind of manifestation. It was an object lesson.

MANNER OF OUR LORD'S RETURN

One of the evangelists recounts that after Jesus had disappeared angels materialized and addressed them, saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." This statement has led some to believe that at his second advent Jesus will materialize and appear in the flesh; but to our understanding they are laboring under a grave misapprehension. The world is to see Jesus no more; and the church is to see him only with the eye of faith until that time when they shall experience their change, in the end of the age. Then we shall see him as he is—not as he was; for we shall be like him. Then we shall know even as we are now known.—1 Corinthians 15:50-52; 1 John 3:2.

It is worthy of notice that the angels laid stress upon the manner of the going, and that the manner agrees with what the Bible tells us respecting our Lord's second coming. He went quietly, secretly, unknown to the world—he is to return as a thief in the night; and none will know of his return except those whose eyes of understanding will be opened to discern the signs of the presence of the Son of Man. These will be his loyal, saintly few. So Jesus explained, saying that at his second coming it would be for a time as it was in the days of Noah—mankind would be eating, drinking, planting and marrying, and would not know of his presence.—Matthew 24:37-39.

INTERESTING LETTERS

RE-DISTRIBUTION OF B. S. M.

Dearly Beloved Pastor:—

We realize how very busy you are, and this keeps us from writing you often, telling you how much we appreciate your labor of love on behalf of the household of faith. We certainly feasted upon the November 1st TOWER. What could be stronger evidence as to our present position than is there offered? We praise our Father for such a channel of blessing, and we ask him, each day, dear brother, to strengthen your heart, realizing something of the persecution that comes upon you as a result of your faithfulness to him and to his cause.

We have had such blessings in the last few weeks in putting out the volunteer matter! We want to tell you the method we have adopted; if it is new, perhaps a line in THE TOWER would bring the same blessing to other classes. It has been our privilege to meet with many of the classes throughout the United States, and having served one of the large ones as Captain of the Volunteer work for three years, we naturally notice this branch of the work, its effectiveness, etc. When we first took charge of the work the friends were merely throwing the tracts into the yards; in a short time nearly all were placing them on the gallery, and a little later they were putting them inside the screen door, or under the door. Our method is to ring the bell, and meet the one who comes to the door with a smile, making some remark about the contents of the "sample copy of the little non-sectarian religious paper" we wish to present them.

As to the advantages of this method, it is a problem among business men, nowadays, to get advertising matter into the hands of prospective customers. To illustrate; I have gone to houses many times while colporteuring, and when the lady would come to the door about the first thing she would do would be to grab up a bunch of advertising matter that had been put inside the screen, and wad it up for the stove or waste-basket. Of course, our literature would get the same treatment; result, waste of thousands of dollars.

Now, as to the blessing that accrues from the method which we have adopted: First, the tract is not destroyed; second, we feel that we have done the Father's work as well as we would do our own work; third, we meet many who say, "If this is Russell's literature I don't want anything to do with it." What an opportunity this affords to defend the truth! Nearly all will admit that they have not read the literature, but have heard this, that, or the other about it. By using a little tact we can break down the prejudice and often get them interested. Fourth, we find many who are interested to some extent in present truth, who do not know that there is a class in the city. Sister Dunn met a gentleman who was reading your sermons regularly, but did not know that there were classes of Bible Students. She loaned him the books, and in a few weeks he made a full consecration to the Lord.

One of the brothers who was working with me met a minister recently who, when he learned that we had Pastor Russell's literature, was so angry that his lips quivered when he tried to demean you. He finally admitted that he had not read your writings, and that he could not prove a single assertion he had made. He also came down from his haughty stand and admitted that he did not understand the Bible.

These are a few of the blessings, dear brother, that come as a result of doing the Master's work rightly. What courage it develops in one to go right up to a door with a message from the King of kings! We get some polishing, of course; but isn't that what we need? We meet people who have never heard of present truth, as many times as Denver has been served with the literature. The reason is, as above stated, the tracts had found their way into the stove or waste-basket, along with other advertising matter.

Trusting that others may receive some of the blessing that we are receiving, through a few lines in THE TOWER on this subject, we beg your forgiveness for taking up so much of your valuable time.

Sister Dunn joins in loving greetings to yourself and all the dear family at Bethel.

Faithfully, your brother and fellow-servant in the One blessed Hope, DR. W. H. DUNN.—Colo.

TURNS ATHEISTS TO THE BIBLE

Dear Brethren at London:—

I notice that the only place the Photo-Drama has been actively opposed in the London area is at Ilford (where, by the way, the meetings have had overflow attendances). The first start was apparent early Sunday morning (when we arrived to rig up the booth, screen, etc., for the afternoon presentation) by the appearance of well-written warnings in yellow chalk on the pavement outside admonishing the passers-by to "Beware of Pastor Russell's lie," etc., but as the expected passers-by were all more or less in bed the "early birds" demolished the "worms" with a duster.

By the time the afternoon presentation started several energetic opponents were at the entrance supplying everyone with opposition literature. We asked one mild looking friend whether he thought he was exhibiting the Master's Spirit. He said, "My Master is the Lord Jesus Christ; Mr. Russell's master is the devil."

We had the opportunity at intermission time to give the exact quotation concerning this information to the crowded audience, with the result that the opponents received quite cold comfort as the crowds passed out from the Photo-Drama, and the attempt to get up an argument and collect a crowd failed entirely. It was most noticeable that the people went straight off to their homes and ignored the odd folks outside. And it was quite evident that what the public had seen had proved beyond doubt that the devil was not connected with the Photo-Drama or its founder; in fact, the opponents, who are at work every night, have proved a standing advertisement.

But more interesting still, and certainly to our surprise, is the fact that we have been opposed in the same way by members of the Rational Press Assn. (atheists, really). A brother who had converse with one of them writes me the following remarkable information of what was said: "A glance at the leaflet showed me that it discounted the miracles of the Scriptures, and stated that they were not to be seriously considered in the light of science and proper reasoning." "I asked the gent why he discounted the miracles, and if he discounted these why not put away the whole of the record of Holy Writ." He replied, "Exactly! I do not believe any of it, save a few historical points, which other books give." Then I said, "Why do you then come outside a religious meeting such as this and confine your efforts to discounting the miracles?" He replied, "Well, this Mr. Russell, whose teachings you have heard tonight, puts an entirely different construction on the miracles, and now some who had turned aside from Scriptural teaching and taken up a sound, scientific reasoning (i. e. Atheism) are believing what he says."

Surely "the wisdom of the wise will perish" when the beams of truth are focused on them.

Yours in the dear Lord, F. GUARD, SR.

INTERESTING REPORT OF EUREKA DRAMA

Dear Brethren:—

I am herewith sending the report of exhibition of Part III., which closed the series at Holze, Ill. However, we had a fourth meeting, a finale, at which was given an illustrated lecture. The speaker used for his subject, "The Two Sacrifices." Slides were shown of Abraham offering up Isaac, and the explanation was made that it typified Jehovah offering up his dear Son in sacrifice. Also a great deal was said about "hell," and slides were shown of Dante's Inferno. Then with a brief explanation of the words sheol, hades, and gehenna, the "Bible hell" was shown, the speaker commenting quite liberally on the same.

At the close of the meeting fifty names were handed in out of an audience of 125. This was very encouraging to us, and the class is much elated over their first experience with the "Eureka Drama."

All these meetings were held in the school house. The town is very small, there being not over 150 inhabitants; and at least 400 people were served—an average of 100 at each meeting. Many farmers attended, and all seemed well pleased.

Some of the class felt somewhat reluctant on entering upon this new branch of the work, but now all are rejoicing exceedingly in the glad service. At first there seemed to be a little fear of encountering much opposition, etc.; but when once we realize that it is the Lord's work, and that He has promised "never to leave us nor forsake us," these big mountains that we see at first dissolve into molehills.

The class has an automobile, which is used in the work. Getting an early supper, we load up our paraphernalia and start off to the place of meeting, so as to have plenty of time to set up the machine and get up the curtain. Prayer is first offered, asking the Lord's blessing on the work, which surely has been with us.

Yours rejoicing in the service of the King of kings and Lord of lords. LOUIS F. WIEBRECHT.—Illinois.

CREATION DRAMA DID IT

Dear Brother Russell:—

My wife and I truly thank our heavenly Father for the great and priceless blessing which has come to us through your instrumentality. It was your beautiful Photo-Drama

which was the cause of our seeing and accepting the truth as our own.

We believe that we owe you, and the Ecclesia, which we attend regularly, a debt which we shall never be able to pay. We feel as if the Drama was brought here for us alone. With that feeling in our hearts we can see and truly appreciate our dear heavenly Father's great love for us. But we cannot see where we are deserving of such great love.

We are truly happy now; we were not happy before. We could see too much of one another's faults. We sought worldly things, but now we count them "loss and dross," as the Apostle says.

We have your six volumes of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. They are a great help. We spend as much time as we can in reading and studying them. We have taken the Vow. We read your Morning Resolve, and the Daily Heavenly Manna every morning. They are a source of comfort to us. There are many things which I have to be thankful for. I won't try to enumerate them, because my dear heavenly Father has been bountifully blessing me ever since I fully accepted the Lord as my Redeemer. I shall continue to pray for you, dear Brother, and I ask your prayers.

Your brother in the Lord, ———

VOL. XXXV BROOKLYN, N. Y., DECEMBER 15, 1914 No. 24

1914—ANNUAL REPORT—1914

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY

For the sake of our many new readers we explain that the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, as the parent organization, represents all the activities in Christian work with which THE WATCH TOWER and its Editor are associated. All the work done through the International Bible Students Association and Peoples Pulpit Association, directly and indirectly, is the work of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. The Editor of THE WATCH TOWER is the President of all three of these Societies. All financial responsibility connected with the work proceeds from the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. From it the other Societies and all the branches of the work receive their financial support. There is nothing unusual in this. It serves to keep the different parts of the work separate. Just so our Methodist friends have a Methodist Book Concern, an Epworth League for the young people, and both Home and Foreign Missionary Societies, besides numerous other aid societies, etc., etc.

