THE Watchtower

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

FALLEN FROM GRACE VERSUS COLLAPSED

More evident does it become, daily, that our Lord's declaration, "Babylon is fallen!" does not signify the outward collapse of "Churchianity;" but that nominal "Christendom" has fallen from divine favor;—just as the fall of national Judaism from divine favor, at the rejection and crucifixion of Messiah at his first *presence*, meant not the collapse at the moment of that religio-political system. The collapse of Judaism came after it had been *fallen* from divine favor for 37 years, viz., in A. D. 69-70: and during that interim God's true people, "Israelites indeed," were called out by the voice of the Gospel Dispensation. And just so now, the collapse of *nominal* Christianity, "Christendom" or "Babylon," is not to be expected until A. D. 1914, though fallen from favor since 1878. The collapse will be sudden and awful when it does come: and while only the few realize the *fallen-from-grace* condition of Babylon in the present, none will be ignorant of her collapse when it comes. But to know then will be too late so far as the little flock of overcomers is concerned;—they are all called now, during the interim, "Come out of her, *my people*, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues"—punishment.—Rev. 18:2-4.

The collapse of Babylon is graphically described by the Revelator as like the casting of a great millstone into the sea, saying, "Thus [suddenly], with violence shall that great city, Babylon, be thrown down and be found no more at all." Her sudden destruction is described as a great conflagration, and the declaration is made that it is because "the hour of her judgment [krisis]" will have come, that she will thus suffer overthrow or "plagues." "Therefore shall her plagues come in *one day* [prophetic time is a day for a year], death and mourning and famine, and she shall be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." Whoever are worthy the name, "my people," will hear and obey the Lord's voice and come out of Babylon and "receive not of her plagues;" because their obedience in fleeing out as soon as they see Babylon's real condition will prove that they were never in real accord with her sins. Those who *remain* after seeing Babylon and her blasphemous doctrines in the light now shining are reckoned as endorsing the blasphemies and deserving the "plagues" most thoroughly—as much or more than the "tare" class of Babylonians, because they have greater light.

Many err in not fleeing promptly when first they realize the true condition of affairs. Some say,—I will use my office or influence in Babylon, and then obey the Lord after I have gathered some of the "wheat." They forget that obedience is better than all else in divine estimation—better even than sacrifice. Are they wiser than God that they may even for a month advantageously or safely ignore his Word? Later on they find that even the "tare" class consider them as having for a time at least "dissembled" and misrepresented their own faith as well as misrepresented the faith of the denomination which they had agreed to uphold. Their *influence* which at first might have been powerful for the truth becomes vitiated by reason of their neglect to obey God's voice—by their attempt to guide themselves and to lean to their own understanding.

Others say, I am free from Babylon in spirit, God knows! Although my name is still on the denominational rolls, I take no interest in her affairs—my sympathies are all with the truth, and I rarely attend other meetings. But is this right—to be half out and half in Babylon? Is this the obedience required of an "overcomer" and pleasing and acceptable to God? Surely not. He publicly entered into a *covenant* with the denomination when he joined it, and he should faithfully live up to all the conditions of that covenant until he *as publicly* renounces or cancels his membership.

Others say, I merely retain my membership in the church and sing in the choir, etc., for the sake of peace in my family, otherwise I would speedily withdraw. But is this "*overcoming*," or being overcome? The latter, surely: it is a *balancing* of regard for God and his Word, with regard for husband or wife or children or friends and their wishes. Thus the Lord tests us, whether we love houses, lands, reputation, friends, husband, wife or children, *more than him!* We should be prompt to obey and thus to show that to us God's will is superior to every other consideration.