Our division of the work was made necessary by the fact that the parent society Charter by the State of Pennsylvania is not by law permitted to hold property in New York State; hence the necessity for organizing a subsidiary society to hold any real estate in New York. Similiarly, the laws of Great Britain prevent any foreign society from holding title to real estate there. This necessitated the organization of the International Bible Students Association with a British charter. Thus it comes that we use sometimes the one name and sometimes the other in various parts of our work—yet they all in the end mean the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society—to which all donations should be made.

1914 A VERY NOTABLE YEAR

For instance, we have for forty years been looking forward to the present year as the one in which Gentile Times would expire and the one, therefore, in which we might expect some special manifestation of the transfer of earth's government to its new King, Messiah. We had hoped that the ending of the Gentile Times might have signified the ending also of the church's times, or years, in the flesh, the ushering of all the Lord's consecrated people into the kingdom. The latter expectation brought, we are sure, a great blessing to our thousands of readers. It brought them quickening of spiritual interests, and zeal to know and to do the Master's will. It brought them heart searchings, to see whether or not they were ready for the kingdom. It brought them a condition of peace with God which passeth all human understanding, so that now they are able to rejoice in the will of the Lord, whatever it may be. If the Lord will continue us in his favor, it will matter little to us whether we are on this side of the veil or on the other side—so great are our joys and blessings, and so pronounced the peace which rules our hearts.

In God's providence the present year has been the most wonderful one in the history of our Society. We believe that the Lord has used it mightily in pulling down prejudice, ignorance, superstition and error. It seems as though this year we had the grand climacteric of all previous efforts on the part of God's consecrated people to show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. In order that the results may be seen in their truly miraculous light, it is proper that we remind our readers that we have no church organization in the ordinary sense of the word, no bondage of any kind, no obligation to pay, either to the parent society or anybody else, either ten per cent. or any other sum. We remind you also that no solicitations for money in any way are authorized by this Society; that every amount, therefore, which has come into our hands, and been used, has been a voluntary donation from a willing heart. We remind you also that it is true of the Lord's people in general, just as the Scriptures tell, that among them are not many rich, not many wise, not many learned, not many noble, but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom.

With this before your minds, keep in memory the fact that last year, the year before and several years back, the brethren, THE WATCH TOWER readers, have been spending generously, according to their ability, both of time and money. Now suddenly, as is evidenced in their growing faith in the Lord and the truth, in the fact that we are nigh at the door of the new dispensation, everywhere there has been a willingness to give and much rejoicing in the privilege. Let these few words prepare you for the, to us, stupendous results of the year, which show that about One Million Dollars have been spent in the service of present truth this year by the classes for theatres, etc., and by the Society.

CREATION PHOTO-DRAMA

After two years of preparation, the Photo-Drama was barely ready to give its first exhibition in January last. It did not get properly started with a full swing in America until April. In July we made a start in Great Britain. By September the Drama had begun operations on the Continent of Europe—in Germany, Switzerland, Finland, Sweden and Denmark. By October it had reached Australia and New Zealand. Few can appreciate the amount of labor involved in preparing each Drama outfit. The arrangement and preparation of the films used is comparatively an easy matter. Our difficulty lay in procuring copies of fine art pictures illustrative of the history of the world from the dawn of creation to the present time and into the future. We adopted, and adapted, everything we could find already prepared and suitable to our purposes; but this left hundreds of paintings and sketches to be made, from which in turn to make the stereopticon slides.

With all this accomplished, a still further difficulty presented itself. We wished to have those beautiful pictures hand-colored—really beautiful. To attain our purpose we had some painted in Paris and some in London, while the majority were done in Philadelphia and New York. We required of these artists their very best skill in coloring. We should not forget to say that, with others, our own Art Room turned out a large share of the work. Although we are not adding to the number of panoramas with painted slides, yet the breakage is so great that even now we have twenty continually at work on replacements and in photographing and tinting the Eureka Dramas.

God kindly veiled our eyes as respects the amount of labor connected with the Drama. Had we foreknown the cost of time and money and patience necessary for the start we would never have begun it. But neither did we know in advance the great success that would attend the Drama, and that through it nearly eight million people in the United States and Canada have already heard a glorious message from the Word of God (a precious message that they will never forget), also that other hundreds of thousands in other lands are hearing in their own tongues "wonderful words of life." We had twenty Dramas, which, in four parts, were able to serve eighty cities each day. The audiences varied from four thousand down to less than a hundred, according to place and circumstances.

The Classes which put on the Dramas in the various cities experienced great blessings and also great trials. They had precious opportunities for serving, sacrificing time and money. These faithful sacrifices the Lord rewarded, as he always does. The trials of faith and patience sometimes arose from accidents causing delays in the receiving of films; sometimes from misunderstandings between the friends in connection with the service of the Drama; sometimes through misunderstandings along financial lines because of not being experts in the matter of keeping accounts. But, rightly received, all these trials had their good effect, helping to test love, to develop patience and thus to broaden Christian character. It is safe to say that the Drama has done as much for the friends of the truth

as for the public in general. This is surely saying a great deal; for in one city the newspapers published that in the week following the showing of the Drama their police court records showed one-half the usual criminal cases.

The special advantage of the Drama seems to have accrued to a certain class of people whose faith had well-nigh slipped, who were beginning to doubt the Bible and everything connected with the future. Some of these have written us very beautiful and pathetic letters of appreciation and of thanks to God. Some have contributed to the Society's funds to assist in defraying the expenses of the Drama further.

We had various things to contend with in order to keep the Dramas all busy every day. Train schedules were not always to our convenience. Then, too, the friends who engaged the place of exhibition could not always get the dates that would have served best. In order to adapt ourselves to the various times and seasons, opportunities, etc., it was often necessary to take what might have appeared a very zig-zag course. Hindsight might have enabled us to do better in some instances, but we used the best foresight which we possessed. We had a large force of extremely competent brethren continually at work safeguarding the interests of the Drama and the engagements. Perhaps a sufficient number of mistakes occurred to keep us all very humble, to make us realize that when that which is perfect shall have come and that which is in part shall have been done away, the whole world may move the better in consequence.

The expenses of the Drama were, first, the preparation of the films and the slides. This was considerably accomplished before the Drama started, of course. But the large amount of money necessary for this preparation was not included in the statements of last year and the year before. The friends who contributed the money were quite agreeable that it should be used for this purpose and not be reported until the Drama would begin. Those preliminary expenditures are included in the present financial report. Another item of expense was the railway fares of approximately one hundred and twenty people, their food, shelter and clothing. The shorter the stay in each place, the higher the rates for board, lodging and traveling. These expenses all appear in the financial statement under the head of the Drama expenditure.

However, there is another item of Drama expense which does not appear in our report; namely, the expense borne by the various classes in connection with the Drama presentation. It is difficult to estimate the total, but we do know of three cities which have each spent more than Ten Thousand Dollars in conjunction with the showing of the Drama in their own cities. We believe that it will be safe to say that the total amount expended by the different classes for the preaching of the Gospel through the Drama would total somewhere between $150,000.00 and $200,000.00, in addition to what our financial report shows. What a wonderful blessing thus came to the Lord's people! If it is more blessed to give than to receive, as the Master declared, then surely these have had rich blessing.

Quite naturally these heavy expenditures on the part of the different classes caused a considerable decrease in the contributions which otherwise would have come to THE WATCH TOWER treasury. The friends, having given of their substance freely, could not in every case fulfil all of the "Good Hopes" they had entertained at the beginning of the year. Nevertheless, we are sure that a great surprise awaits every reader to see how large have been the contributions this year, notwithstanding the financing of the Drama's expenses in the home cities. The results are greater than anything we have had before.

Doubtless many of our foes imagined that by this time THE WATCH TOWER readers would be disconsolate, disheartened, etc., and that many of them would be regretting that they had spent their money so liberally for the truth. But not so! The spirit of service seems to burn within the hearts of the dear friends everywhere. Gratitude to God, appreciation of the truth and desire for further opportunities of service—these are prompting to love, joy, faith, confidence, rejoicing.

While the field seems riper than ever for the message of the truth since the war began, the Lord's providence is making it clear to us that expenses must be reduced. The twenty Dramas are now reduced to six, and we know not how long they may continue active. One other Drama has been taken over by a brother who engaged to spend Ten Thousand Dollars in the expense connected with the showing of it. The Society always follows the plan of watching the Lord's providences. The more money we receive, the more we spend. As the funds diminish we curtail expenses. We have no desire to lay up treasures on earth; neither must we incur debts. In this connection we should add that so great a work could not have been accomplished for less than double the amount shown in our financial columns had it not been that all of our managers, superintendents, operators, etc., gave their time freely, voluntarily, merely receiving things needful—which we supplied not only to those who were out in the field operating the Drama, but also to the many in the Bethel home connected with the preparation of the slides, films, management, etc.

THE DRAMA OUTSIDE AMERICA

Splendid reports are coming to us from the showing of the Drama in Great Britain. It has been presented in six different places in London to large and appreciative audiences. It opened at the Prince's Theatre, remaining there for several weeks. Then it showed in various suburban districts of London before reaching London Opera House. The presentation in the latter place has been phenomenal. It showed there approximately five weeks, afternoon and evening daily, including Sunday. In the evening hundreds were turned away—very much the same as when the Drama was shown in the great Auditorium Building of Chicago. In the London Opera House an exceptionally high-class of visitors were present. Several hundred pounds Sterling were voluntarily handed in, thus permitting continuance of the exhibition. By the time the engagement at the Opera House was closed, the interest was so great that the London friends found themselves able to undertake the exhibition of the Drama in Royal Albert Hall—one of the largest and most notable buildings in Europe. It has a capacity altogether of nine thousand, but probably not more than five thousand could be comfortably seated and have a view of the screen. We have yet to hear of the results.

In various other cities of Great Britain two other Dramas have been operating as continuously as possible, the dear friends demonstrating their love and loyalty by their self-sacrificing arrangements for the presentation of the Drama. In Glasgow the Drama had an especially good reception.

Good word reaches us from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Germany and Switzerland. In each of these very large auditoriums are obtained. The people crowd to see the pictures and hear the lectures. The free Scenarios are taken with avidity. The Lord's blessing is with the work, and many hearts have been made glad. We have just heard from Australia that the Drama there has started and bids fair to be a good success.

THE EUREKA DRAMA WORK

Our readers will remember that reference was made in these columns to the Eureka Drama No. X and No. Y, suggested to the classes and private individuals as useful in connection with their class extension work. These notices appeared in our issue of August 1st, Page 238, and in our issue of August 15, Page 254; also in November 15th issue, Page 2. Our readers will be deeply interested to note the success of these Dramas. They are going into the various small towns, villages, school-houses, in the vicinities contiguous to the owners of the Dramas.

Consider Drama X first. We have sent out a total of fifty-six outfits, but we have had reports from only six of these. These reports certainly are encouraging. They have shown in nineteen different places, sixty exhibitions altogether, with a total attendance of 1,231, an average of over twenty at each entertainment. The X Drama, be it remembered, has no slides, no films, but merely the phonograph musical and lecture records. We trust that the possessors of the other fifty outfits of Drama X are doing similarly good work and that we shall hear from them at their convenience.

Eureka Drama Y reports show as follows: Of the forty-five outfits sent out twenty-nine have reported. They had served two hundred and seventy-two places, giving eight hundred and four exhibitions to a total attendance of 69,053. The average attendance was 86. Three thousand five hundred and ninety-seven cards inquiring for further literature were received. The number of Drama Scenarios and Studies in the Scriptures sold has not been reported, but over a quarter of a million of Scenarios have been distributed free.

How interesting to note the leadings of the Lord's providence! The people in the rural districts seem hungry for just what these Dramas present. We trust that the sixteen other Y Dramas are doing as well as the twenty-nine included in this report, and that we shall hear from them soon. The Lord seems especially willing to bless all of His consecrated ones who seek to devote time, strength and money to His service. These agencies are mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of error and to the upbuilding of His saints in the "most holy faith," in preparation for the glorious resurrection "change," which we are all hoping for soon.

When we speak of fourteen Dramas being disbanded, we do not mean to say that they are done away with. The operating corps are disbanded. The slides, films, records, etc., etc.,

are stored, awaiting such a change in the Lord's providence as may permit their service to be resumed. We are not without hope of this.

SERVICE IN NEWSPAPERS

As our readers are aware, Pastor Russell's sermons and weekly Bible studies have for several years been very widely published in the secular newspapers. The number publishing is not so large as formerly; nevertheless, we are probably reaching more people than ever, by reason of inserting the sermons in metropolitan newspapers—in New York, Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Baltimore, Washington, Los Angeles.

The difference between the two services is that in the smaller cities the sermons are published strictly as news, the newspapers paying for the stereotyped plates twenty-five cents per column weekly. It is the business with these, conducted by a newspaper syndicate, that has fallen off considerably. The number now publishing the sermons, etc., regularly, is about one thousand.

Newspaper space in large cities is counted too valuable generally to justify the publishing of a sermon of two or three columns weekly. Besides, if one newspaper would publish, the others of the city would decline to publish as news. Furthermore, the publishers claim that since there are many talented men in all large cities, these would expect their sermons also to be published, or else would be offended. To publish the sermons of a large city would be a huge contract. The Society has felt, therefore, that this large field of influence, the large witness to the truth possible through the immense circulation of these papers well justifies the expenditures in this way of some of the money at its disposal. It will be encouraging to all of our readers to know that the sermons are now reaching weekly approximately five million five hundred thousand readers.

We trust that some good is being accomplished. We are continually coming into touch with noble souls being reached in this way, and doubt not that many others are being influenced who have not yet come to the place where they wish to express their interest by writing. The money expended in this department this year has been large; but we believe that it has been very economically spent, and the evidences are that it was wisely spent.

MANY TONS OF FREE LITERATURE

From year to year we have wondered what would be the limit of the capacity of our friends in the matter of the distribution of free literature. The quantities have grown enormously. Many who cannot give all their time in the colporteur work, colporteurs also and pilgrims (indeed, all our readers), have found opportunities for engaging as volunteers in the Lord's service in the distribution of reading matter, which we provide approximately in thirty languages—even the freight or expressage or postage being met from the Society's funds. Indeed, while we supply the literature freely, it is a fact that many of those ordering it are donating largely to the Tract Fund.

It is difficult for people to estimate quantities, especially when the figures run up high. We will not stop to calculate how many car loads of paper went into tracts, nor how many times these papers would girdle the earth. We will merely state the facts in quantities, although we are aware that very few appreciate what a thousand is, or ten thousand, or a hundred thousand, or a million. In a word, then, the total distribution of free literature, during the year just closed, in the United States and Canada alone amounted to forty-seven million six hundred and ten thousand (47,610,000) copies. Of this quantity about two-thirds (30,000,000) were BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLIES, and seven million eight hundred and fifty thousand (7,850,000) were free Scenarios of the Photo-Drama of Creation. Thus you will see that these were good-sized Tracts, containing many valuable lessons for those wishing to read them.

OUR CORRESPONDENCE DEPARTMENT

Naturally the increase of the work has led to great increase in the correspondence. Nevertheless, we have not been able to write the dear friends as fully and elaborately sometimes as we would have liked. The Editor hopes that all the readers will charitably remember that his capacity is limited, and that he cannot do all that he would like to do in the way of answering the letters of the friends. In fact, letters are rarely answered at all unless something in them especially calls for reply. Sometimes the reply is made by sending a marked copy of some of our publications dealing with the subject, which the correspondent has forgotten or failed to see. The Editor hopes that the dear friends will continue to accept THE WATCH TOWER articles as his personal letters to them. In this way he can best serve the largest number.

The total number of letters received during the year was	199,139
The total number of letters sent out during the year was	428,273

COLPORTEURING "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES"

Our readers well know that we esteem very highly indeed the Colporteur Branch of the service. God seems to have blessed it in a wonderful manner. We are glad to be able to report that the falling off in colporteur work during the year was not so great as might have been expected. The Drama work became an attraction to many of the friends, some of whom left the colporteur work to engage in the Drama—later on returning to the colporteuring. A comparison with last year's output shows a less number of volumes put out; yet the figures are wonderfully large. Be it remembered, too, that very few of these books are sold in stores and very few of them sent out from the Office direct in answer to mail orders. Nearly all of them represent the direct exercise of mind and body on the part of a noble band of the Lord's people—brethren and sisters known by the general name of colporteurs. Amongst them are some from the home and family, the shop, the work-bench, the farm, as well as some clerks, bookkeepers, stenographers, draftsmen, teachers, preachers, lawyers, doctors. The more influence any one has the larger is his talent, all of which has been consecrated, if he entered the body of Christ which is the church.

Our enemies have helped us considerably. Their slanderous misstatements undoubtedly stopped some from purchasing and from reading the books, but in other cases their harsh, unchristian words and conduct had a reverse effect to that which was anticipated and intended. Some bought from curiosity. Some said, "If Pastor Russell has something different from the preachers, we would like to see what it is; for we have not been satisfied for a good while with what has been doled out to us—which satisfies neither head nor heart."

At one time we think the colporteurs avoided as much as possible giving the name of the author of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES for fear the customer would be prejudiced. Now, however, many of them are finding that the surest way to interest their customers is to tell them that the books are written by Pastor Russell, and that they are not like other religious books, but absolutely different, both in matter and style, and contain the very subjects they have been perplexed about for a long time—the subjects concerning which they have asked their ministers repeatedly and unsuccessfully.

The Drama has helped also, wherever it has gone, stirring up an interest in the books. Besides, many of the colporteurs have solicited orders for the bound editions of the Photo-Drama of Creation Scenario. We trust that all of our readers feel, as we do, a very warm interest in the colporteurs; and that, as they may have opportunity, they will speak to them words of encouragement; for their way is not always strewn with thornless flowers.

The total output of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES during the year past was more than 2,000 copies daily.

In cloth binding	623,018
In magazine edition	78,000

THE PILGRIM SERVICE OF THE YEAR

The pilgrim service during the year was immense; but for a time it took a little different course from its previous and usual one. Aside from special lectures following the exhibition of the Drama, special series of pilgrim meetings were held in many of the large cities. These sometimes continued every Sunday for months, the local friends providing the auditoriums, the Society providing the speakers. This kept busy the Brooklyn Brethren and necessitated their traveling over considerable distances—to Boston, Washington, Richmond, Providence, Detroit, Buffalo, Cleveland, Toronto, Hamilton, Montreal, Philadelphia, Baltimore, etc. These meetings, while not taking the Brethren long from the Office work, did entail considerable expense for railway fares. However, we believe that the expenditures were wisely made, and that the results justified the efforts and outlay. This extra service is responsible for much of the extra cost of this Department above other years.

Total number of Pilgrims employed	76
Total number of public meetings held	3,217
Total number of semi-public meetings held	2,931
Total number of miles traveled	817,475

The expense will be found in the Financial Report.