Additionally, we once said to a dear brother who made such a remark as the above: Brother, excuse the illustration, but it may help you to see your position on this question in its true light if I tell you of a matter which, it seems to me, aptly illustrates your position in a way you have not thus far thought of it. It is this: In Chicago, at one of the great butchering establishments (perhaps at all) they have a trained bullock whose duty it is to decoy the cattle that are ready for slaughter. The bewildered cattle are naturally fearful of harm and would be difficult to drive to the butchering spot, but with the decoy bull they are easily led. He gallops up to the herd tossing his head and tail as a friendly greeting and then, wheeling around, he becomes their leader and gallops off along the narrow passage where they can go only single file. He knows well his business, and when near the killing place he steps aside into a little space provided for him alone, while the herd push one another along to their slaughter. Now, dear brother (we remarked), you and others in the nominal churches, who know better and who merely sing, or preach, or hold some petty "office," or merely help to count another *one* on the reports of Babylon's prosperity or to give another dollar to her millions, are like the decoy bull—using your knowledge and influence to the injury and bondage of others who, seeking the right way of true liberty and life, are looking to you for counsel and being misled by your example. The brother in question at once thankfully acknowledged the force of the illustration, and requested that some of the free "Withdrawal Letters" and tracts to accompany them be sent him for his use in getting free and setting a worthy example to others.

THE FEDERATION OF BABYLON

"Christendom" was *united* in the dark ages, and the results were terrible, every way. The more truth and reformation came in, the more did "Christendom" split up. Had the reform continued, and had the light of truth shined still more clearly, the result would have been that split after split would have occurred, until each individual Christian would have stood *free*, and all denominationalism would have perished. This would be the ideal condition; for all the *unions* of the past and present are unscriptural and tend to impede the Christian's progress. They are *mechanical* unions, and not

heart unions: they are the work of Satan, and not God's workmanship: they tend to prevent *heart*-union and foster errors, which otherwise would quickly die. Not until enlightened by the spirit of God's word are any prepared to exercise the liberty wherewith Christ makes free indeed, and to come out from all false Christian unions or sectarian communions, into that broad place which recognizes one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one church, *whose names are written in heaven.* And only such are prepared for proper union on the same basis as that of the church of Apostolic times.

When, therefore, we from time to time in these columns allude to the growing evidences of a *federative union* among all the great denominations of Christendom, and when we point out that the Scriptures indicate such a union, let no one suppose that either we or the Scriptures *approve* of such a union, or consider that its influence will be favorable to either the truth or the "saints." Quite to the contrary, the influence will be baneful whatever is encouraging or helpful to Babylon is proportionately injurious to the true church. The various sects of Christendom realize that many of the doctrinal errors, which have heretofore bound their votaries helplessly and mechanically, will no longer hold as firmly as before, and they are supplanting these with new bonds of later device: *viz.*, love of respectability and pride in denominational name and prosperity—a party spirit. And instead of the discredited doctrines (which can no longer be unfurled as standards, but which must be carried along tightly closed) they are raising the standard of moral and political reform, the banner of a new crusade.

No one can say that their crusade is an evil of itself; and only the few who are *spiritually minded* (the *true* church) in and out of their sects can so much as see that moral and political reform is a worldly work and not the commission of the church which is anointed to preach, not such reforms, but *the cross of Christ and complete regeneration of heart.*

Those who are looking for a *union* in Christendom in which denominational names and denominational lines will be obliterated, are looking for what they will never see until the great collapse comes, and the entire "Christendom" system, social, religious, political and financial goes down in the great anarchous trouble with which the present age will close. The *union* which will be cemented will be largely one of common sentiment and co-operation in moral and political reforms. And this federative union, as already pointed out, began in 1846 in the organization of the Evangelical Alliance. We are looking yearly for its final knot to be tied in some manner that will include with other Protestant denominations the Episcopal church, and a *working agreement* with Papacy.

Thus the "*Image* of the Beast" (Rev. 13) will receive life —vigor, energy—be made active. And that activity which will seem to promise great things for Babylon, and which will actively suppress liberty and be exerted powerfully against the spread of the truths now published by us, will be but the lifting up of the great millstone preparatory to its being violently and quickly destroyed, for it will soon be evident that such a new union of church and state (wholly different from that of the past) will be a union of the classes against the masses; and it will be the rising of the masses in revolution that will, as God's agency, hurl the Babylon system to utter destruction.

THE TIME OF OPPORTUNITY IS SHORT

The more clearly we *see* present conditions and foresee those approaching, the more it should stimulate our zeal to be and to do while we have the opportunity—for a dark night approaches, wherein no man can work. Whoever desires to lay up treasures in heaven, by voluntarily sacrificing time, money, influence and other earthly considerations for the service of the Lord by service of the "brethren," should bestir himself, lest the harvest pass, and the summer of opportunity end, and he find that he has failed to offer his *sacrifice* which he presented to God theoretically when he was baptized into Christ's death. And whoever, having become nominally a member of the "royal priesthood," does not *offer any sacrifice* during this Gospel day of sacrifice forfeits his place as a member of that priesthood—his name will surely be blotted out and the crown, apportioned to him on the strength of his covenant to sacrifice, will be set over to another who will appreciate and use the *privilege* of self-denial, self-sacrifice, suffering with Christ.