Some extra services have been cut off. We are endeavoring to trim our sails to the lighter financial breezes. Should the Lord's providence be favorable, you will quickly discern increased activities along all propitious lines.

WATCH TOWER ACCOUNT—1914

Balance on hand 1913	$1,333.95
Tract Fund and Good Hopes	414,880.48
Sundry P. & L.	42,419.96
Special Accounts (amply secured)	107,000.00
	$565,634.39

EXPENDITURES.

Free Literature and Newspapers	$125,462.60
Pilgrim Department (advertising, etc.)	61,686.37
Photo-Drama of Creation	314,876.91
To British Branch	24,165.44
To German Branch	14,735.52
To Australasian Branch	10,723.68
To China, Japan, Korea, etc.	5,705.48
To India and South Africa	3,845.00
To Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Polish, French, Italian, Hungarian, Arabic, Greek, Finnish	2,146.30
To West Indies	609.97
Cash on hand	1,677.12
	$565,634.39

HOPE AN OUTGROWTH OF CONFIDENCE

"Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the things promised."—Hebrews 10:35, 36.

Confidence is another word for trust. The Apostle's thought, then, is, Cast not away your faith, cast not away your trust, which hath great recompense. It seems strange to us, sometimes, that God should purpose to reward faith rather than works. Surely almost anybody else would have made a plan which would have said, I will reward you according to what you can accomplish. But God has declared that he will reward us according to our faith, our confidence, our honesty, our sincerity. Under the present conditions God can do nothing with a dishonest man. During the Millennial age this class will receive the necessary stripes—just exactly what they need—to bring them rightly into accord with righteousness. But for the time being, God is making an appeal only to the honest-hearted.

As we come to the Bible and get it clearly before us, as our eyes become anointed with the holy Spirit and we see into the deep things of God, we find that he has a great, a wondrous plan. When his kingdom shall be established, then all the families of the earth shall be blessed, and the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth. None shall need to say to another, Know thou the Lord; for all shall know him, from the least unto the greatest of them.—Jer. 31:34.

God is not dealing with the world yet, but is dealing with the few. There was a time when he dealt with typical Israel alone. Then, beginning with our Lord Jesus, who kept the law which the Israelites could not keep, and who obtained the blessing accruing from the Law Covenant—from that time God's plan has been, we see, to gather out of all nations and out of all parts of the earth a people for his name, to bear the name of Jesus, to be the bride, the Lamb's wife.

As a woman is joined to a husband and bears his name, so this company is called out from the world to bear the name of Christ. The word Christ signifies, as we know, The Anointed of God, and includes Jesus, the Head of The Christ, and all the members of the church which is his body. God purposed the selection of the church, and he purposed that it should not be accomplished by force, by compulsion. If any have thought that God has been dealing with the world, they have been mistaken. We are told in the Bible that God has been drawing a class, calling a people, a very different thought. Our Lord Jesus is the great Shepherd of the sheep. The sheep hear his voice and follow him.

It is a wonderful privilege to become a member of the body of Christ. God is not forcing any one to become a member. How strange it would be for us to think that he said, If you do not become a member of the bride class, you shall go to eternal torture! Nay, dear brethren, he lays before us the grandeur of the divine plan, that seeing it, we might be eager to become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord. This is set before us in the Bible as a great prize, "a pearl of great price." If we do not care to come in under the invitation given, then we need not come at all.

AN HONEST HEART—A WILLING MIND

We remember that the Apostle declares that the Gentiles rejoiced that they had been accounted worthy to hear. (Acts 13:48) Do we realize what an honor it is that God has asked us to hear his message? It is a great honor, to our understanding. The one thing that is the basis of God's favor is sincerity. There are people who are born dishonest, born insincere. The message was never designed of God for a dishonest mind.

There is something about the dishonest, insincere, self-sufficient, that would surely lead them to take a wrong course. We think of a gentleman—a well educated man, an engineer. He was well-balanced mentally and could talk on any subject. One day we told him something of the divine plan and of the call of the church. He replied, "Well, I do not care to have anything to do with it. I do not wish to have my sins forgiven; I wish to bear the penalty of my own sins. If other men are going to get along, I shall get along, too."

Jesus said that if one would receive his message, he must receive it as a little child—in that pure, simple manner that a little child would receive a message. It is natural for a little child to be full of confidence. How often we hear a child say, "My papa can do anything! My papa says thus and so." And so the heavenly Father would have us honest, faithful, full of confidence in him, trusting what he has said, not doubting. He would have us to be loyal to him.

"Cast not away, therefore, your confidence," said the Apostle. He had been telling these Christian Hebrews that they had a good degree of confidence. They had accomplished a good work. They had endured hardness in various ways, partly while they themselves were made a gazing-stock, and partly while they were the companions of those who were so used. The Apostle went on to say that God was not unjust to forget their labor of love.

A POTENT TEST OF LOYALTY

But, dear brethren, it is not enough to make a good consecration; it is not enough that for a time we fight a good fight. No, indeed! God is not accepting to the kingdom those who once were faithful. He desires to have those who were once faithful, who were afterwards faithful, who are always faithful! He desires to have in the kingdom class those whom he can trust implicitly, those to whom he can safely give the glory, honor and immortality that he has promised to the faithful. And before they receive this high reward and exaltation, they must be thoroughly tested and proven. We see the reasonableness of this arrangement in every particular. If "he has called us to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ," he expects us to be found worthy of that honor—not that we could do anything to make ourselves worthy of so great exaltation, not that we could merit it in ourselves, but he expects us to be true overcomers, and to develop the character necessary for so high a position of responsibility and glory.

Have you given God the glory in all the affairs of your life, in whatever measure of success you have attained in his service? or have you often taken the glory to yourself? This is a good question for each one of the Lord's children to ask himself. We know that we have deserved no glory whatever in connection with what we possess or what we have accomplished. If any have attempted to take glory to themselves, they have taken the glory from the Lord. We must be so loyal that in presenting the truth to others we will say, "This is not my plan. I am glad to tell you anything that I know about it, but it is not man-made. It is all God's plan."

So, then, let us remember the Apostolic injunction: "Cast not away your confidence." What confidence are we to have? Confidence in God. In whom else could our confidence be placed? Many of the world have no confidence except in themselves. Others place their confidence in some earthly hero. One man says, I have confidence in King George; I will follow him to death. Another man says, I have full confidence in Kaiser Wilhelm; I will follow wherever he leads. A third man declares, I have great confidence in President Wilson. What does President Wilson or any of these rulers know about the future? No one but God and he who is executing God's will, know to a certainty, except in so far as God has seen fit to reveal his purposes.

We as the Lord's people look up and see our great Creator's wonders in the heavens, and we say, How great is our God! Then as we look at ourselves and find how wonderfully we are made by our Creator, so that by thinking, by the power of the mind, we can move the different parts of the body—the hands, the feet, the eyes—oh, we say, this is the most wonderful ma-

chine in all the world! And so we are led to exclaim, Surely this great God, our God, our Father, is willing to tell us, his people, who love him and desire to know his will, what his will is! He must have a good plan; for he is wise, he is loving, he is just.

CONFIDENCE PROPORTIONATE TO KNOWLEDGE

And so we have found our old Bible, which perhaps was long covered with dust, and we have studied about God's justice, wisdom, love and power. And we have learned to have confidence in that dear old Book; for its message is so consistent, so reasonable, so loving. The Bible explains how sickness, sorrow and pain came to be in the world. It informs us that all these came as the result of sin, and that from the very beginning God foreknew the fall, and purposed the restitution of mankind from sin and death. The Bible points out that the blessing to all men would come when Messiah would come.

Thus we have confidence in the Word of the Lord and in the great plan presented in that Word. And we have confidence that God has invited us to be joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom, that he is taking out a people for his name—those who will confess their sins, will acknowledge that they themselves are not great—those who will, when they receive God's favor, be so loyal to Him that they will be ready to lay down their lives.

Ah, yes! Others lay down their lives for earthly kings, and we have a King of kings and Lord of lords, and if we could not lay down our lives in loyalty to him, what would we think of ourselves! We have a good God, worthy of all confidence, and we trust him. In proportion as we have knowledge of God, of the Bible, in proportion as we have grown in grace by seeking to walk in the narrow way, in that same proportion our confidence is growing stronger and stronger.

CONFIDENCE INDICATIVE OF HEART CONDITION

The only question remaining is, Will we be found faithful? The Scriptures declare that he is faithful who has promised, and that he will do exceeding abundantly more than we could ask or think. He has determined that all who will receive the great blessing will be those who will demonstrate their loyalty to the fullest degree. Hence the Apostle urges, "Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

God will one day reward our confidence. Why is it that the Lord will especially reward our confidence? The reason is this: Our confidence in God represents our heart condition, and it will go down like a barometer in falling weather if we lose our faith. Our hearts cannot be wholly stayed on God except as we are strong in faith. The only instances in which Satan will be permitted to take away the confidence of God's people will be in the cases of some who have not been living up to their light. The Lord will permit such to go gradually into darkness.

So we are to keep firm hold of our confidence; for this assures us that God is our Father. We all know something of the wireless telegraphy which is now being used in a marvelous manner on the sea and on the land. And this is only a feeble illustration of the wireless communication that maintains between the true Christian and the heavenly Lord. In every circumstance this confidence, leaning on the Lord, will look to him. There will be the wireless communication between Father and child.

When the Lord's people find themselves in difficulty, they should reason like this: What is the Lord's will? What does his providence indicate? He has said that all things shall work together for good to me because I love him; therefore, having confidence in God, I am sure that all things shall indeed work out for my good. I have faith in his wisdom and his power and his love. He could have protected me from this difficulty had he seen best. So the fact of its reaching me proves that he saw fit to permit it for a wise reason. He has promised that he will not suffer me to be tempted, tried, beyond what I am able to bear. As he is faithful, he will never fail to keep that good promise. So then, I will "not cast away my confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."

CONFIDENCE IN GOD TO BE TESTED

If God would reward according to works, some of his children would get very little. The very ablest of God's people cannot do very much. We spend one-third of our time in sleep; we need perhaps eight hours more for preparing our food, etc.; and we have a thousand and one things to do in the remaining eight hours. How little time we have, after all, even if we have cut off many things that once took more or less of our time! The most intelligent people have very little time to spare.

Do your very best, and try to note how little you will be able to accomplish by the close of the day. Think of those five minutes, that half hour, etc., and count up and see how much you render to the Lord your God daily. We fear that each of us would be ashamed to see how little time the sum total would make. And if the reward depended on our works, it would surely be a very small reward. God knows also that some have more time at their disposal and some less, and that some have more talents and some less.

Some are able to give ten times as much as others. How much would you like to do for the Lord? How much do you strive to do for the Lord? It will be in proportion as you have confidence in him. As you come to have more trust in the promises, you will try harder and harder to live up to all the terms and conditions of discipleship. If you have but little confidence in the Lord, you will be like the man who was told that if he would go to a certain place he would find a fortune, and who replied, It is absurd to consider anything of the kind! If some one should say, Behind a curtain in a certain corner there is hidden a bag of gold, and any one who will go there for it may have it, it would be safe to say that not two persons out of a hundred would go to look for it.

God is testing your faith, your confidence, and our own. And, oh, that is worth so much more than all the wealth of the world! We have been invited to try for the great prize. We said, Yes, Lord! Yes, Lord! Then he said, Will you be faithful under the conditions which I impose? I am watching to see how faithful you are every hour, every minute. I will protect you from the pitfalls in the way, as you strive to show forth my praises; I will uphold you in every trial. My dear children, I want to give to you a great blessing. You have all entered on a common basis. You would be very unequal in the race if I should take you according to your natural qualifications. I will judge according to your heart and how you do in little things. He that is faithful in the little things, in that which is least, will be faithful in that which is greatest. I will reckon the matter thus. That is a fair proposition, and exactly what the Lord says. God purposes to reward greatly all faithfulness.

THE NATURE OF THE PRESENT TEST

But there is another phase of the confidence. Bible students all over the world have been expecting certain things to occur; and we have been hoping that the Lord's time is near for the setting up of the kingdom, the time for the fulfilment of the prayer, "Thy kingdom come." We have been hoping for this; but if it should not come as soon as expected, we will still hold fast our confidence.

There are not many people in the world who are hoping to die soon; and it is only our confidence that makes us have this hope. If we did not have a strong confidence in the outcome, then we would not have the desire to pass beyond the veil. We are speaking of our confidence to those whose eyes of understanding have been enlightened to see the lengths, the breadths, the heights and the depths of the love of our God, and to know something about the times and seasons of our Father's plan.

The Apostle tells us, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all children of the light, children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness." (1 Thess. 5:4, 5) God has promised that he will give his true children the light at the time appointed, and that they shall have the joy of understanding his plan at the appropriate season.

"What more can he say
Than to us he hath said!"

The Editor has been rejoicing in these blessed experiences. Even if the time of our change should not come within ten years, what more should we ask? Are we not a blessed, happy people? Is not our God faithful? If any one knows anything better, let him take it. If any of you ever find anything better, we hope you will tell us. We know of nothing better nor half as good as what we have found in the Word of God. As the hymn expresses it:

"It satisfies my longings
As nothing else can do."

Personally, we can say, If God has some further experiences for us, we are glad that he has; if we need further polishing, we hope he will give it to us. If it takes a year to get the polishing necessary, we desire to have this time allotted. Or if he desires to have us do some work in the polishing of others, and if we should not get into the kingdom ourself, we would be glad to have his will done.

We have sometimes asked, How many brethren would be willing to take a thousand dollars for what they know of the truth? Not a hand was seen! Who would take ten

thousand dollars? None! Who would take a million dollars? Who will take the whole world in exchange for what he knows about the divine character and the divine plan? Nobody! Then we said, You are not a badly discontented crowd, dear friends. If you feel so rich that you would take nothing in exchange for your knowledge of God, then you feel just as rich as we do.

CONFIDENCE LOST

The Editor has known from earliest childhood what it is to call God his heavenly Father; for he had Christian parents. And then, when fifteen years of age, we gave him our heart, and reverenced and worshiped him with what amount of knowledge we had. Although indoctrinated along Calvinistic lines to believe that only the elect would reach glory, and that all the non-elect would experience eternal torment, we were accustomed to think of ourself as one of the elect, and to appreciate the love of God, which had provided for the salvation of the elect.

A few years later, however, reason began to assert itself over superstition. We inquired of ourself, Where is this hell which you preach? What do you really know about it? Confessing our own ignorance, we went to our teachers and elders; but to our amazement we found that they knew no more about it than ourself. Then we stopped preaching and began to think and to examine the creeds. We found that the difference between them was trivial. All had the one foundation of heavenly salvation for the few and eternal woe for the thousands of millions.

The more we investigated, the more sure we felt that a great mistake had been made; that a real God could not have made such an arrangement as our creeds declared. We threw them all away; and thinking that the Bible was the basis for them all, we threw the Bible after them.

SOUL-HUNGER FOR GOD

But having once known our heavenly Father, we could find no rest without him. Our soul hungered for his love and care. We still held to the great fact that our Universe had an intelligent, personal Creator; for his wisdom and power were before us on every starry night. The more we studied anatomy, the more thoroughly we became convinced that all humanity, yea, every creature, is "fearfully and wonderfully made," and that the eye, the ear, the nerves, the power to move in response to mere thinking, could not have come by chance, could not have been evolved by a nature god. We worshiped the God of wisdom and power, and sought to know more of him, confident that we should find him good.

Left to the resources of our own brain, we reasoned, Could others and ourself possess as the gifts of our Creator the qualities of justice and love, which we esteem to be the very highest of our faculties, and yet the Creator himself be devoid of these attributes? Our mind answered, Surely he who formed the eye to see and the ear to hear and who gave humanity the qualities of justice and love must possess these qualities in infinite measure.

Thus with the eyes of our understanding we beheld the great God of the universe, infinite in wisdom, justice, love and power. Again we worshiped him, rejoiced that we could have confidence in our God and realize that he had made neither the earth nor the race of mankind in vain, but that he had some wise, just, loving purpose in connection with our creation.

CONFIDENCE REGAINED

Our next thought was, Would not a just and loving God be pleased to make known his purposes to those of his creatures who desire to do his will? Would he be ashamed of his purposes? Would he ignore the qualities of mind which he has given us? Again our mind answered, You may confidently seek God's message to humanity. Thinking that we had already examined the Bible sufficiently, we turned our attention to heathen religions, only to find them less rational in some respects, though less fiendish, than our own creeds. Evidently the most intelligent peoples have been the most thoroughly seduced by Satan and his doctrines of demons, into believing the most horrible things respecting the Creator and his purposes toward his human creatures.

Finally, we resolved to begin anew the study of the Bible, first assuring ourself that our colored creed-spectacles were thoroughly broken and our mind entirely untrammeled. Gradually the Lord led us to clearer and yet clearer light upon his Word, until we found that the basis of all our difficulty lay in the fact that we had followed Satan's lie told to Mother Eve in Eden—"Ye shall not surely die." From that time onward the entire Bible became illuminated, grand, beautiful, harmonious; and now it stands pre-eminent before our mind as God's Word!

No tongue or pen can tell the peace, the joy and the blessing which a clear knowledge of the true God has brought into our heart and life. The story of God's wisdom, justice, power and love fully satisfies the cravings of both our head and our heart. We are seeking no further. There is nothing more to be desired than to get this wonderful story more clearly before our mind, and to appreciate more and more the divine character as illustrated by the great divine plan of the ages, which our heavenly Father is gradually outworking for the blessing, first of the church, and afterwards of all the families of the earth.

SAVIOR OF THE WORLD

DECEMBER 27.—2 Corinthians 5:14-21.

"Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Galatians 6:14. R. V.

Today's Bible Study reminds us afresh of the fact that Jesus is not merely the Savior of the church, but that he is also the Savior of the world. In the past, Bible students have overlooked this great truth, to their confusion. Now we see that God has provided two distinctly different salvations—the one for the church in the Gospel age, and the other for the world in the age to follow this—the period of Messiah's kingdom.

Not only do we see that there are two different salvations, but also that they are wholly different, totally different in kind. They are alike in some things, however. Both are salvations from sin and from its power and its penalty, the curse—sorrow, pain, crying, sighing, dying. Both are salvations to an everlasting happiness. But there the similarity ends; for the church is to be saved by a change of nature, while the world is to be saved without a change of nature—by a resurrection to the perfection of human nature.

The church's salvation, which is now in progress, has its beginning in the "hearing" of faith. The message of God's grace is proclaimed here and there by stammering lips, which do not appeal to many of the great or wise or learned, but chiefly to the poor of this world, rich in faith. Such of these as are of humble mind, of "broken and contrite heart," are charmed with the message of forgiveness of sins and reconciliation to God through the Redeemer. As they approach and seek to draw near to God, he through his providences draws near to them. If they continue to hunger and thirst after the Lord and his message, he will satisfy them. He will show them his covenant. He will enable them to understand the terms and conditions upon which they may be received back into fellowship with God as dear children—no longer aliens, strangers, foreigners—no longer condemned to death, but on the contrary justified to life.