THE PROSPECTS FOR 1900

It is our opinion that the year just beginning will be a very prosperous year for the truth. This is not merely "a wish, father to the thought," nor is it because the "Good Hopes" already sent in seem to give promise of funds for a wider spread of the truth; for, as an offset, we have noticed that our paper (the chief item of cost in our publication) will cost us nearly double what it did last year—in other words, a dollar will do only about sixty cents worth as compared to last year. No; but we have felt for several months past that Churchianity has reached and is at a crisis, where a cleavage is sure to take place,—which will separate from her some true saints who hitherto have been perplexed respecting the Lord's will, but who will not gradually become convinced that "Babylon" is no longer his mouthpiece, but already spewed out of his mouth (Rev. 3:16), and that her evolutionary teachings are not of him but in radical opposition to his Word and plan.

We have confidence that God's time is ripe for present truth to be more widely made known among his people as a part of the Gospel which is either a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. We have confidence, too, that all the money and all the colaborers necessary will be forthcoming, and we are arranging plans accordingly. Those who co-operate will share the service and the blessings attendant; those who do not use their privileges will but mar their own blessings, but shall not hinder the work that is due to be done "The Lord will provide!" Indeed, we expect that each year now will note rapid spread of the truth *until* "the door is shut,"—until the work is interfered with forcibly by outside influences. Then we shall understand that our work is done —that the "elect" have all been sealed, and that nought remains but to "stand" and assist others to stand. Indeed, this, as we all know, is a most important part of the present; for, while others are being reached with the truth, those already blessed are being assaulted by the adversary, so that all may be tested and only the faithful be *able to stand.*—See Eph 6:10-18.

TO HIM THAT HATH USED SHALL MORE BE GIVEN

The "Volunteer" spirit is growing Those who have served thus have been blessed and are more anxious for the conquest than they were for the first. They look abroad and see thousands blinded by the god of this world enlisting to kill and be killed, and they read the reports of the killed, wounded and prisoners, and the hardships endured, and the taxes to be borne; and then they say: How small is the service, how slight the hardship and suffering and self-denial our gracious King is willing to accept as "reasonable service" from us who have consecrated to him our *all*—even unto death—and to whom he has already given such rich rewards as well as promised us a share in his Millennial kingdom. We are resolved that neither cares of this life, nor pride, nor self-ease shall hinder us from engaging in this battle against darkness and the influences of the prince of darkness. On the contrary, we will be yet more vigilant, yet more enthusiastic in planting the truth, the standard of our King, where it can be seen by many now ignorantly fighting against him and it.

Let none think of the "Volunteers" as illiterate "hand-bill-distributers." Quite to the contrary, these "*ministers of the truth*" who are reaching larger numbers and exerting a greater influence than if they occupied the chief pulpits of the land, are far above the average of those whom they serve—both in secular and in Biblical intelligence. One is a stove-manufacturer and dealer; several are storekeepers, one owning and successfully managing five stores; some are college graduates, architects and civil engineers; some are clerks holding remunerative positions of trust—one of the latter, besides doing diligent "Volunteer" work, economized rigidly his living expenses and accumulated five hundred dollars during last year, which he sent to our Society to assist in publishing more "good-tidings-ammunition." Several are the chosen leaders of meetings in their various localities; several are stenographers (male and female); at least two are artists, one of these of distinction as a protrait painter; others are house wives; others are mechanics, who, after a week of toil, find recreation and heart-refreshment by spending part of each Sunday as messengers (angels) of the Lord to carry to their "brethren" yet in Babylon the true Gospel message,—"good-tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people" through "him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood."

Plenty of worldly business can command such servants because of the pay offered; but no other religious work has ever called for and gotten volunteers of this class, nor for a work of this kind, whose only pay in the present time is the divine blessing "a hundred fold more in this present time with persecution,—and in the world to come eternal life"—"glory, honor and immortality." No other Gospel was ever worthy of so intelligent a class of servants; but as respects this Gospel its most honorable servants feel that all that they have and are, are offerings far too insignificant to testify to God their new-found appreciation of his glorious character and plan. They feel impelled to pay their vows unto the

Lord, to keep their covenant of self-sacrifice even unto death, because they have the *genuine* faith in the Lord's promises, which *works by love* and purifies the heart from pride and selfishness.

A FRESH CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

In the world's warfare defeat leads to fresh calls for soldiers: with us success calls for more "Volunteers" and more success and more blessing, "riches of grace" (with possibly more persecution and slander) and by and by "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." There is more, much more work to be done, and we are desirous that many more of the Lord's consecrated people should share the heart-cheer and character-strengthening which this service affords.

Here is the very opportunity for which you have prayed—an opportunity for serving the *truth*, and the *Lord* and the *"brethren."* You wished and prayed for the needful *talents* to present these good tidings, and you hoped and prayed for *opportunities* and for *means:* and now, behold! the Lord has provided you all these in this "Volunteer" work. Notice that it is a *"reasonable service"* as no other is; because—

(1) It is not an *unreasonable* misrepresentation of God's character and plan and methods with drum and tambourine, and singing of hymns to concert-hall tunes, misnamed divine worship and service.

(2) It is not the *unreasonable* misrepresentation of the divine character and plan as preached in one-half the 200,000 pulpits of "Christendom" which blasphemes God's character and misrepresents his plan by declaring that only the *saints* of the present time will ever be saved—far less than one out of every thousand of the world's population;* and that the great mass, both of the living and the dead, will spend an eternity in torment indescribable.

(3) It is not the *unreasonable* misrepresentation of God's character and plan presented in the other half of the pulpits of "Christendom"—which, ashamed of their "hell fire and damnation creeds," hypocritically acknowledge them, while actually they deny them and preach *"another gospel"* of Evolution and Higher Criticism, which makes void the Word and plan of God, and repudiates the cross of Christ and all necessity for his atoning sacrifice.

(4) It is a *"reasonable service"* because it appeals only to reason and Scripture, as no other gospel message on earth or known among men appeals to these, and to no other authorities and standards. And it does, this, too, in a most *reasonable manner:* not taking vows in order to get into pulpits and into college-professorships, and under good salaries, to capture the sects ("creeping into houses and leading captive silly women"), but by kindly proffering without money and without price the priceless jewel of *consistent truth* which from our own experience we know will bless every true recipient. Nor has the Lord given us cause for shame respecting the *form* in which our messages are delivered—they are neat, creditable to the most refined who engage in the service. And in turn "the adornment of a *meek* and *quiet* spirit" which the Lord's faithful take to this humble service (laying down their lives for the brethren) is one of the strongest sermons or epistles of Christ-likeness that can be presented to those we may hope to interest, and it already has spoken loudly to those who at first were too prejudiced to read.

(5) Could there be a more blessed or a more reasonable service than this? Nay, verily! We can fancy, indeed, that the heavenly angels look down upon our privileges and opportunities and fondly desire that in divine providence it might have been their privilege to join with us in this most reasonable, most honorable and most blessed service.

* One in a thousand of the world's population would be 1,600,000. That many saints would be a *power* for good.

THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN FOR 1900

Confident of the reënlistment of the veterans of 1899, we have prepared for them a new campaign which we believe they will heartily enjoy. We will get ready for Spring campaign hundreds of thousands of pamphlets which we believe you will enjoy using. We will call for Volunteers and reënlistments about March, so please be ready.

Meantime most of the "volunteers" have plenty of work for the suitable weather between now and spring: and the spirit of the Lord—the spirit of love for the Lord, love for the truth and love for the "brethren"—is constantly constraining fresh volunteers for places not yet served with the booklet, *"Bible vs. Evolution"* and we are printing and will continue to print, plenty of these to supply the demand.

The new booklets will be supplied only for the fields where the other distribution has been made. This *free* offer for this special work will not affect the regular selling price of the booklets;—they are not *free* for any other kind of service, tho all are supplied at very low rates. We hope that we may have many and prompt responses to this call for Gideon's Band armed with the Jubilee trumpet to give the joyful sound, and with lights in their vessels,—ready and willing to break the vessels, to let the light shine out while they cause the joyful sound of the real good tidings to sound throughout the land.—See Judges Chap. VII.