Here comes to them another test of their love of righteousness, their hunger for fellowship with God; for the requirements made of them seem at first to be exacting. These requirements, as stated by the Master himself, are: "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself [renounce his own self-will], take up his cross [begin to live contrary to his own preferences in that he will do according to the divine will, instead of according to his own will, where it crosses the divine], and follow me." Then he must continue to follow in the Master's footsteps—faithful unto death.

Some, upon learning of these stringent conditions of discipleship, turn back and follow no longer in pursuit of the Lord's favor, forgiveness, reconciliation, blessing, begetting of the holy Spirit. It is their option; and their course will decide their worthiness or unworthiness to be counted in with the special class whom the Lord is now selecting from the world to be the church—"the bride, the Lamb's wife."

THE BLESSINGS OF FAITH

We are not to think of those who reject the Lord's cross and refuse to make a full consecration of their lives as being, therefore, condemned either to eternal torment or to anything else. The call of the Gospel age is a favor and a privilege. Those who respond get a special blessing; those who reject miss that special blessing. They are not condemned (damned) in any sense of the word because of rejecting the privilege of walking in the Master's steps. On the contrary, as the Scriptures declare, they were already condemned—condemned in Adam, because members of his family, sharers of his weaknesses and unworthiness of life—sharers of his death sentence. They failed to escape from that condemnation, and thus they continue under it.

It is of the church class only that St. Peter writes, "Having escaped the corruption that is [still] in the world." (2 Peter 1:4) As the Apostle Paul wrote, "We were children

of wrath, even as others [still are]." (Ephesians 2:3) By believing in Christ, by accepting his terms, by becoming his disciples through full consecration, we secure forgiveness for the sins that are past, and additionally secure relationship with the heavenly Father through our Redeemer, our Advocate. Now his acceptance of us is by and through the begetting of the holy Spirit, and this is granted to none others than those who come by his appointed way.

Those begotten of the holy Spirit are Scripturally styled "new creatures in Christ." To them, "old things have passed away and all things have become new." They have new aims, new objects, new hopes in life. To them, earthly things have no value, except as they can be used to glorify the Lord and to serve him. Earthly learning, reputation, honor, titles, are valuable only as they can be used in some way to the glory of God—in the service of his cause or for the benefit of fellowmen, especially those of the household of faith. To these, earthly prospects, political hopes and ambitions, etc., are nothing; for they have before their mind's eye heavenly prospects, which include joint-heirship with Christ in his Messianic kingdom of a thousand years and, after that, additional glory and honor in the ages to follow.

But all these blessings, you note, are heard with the ear of faith, seen with the eye of faith. Thus the Lord selects and draws only those who can and do exercise faith; for "without faith it is impossible to please God."

Those who either never hear, or hearing fail to respond, or responding go for a little way and then stop when they come to the crucial test of self-denial, self-renouncement—these lose all those spiritual blessings which the others, if faithful, will attain—heavenly honor, heavenly glory and immortality through the change of nature begun at the time of their begetting and to be consummated in their complete change in the first resurrection. These the Apostle describes as "sown in weakness, raised in power; sown an animal body, raised a spiritual body; sown in dishonor, raised in glory."

But even those who lose God's highest blessings and rewards will still have open before them great and wonderful favors of God, all of which were purchased by the Redeemer's precious blood—by his sacrifice for our sins, by his submission of his life for the forfeited life of Adam, for the recovery of Adam and all his race from the sentence, or the curse of death. These blessings for the world, however, are not to be clearly seen or appreciated yet, except by those who are especially taught of God—those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit and thus enabled to understand "the deep things of God."—1 Corinthians 2:10.

"THE COMMON SALVATION"

The point we are here especially making is that God has provided a salvation for the world, as well as a salvation for the Church. The Bible tells us of the general facts of these salvations. It assures us that "God so loved the world [as well as the Church] that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) We noticed at first that the penalty that is upon the world is not an eternal torment penalty, but a penalty of destruction. Christ died that the race might not perish, but in due time recover from the death penalty through faith in Christ and obedience to him.

Only the few can exercise the great faith that is necessary to a place in the heavenly reward as members of his bride class. By and by, when the knowledge of God shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep, all will understand; all will hear and be able to believe in God's goodness and in his wonderful arrangement on man's behalf. Those who will then believe, and who will then accept God's favor on its terms of loyalty and obedience to the best of their ability, will be blessed by Messiah's kingdom.

The blessing, as the Bible describes it, will be the rolling away of the curse and the rolling on, instead of the curse, "the blessing of the Lord, which maketh rich; and he addeth no sorrow with it." This work of rolling away the curse and rolling on the blessing is the appointed work of Messiah's kingdom for a thousand years.

We may be sure that by the time his kingdom shall end, and shall be delivered up to the Father, our Lord will have fully accomplished all the great work which was committed to him of the Father and for which he has shown his worthiness by his co-operation in the Father's plan, to the extent of dying for the race. And this King of Glory, Messiah, will have for associates those who, like himself, delight to do the Father's will—those who delight to walk in his steps. His perfection, his sacrifice, making good for their defects through the fall, enables them to become joint-sacrificers with him. Of these the Apostle writes, "For if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; and if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him."

NEW CREATURES IN CHRIST

In today's Study St. Paul deals especially with the church class. He explains to us that it is the love of Christ that has exercised the constraining, or drawing, power upon our hearts. The love of Christ is merely the love of the Father, but as men we would not be able to understand the Father's love. We are enabled to understand that love as it was manifested by our Redeemer; and thus through him we look upward to the Father, and are able to appreciate something of the love that is beyond all human understanding. As St. Paul points out, Christ's love was manifested in that he died for all. When we say "for all," it means that the whole race was dead, that none had a right to everlasting life, and that none could commend themselves to God so as to be worthy of everlasting life.

The Apostle explains that all who realize this matter fully, clearly, should indicate the fact by consecrating their lives to the Lord, to live unto him, to know his will, to lay down their lives in the service of him who died for them and who rose again. These have a special love for the Lord and they, properly, have a special love for each other. They are seeking to live, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit—in harmony with the begetting of the holy Spirit, which they have received.

Hence they more and more are thinking of Christ, not as the Man Jesus, but as the glorified Lord. So also they are learning to think of each other, not according to the flesh, but according to the heart; for "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." To such, earthly things—earthly hopes, aims and prospects—have gone, and all things have become new. They have new hopes, new ambitions, new relationships. If faithful, they will receive the glorious things which God has in reservation for those who love him.

These things are of God. They are not of the Apostle's making up, nor of Jesus' origination. The Father himself originated the whole plan and arrangement. He has already reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. We are fully given over to him. We have no rebellion in our hearts. He has reconciled us to himself through his Son; and God has nothing against us. "There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." Their sins are forgiven. Instead of condemning them, God justifies them. As St. Paul says, "It is God that justifies; who is he that condemns? It was Christ that died," giving full satisfaction for our sins.

THE SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION

These new creatures, begotten of the holy Spirit, are given a work to do. They are not only to have a work in the future as kings and priests, joint-heirs with Christ in the blessing of the world, but they have a work to do at the present time, a work for God. They are to be ambassadors for God. They are to be his representatives amongst men. They are to seek to tell the message of God's love to those who do not understand it. They are to tell the way of return to God to those who know not the way and to those who give evidence of a desire for reconciliation. They are thus ministers, or servants, of the way of reconciliation even in the present time. All those reconciled in the present time by faith and obedience are privileged thus to become members of the bride class—joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom.

In the 20th verse it will be noticed that the word "you" is in italics, indicating that it is not in the original. The passage does not read properly with the word "you." It should be omitted. God is not beseeching the church through the church, or through each other, to be reconciled; for all of the church are reconciled.

The Apostle is telling us that God through us is beseeching or urging mankind—all who have the hearing ear—to be reconciled to him, telling them that he is willing to be reconciled to them, and explaining the basis of this reconciliation; namely, that Christ took the sinner's place, that he personally knew no sin, but was holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and that those who receive this message may have the privilege of coming into the righteous condition acceptable to God, and thus of being inducted into the bride class, who will complete the royal priesthood beyond the veil, and for a thousand years have the glorious work of blessing all the families of the earth.

And while the earth with strife is riven,
And envious factions truth do hide,
Lo! he, the Lord of earth and heaven,
Stands at the door and claims his bride.

ISRAEL'S EXPERIENCES TYPICAL, ALLEGORICAL

JANUARY 3.—Judges 2:1-19.

NATURAL ISRAEL'S ENEMIES—SPIRITUAL ISRAEL'S ENEMIES—NATURAL ISRAEL'S JUDGES OR DELIVERERS—SPIRITUAL ISRAEL'S REFORMERS AND HELPERS—TYPICAL IDOLATRIES AND THEIR ANTITYPES—ISRAEL'S LAST DELIVERANCE NOW DUE—GENTILE TIMES HAVE ENDED—PALESTINE SOON WILL BE POSSESSED BY ABRAHAM AND HIS NATURAL SEED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF MESSIAH AND HIS SPIRITUAL BRIDE, THE CHURCH

"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely."—Hosea 14:4.

Today's Study tells us of the death of Joshua, who became the leader of the Israelites at the death of Moses. He was a worthy example of faithfulness to God amongst his people. Under divine direction he divided the land of Palestine amongst the ten tribes of Israel, giving each his portion with the understanding that the portion was the gift of the Lord, and that the more faith possessed the more quickly would the tribe enter into its inheritance.

The Israelites were enjoined by the Lord through an angel, especially sent as God's representative, that they should speedily take possession of the land, driving out their enemies, destroying their idols and altars of worship, and thus conquering the entire country for themselves as God's people and ridding themselves and their children of all idolatrous temptation. But instead of doing this, they made leagues with the various heathen peoples inhabiting the land, and brought themselves into more or less of a friendly relationship. This disobedience to divine command proved to be a serious snare.

In studying the history of Israel, we are to remember that the Apostle tells us those things were allegorical. (1 Corinthians 10:11) They were true, they were real occurrences; but their chief object and purpose, from God's standpoint, was to illustrate certain great truths for spiritual Israel, coming afterwards—the Gospel church. Thus, for instance, when the Christian enters upon his new life as a result of his consecration to God, it corresponds to crossing Jordan—dying to old interests and entering into the new inheritance. Under the leadership of Jesus, our Joshua, we enter into new life full of courage and faith. Victories result.

Then we learn that the new creature is to conquer the perverted appetites of his own flesh, which correspond to the idolatrous peoples who resided in Canaan. It is the duty of the new creature to drive out these earthly hopes, ambitions, weaknesses, perversions, and oppositions to the Lord and his righteousness. If the work of exterminating were carried on thoroughly, the result would be a ripened character, strong in the Lord, full of faith, obedience, joy, peace and blessing.

However, like the Israelites of old, in too many cases the Lord's people make a truce with their own fleshly weaknesses. They fail to drive these out, and fail to overthrow the altars of passion, avarice, etc. These weaknesses and depravities of the flesh for a time cower before the new nature, entreating mercy, patience and a measure of gratification. But so surely as these are granted, the result is that the passions and weaknesses become stronger and stronger and the new creature is worsted in the battle, until he must cry to the Lord for deliverance, lest he perish before the onslaught of his own passions and desires. Thus the lives of many Christian people are a succession of battlings and defeats—captivities. The battle should have been fought out at first. The will should have been fixed firmly on the side of righteousness, truth, obedience to God.

It is difficult to determine how much all of the Lord's people suffer as a result of not being firm enough, rigorous enough, ing their dealings with their own flesh, especially at the beginning of their Christian experiences. The only remedy is to cry unto the Lord as the Israelites did when they found themselves hard pressed. As the Lord delivered them, so he is willing to deliver all of his spiritual Israelites.

However, it is certainly a shame for Christians that their defeats are so numerous, as it was a shame to the Israelites that, during the period of the Judges, they were eighteen times oppressed by their enemies—slaves where they should have been masters. The one great lesson of all this to the natural Israelites and to the spiritual Israelites is the lesson of God's mercy, as expressed in our text. The Lord is very gracious, willing to forgive our trespasses and to assist us when we realize our wrong condition and appeal for help. "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely."

JOSHUA'S WISE EXHORTATION

The Book of Joshua closes with the account of his death, and the Book of Judges begins with incidents covering the same period. When Joshua realized that his work was done and that he was about to be gathered to his fathers—to sleep with his fathers in death—he called the Israelites, and reminded them of the Lord's mercies and manifest favors toward them in bringing them thus far and finally giving to each tribe the allotment of its inheritance in the Promised Land. Then he warned them respecting the dangers of the situation, the necessity for being separate from the people of the land—Gentiles; otherwise the tendency might be toward idolatry. He urged upon all a full settlement of the mind, the will, on the side of the Lord and against all the heathen religions. It was then that he took his stand and announced, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The others joined with him in the same resolve.

Our lesson tells us that all the days of Joshua, and the days of the others of the judges who outlived Joshua, things went well with the Israelites. They had the Lord's blessing and were prosperous. These leaders had in mind the Lord's wonderful dealings, and realized the importance of being on the Lord's side, if they would have his blessing. The idolatries that came in were subsequent.

The true God has always prohibited idols, while the false gods have usually been represented by idols. The idols, according to human reasoning, would appear to be an excellent way of keeping religion before the mind; but it was not God's way, and hence was not advantageous. As the Israelites noted the idolatrous worship of their neighbors, they doubtless felt that the latter were the more religious, because of this outward demonstration.

Moreover, in connection with the heathen forms of worship were various licentious practises, which to some extent would draw from curiosity and, through the weaknesses of the flesh, appeal to the Israelites. The true God, on the contrary, had instituted in their midst a worship which was pure in itself, in every way condemning sin, pointing out the necessity for its cancelation and the need for drawing near to God in the way of his appointment. In a word, the true religion appealed to the highest and noblest sentiments, while the false religions of the Canaanites appealed to the baser passions, combining a form of godliness with gratification of the flesh, dancings and various saturnalia.

But as for the Christian who condemns the Israelites very severely for wandering off, time and again, into the idolatries of his heathen neighbors and requiring to be punished of the Lord that he might turn again and seek the Lord in the right way—let such Christian remember the antitype—how forms of godliness are inclined to take the place of true heart-worship, reverence; and how the weaknesses of the flesh are inclined to assert themselves, to justify themselves and, if possible, to make themselves appear to be in accordance with the divine will. Let them remember that many today worship the golden calf more than they worship God, requiring chastisements time and again to correct them, to awaken them to their real condition. Let them remember, too, that the Christians have made idols equally as hideous as any made by the heathen—not idols of stone or wood or bronze, but more hideous misrepresentations of the divine character—our printed creeds.

Verse 17 and its connections seem to indicate that the record of our lesson covers a long period of centuries of Israel's experiences, under many judges. When they repented, the Lord raised up judges, or, as we say, deliverers, through whom their adversities would be corrected. Yet even these repeated experiences did not deeply enough impress the great lesson, so that they needed to learn their lessons over and over. When the judge would bring them back from their adversities, and they would have rest for some years during his lifetime, it was merely to fall away after his death. Nevertheless, the Lord's covenant was with the nation. The centuries since have shown the persistency of God's mercy.

GOD'S FAVOR RETURNING TO ISRAEL

As we have previously pointed out, the Bible indicates very clearly that Israel's last great lesson of oppression under the Gentiles closed in 1914. The period of chastisement, twenty-five hundred and twenty years long, began where the crown was taken from King Zedekiah, B. C. 606. (Ezekiel 21:25-27) They have not been an independent nation in all these twenty-five hundred and twenty years. As the Lord declared, Zedekiah was the last of the line of David who should reign until Messiah's kingdom would be established. The end of Gentile Times, then, marks the beginning of Messiah's kingdom. Everywhere we see manifestations that He as the great Judge is taking over the affairs of the world, and that Israel's final deliverance is at hand.

Spiritual Israel must first be delivered by the glorious "change" of the first resurrection. Thus the spiritual empire will first be established. Following that great event and the incidental time of trouble will come the exaltation of repre-

sentatives of natural Israel to be the earthly exponents of the heavenly kingdom. These will be the ancient worthies of the Hebrew people—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets. Others of the Hebrew people, delivered from Gentile domination, will nevertheless get their blessing through their acceptance of the kingdom arrangements, which includes the thought that their eyes of understanding will open and that they will recognize the great King.

Thus it is written that they that pierced him shall look upon him and mourn because of a realization that they crucified the Prince of Life. Nevertheless they will have a great blessing, in proportion as they have been seeking conscientiously to serve God and the principles of his righteousness. Then the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, in connection with which they will have so much blessing. (Zechariah 12:10) And this blessing of the Lord, coming upon Israel first, means also the blessing of all the world.

All who realize the fulfilment of the Times of the Gentiles should be looking for and co-operating with the further steps of the divine plan. One of these is Israel's repossession of the control of Palestine, the inheritance of Abraham and his family. The time is ripe. It remains for Jews, who by God's favor have the wealth now, to use that wealth in the furtherance of the hope of Israel. But a failure on man's part to appreciate and use opportunities will not interfere with the divine plan. The hour of blessing is coming. Through some instrumentality Palestine will shortly pass into the possession of the Jews.

Note the fact that promptly at the close of the Jewish year in September, Russia published her decree giving the Jews full religious liberty and privileges as citizens. Germany quickly followed. Great Britain also honored the Jews. Legally, therefore, the Jew today—since the close of Gentile times—is accorded the same liberties as other people. He is no longer "trodden down of the Gentiles."

"DRINK YE ALL OF IT"

"Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?"—Matthew 20:22.

The incident which is narrated in our context occurred just previous to our Lord's death. He had gone up to Jerusalem. He had made the triumphal entry into the city. Now he was waiting for the grand climax of his experiences. He had forewarned his disciples and had explained to them that the chief priests would deliver him up to be crucified.

But the apostles in general did not understand the Lord's words. On many occasions his words had been figurative. So now they wondered what he meant. They did not know what kind of figure of speech this could be. They thought that he was near to sitting on his throne, and that they would be with him. So thoroughly were they convinced that the establishment of the kingdom was at hand that St. James and St. John—their mother acting as spokesman, advocate—had asked that when he came into his kingdom they two might sit near him, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. They were expecting that in a day or two important events would take place which would bring them into the kingdom.

Our Lord's answer to this request was intended not only for the disciples there before him, but undoubtedly for all his disciples throughout the Gospel age, to set before them the conditions on which the kingdom was to be attained. Our Lord stated the matter very plainly, asking James and John, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They did not understand these words in full, but perceived that it meant some kind of death. "Are you able?"—Are you willing? They replied that they were.

The word able, while it contains the thought of force, strength, nevertheless expresses willingness; for it refers to the will. The thought is not, Are ye physically able?—but, Are ye mentally able? This thought would properly be represented by the word willing. Are your wills strong enough? The two disciples determined that they were. "Yes, Lord, we have a will to do the whole thing, whatever it may be." They were fully given up to the Lord, to do his will. They would be willing for anything. They had such appreciation of the kingdom, and such confidence in the Lord that whatever he was about to do they were willing to do.

OUR LORD'S REAL BAPTISM

And so it is with us. Our wills are made up. "Are ye able?" Surely! There is not a doubt—nothing to interfere. That which the disciples could not understand, and which we could not have understood had we been in their places, we fully understand now, because we have the assistance of the holy Spirit to guide and help us in the understanding of the deep things of God. We see that the Lord meant that he was immersed into death. At the beginning of his ministry, he gave us all of his earthly interests in every sense of the word. This was his sacrifice. It was symbolized by baptism into water, but it was really a baptism into death. He had been fulfilling that baptism for three and a half years; and the next day he would die, as he well knew. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!"—Luke 12:50.

The thought is, "I am feeling greatly straitened until that baptism be accomplished. It will be accomplished tomorrow. I find that connected with that death there are difficulties that I had not expected. I am anxiously waiting for tomorrow, for the completion of my sacrificial death."

Our Lord had not supposed that his consecration to death would mean a death of such serious indignity, humiliation and misrepresentation of his character—an ignominious death. He had known that he was to be crucified, had told his disciples so and was entirely willing thus to die. But as he got down to the core of the matter, he saw that the arrangements were that he was to die the death of a criminal. It was an entirely different matter to be crucified as a criminal. Because he was a good man, it was most trying to him to be arrested as a blasphemer—one guilty of the worst crime known to the Jews. To be condemned on the charge of blasphemy and to be led by his own countrymen to be put to death, when he was really giving up all that he had for the service of God, was a terrible ordeal for him—much more of a test for him than it would have been for one who had been tainted with sin, and who was less sensitive because of his wrong life. Jesus seems frequently to have referred to this cup, as if He instinctively shrank from the experience.

THE CHURCH'S CUP OF EXPERIENCE

In a broad sense, the figurative expression, cup of experience, might be used in referring to every affair of our lives. But this is apparently not the way in which Jesus was using this word at this time. He used it in respect to something in the future. "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?"—in the future—that cup which I shall drink within the next few hours. That cup was a terrible draft to him—not the dying, not the cross. He had not asked that he might be spared the dying, that he might avoid death. But he had asked that this bitter cup of ignominy, that he should be put to death as a blasphemer, might be set aside; and yet he said, "The cup which my Father hath poured for me, shall I not drink it?" After he had cried out with strong cryings to God and had received the assurances of God's favor, he was then ready to drink of this cup.

So it is with the Lord's followers. It is hard that our good should be evil spoken of, that we should be declared to be poisonous to every religious sentiment. This is a part of our experience. To have people separate us from their company would be a trifling thing. To die in some respectable way would be a small matter. But to be put into a false light, to have our good made out to be evil, these are trying experiences. Our attitude is to be the same as that of our Master, "The cup that our Lord shall pour, shall we not drink it?" We have the word of the Apostle that all things shall work for good to those who love God, to the called according to his purpose. With these thoughts before our minds, we are to be of good courage and to accept the cup of experience which the Lord has for us. We know not how near that cup may be. Perhaps with the church it is the same as with himself. Perhaps there will be a measure of acknowledgment that we are right about the divine plan. Then through the machinations of the church systems we may be delivered up—possibly to death.

THE TEST NOW UPON THE CHURCH

The disciples at the first advent did not realize how near they were to the experiences of Gethsemane and Calvary. It may be so with us now, for aught we know.

It would appear as though the present time may be one in which the Lord is giving his people a test of a new kind. Even though we see the Gentile nations in process of disintegration, there is an opportunity for some to doubt the whole matter and to say, "There have been wars before, and I suppose there will be wars yet! This is not the end of the Gentile times, as I thought it would be." Such people, if they had been engaged in the Lord's service, might leave it and go into worldly society, or become engrossed in business, or what not. This is most particularly the very time in which such testings might come. Therefore we should be on our guard lest any spirit of doubt come upon us. "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

YOUR "GOOD HOPES" FOR 1915

[The plan here proposed we designate "GOOD HOPES," because nothing is actually promised—only your generous hopes expressed, based upon your future prospects as they now appear to you. The plan has proved not only so beneficial to the cause of Truth, but also so blessed to the hopers, for some years past, that we again commend it to all as Scriptural and good. Those who desire to make use of this plan can fill out both of these memoranda. One should be kept for the refreshment of your memory; the other mail to us.]

——TO THE——

"WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY."

Dear Friends:—I have read with interest of the openings for the STUDIES and Tract work in foreign lands and here at home. I need not tell you that I am deeply interested in the spread of the Glad Tidings of the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of redeeming love expressed for us in God's great Plan of the Ages.

I am anxious to use myself—every power, every talent, voice, time, money, influence, all—to give to others this knowledge, which has so greatly blessed, cheered and comforted my own heart and placed my feet firmly upon the Rock of Ages.

I have been considering carefully, and praying to be instructed, how to use my various talents more to my Redeemer's glory and for the service of His people—those blinded by human tradition who are, nevertheless, hungering for "the good Word of God," and those also who are naked, not having on the wedding garment of Christ's imputed righteousness, the unjustified, who stand, at best, in the filthy rags of their own righteousness. I have decided that so far as my *"money talent"* goes, I will follow the rule so clearly laid down for us by the great Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 16:2), and will lay aside on the first day of each week, according to my thankful appreciation of the Lord's blessings during the preceding week. Out of this fund I wish to contribute to the several parts of the Lord's work specified on the back of this letter. Of course, I cannot in advance judge or state particularly what the Lord's bounty may enable me to set apart weekly, and hence you will understand the sum indicated to be merely my conjecture or hope, based upon present prospects. I will endeavor to contribute more than I here specify; and should I not succeed in doing as well, the Lord will know my heart, and you, also, will know of my endeavors.

My only object in specifying in advance what I hope to be able to do in this cause is to enable those in charge of the work of publishing and circulating the Tracts, etc., to form estimates, lay plans, make contracts, etc., with some idea of what I will at least try to do in the exercise of this, my highly appreciated privilege.

My present judgment is that during the coming year, by self-denial and cross-bearing, I shall be able to lay aside on the first day of each week, for Home and Foreign Mission Work (to assist in circulating SCRIPTURE STUDIES in foreign languages, and in publishing the BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY in various languages, and in supplying these gratuitously to brethren who have the heart and opportunity to circulate them widely, and in meeting the expenses of brethren sent out as Lecturers to preach the Divine Plan of Salvation, and in general to be expended as the officers of the Society may deem best), the amount of.....per week.

To comply with United States Postal Laws, all or any portion of my donation may be applied as subscription price for WATCH TOWER sent to the Lord's poor or others, as the Society's officers may deem advisable.

That the work be not hindered, I will endeavor to send you what I shall have laid aside for this cause at the close of each quarter. I will secure a Bank Draft, Express Order or Postal Money Order as I may find most convenient, and will address the letter to

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY,

BROOKLYN TABERNACLE, 13-17 HICKS ST., BROOKLYN, N. Y.,
or, London Tabernacle, Lancaster Gate W., England; or,
Flinders Building, Flinders St., Melbourne, Australia.

(Name) .....

(Post Office)..... (State).....

YOUR "GOOD HOPES" FOR 1915

[The plan here proposed we designate "GOOD HOPES," because nothing is actually promised—only your generous hopes expressed, based upon your future prospects as they now appear to you. The plan has proved not only so beneficial to the cause of Truth, but also so blessed to the hopers, for some years past, that we again commend it to all as Scriptural and good. Those who desire to make use of this plan can fill out both of these memoranda. One should be kept for the refreshment of your memory; the other mail to us.]

——TO THE——

"WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY."

Dear Friends:—I have read with interest of the openings for the STUDIES and Tract work in foreign lands and here at home. I need not tell you that I am deeply interested in the spread of the Glad Tidings of the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of redeeming love expressed for us in God's great Plan of the Ages.

I am anxious to use myself—every power, every talent, voice, time, money, influence, all—to give to others this knowledge, which has so greatly blessed, cheered and comforted my own heart and placed my feet firmly upon the Rock of Ages.

I have been considering carefully, and praying to be instructed, how to use my various talents more to my Redeemer's glory and for the service of His people—those blinded by human tradition who are, nevertheless, hungering for "the good Word of God," and those also who are naked, not having on the wedding garment of Christ's imputed righteousness, the unjustified, who stand, at best, in the filthy rags of their own righteousness. I have decided that so far as my *"money talent"* goes, I will follow the rule so clearly laid down for us by the great Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 16:2), and will lay aside on the first day of each week, according to my thankful appreciation of the Lord's blessings during the preceding week. Out of this fund I wish to contribute to the several parts of the Lord's work carried on by our Tract Society. Of course, I cannot in advance judge or state particularly what the Lord's bounty may enable me to set apart weekly, and hence you will understand the sum indicated to be merely my conjecture or hope, based upon present prospects. I will endeavor to contribute more than I here specify; and should I not succeed in doing as well, the Lord will know my heart, and you, also, will know of my endeavors.

My only object in specifying in advance what I hope to be able to do in this cause is to enable those in charge of the work of publishing and circulating the Tracts, etc., to form estimates, lay plans, make contracts, etc., with some idea of what I will at least try to do in the exercise of this, my highly appreciated privilege.

My present judgment is that during the coming year, by self-denial and cross-bearing, I shall be able to lay aside on the first day of each week, for Home and Foreign Mission Work (to assist in circulating SCRIPTURE STUDIES in foreign languages, and in publishing the BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY in various languages, and in supplying these gratuitously to brethren who have the heart and opportunity to circulate them widely, and in meeting the expenses of brethren sent out as Lecturers to preach the Divine Plan of Salvation, and in general to be expended as the officers of the Society may deem best), the amount of.....per week.

To comply with United States Postal Laws, all or any portion of my donation may be applied as subscription price for WATCH TOWER sent to the Lord's poor or others, as the Society's officers may deem advisable.

That the work be not hindered, I will endeavor to send you what I shall have laid aside for this cause at the close of each quarter. I will secure a Bank Draft, Express Order or Postal Money Order as I may find most convenient, and will address the letter to

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