A POSTOFFICE THIEF IS STILL ROBBING OUR MAIL!

We specially request that no *money* be sent by mail. Altho this is mentioned in every issue quite a number fail to heed it. They thus not only lose the money sent but cause themselves and us trouble and postage writing about their losses. Furthermore they trouble others who properly send Postal Orders, Drafts or Express Orders; for the mail-thief frequently by mistake takes these (which he cannot use and must destroy lest they betray him). Hence the many who do right in this matter are put to trouble even tho they suffer no financial loss. If all would observe the proper rule, the thief would be spared temptation, and he would soon cease to rifle letters addressed to us—finding no *money* therein.

One dear Brother sent a donation in *money*, which went astray. He wrote subsequently that his thought was—This is the Lord's *money* and for the Lord's *cause* and he will protect it. He erred in this, failing to realize that his course was a tempting of Providence. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Nor should we tempt our weak fallen fellow-creatures.

"THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH"

JAN. 7.—LUKE 2:1-16.

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matt. 1:21.

Jesus is the topic of the International Sunday School Lesson course for the entire year 1900. It should be a very profitable study, for the more intimately we know our dear Redeemer in the light of the Scriptures the more we shall appreciate him, love him and seek to copy him. No other life than his could bear so continual and close a scrutiny, yet always be full of fresh revelations of moral dignity and character—any other life similarly studied and criticised would reveal its seamy side of weakness, sin and ignobility.

Of the four records, only John's attempts to trace our Lord's genealogy to the heavenly source, and to show us that before he was made flesh he was a spirit being with the Father and a sharer of his glory—*a* god with *the* God. But all of the Evangelists are clear in their statement that he was—*"was made flesh"*—not that he remained a spirit being, and assumed flesh as clothing in which to *appear* to men, but, however explainable, that the life power of the spirit being, the Logos, became the life power of the human being, born of a woman and under the Law, subject to all the conditions and circumstances of the Jews. Matthew traces Joseph's genealogy; for altho the statement is clear that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, nevertheless, being adopted by him as his son, he might, without impropriety, inherit through him. Luke shows the genealogy of Mary, by which our Lord was actually related, according to the flesh, to our race and to the royal family of David through the line of Nathan.*

The time of our Lord's birth was an auspicious one in several respects, and very evidently divine wisdom had exercised itself in respect to the world's affairs by way of preparation for this important event: (1) The spirit of world-conquering that began with Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was favorable to it, in the sense that it brought the various families or nations of mankind into closer contact with each other, broadening their ideas. (2) This policy had resulted in the transplanting of peoples from one land to another, and thus had made them more cosmopolitan in their sentiments. (3) Israel and Judah, thus transplanted in their captivity to Babylon, became so attached to the new conditions that comparatively few of them availed themselves of the offer of Cyrus to return to their own land, only about fifty thousand of all the tribes, out of several millions. The Jews among the

* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V, Chap 6.

Gentiles were by no means lost and had by no means abandoned all of their hopes in the Abrahamic Covenant nor all of their faithfulness to the Mosaic Law—altho they were lax in these matters and too full of a love of gain and ease to cultivate the spirit of Israelites indeed. Nevertheless, they had their influence amongst all the nations with whom they dwelt, and were witnesses to the hopes of Israel in the one God and in a coming Messiah, the Son of God, to be the world's Deliverer (4) The triumph for a time of the Greek Empire had brought to the civilized world a highly developed literature—the Greek language had reached its zenith, and was the literary language of the civilized world. (5) The Roman Empire had conquered the world and was in the height of its power, and as a result there was a time of universal peace, and hence a more favorable time than any before for the announcement of the Gospel and for the safety of its representatives in passing from nation to nation. (6) Israel itself had reached probably its highest development, intellectually, morally and religiously, and additionally we are told in the Scriptures that "All men were in *expectation*" of the Messiah's coming —Luke 3:15.

It was just at this most appropriate time, as divinely arranged for, that Caesar Augustus, the Roman Emperor, issued his decree respecting the taxing of his worldwide empire. The decree was not merely an assessment of taxes, but was rather a census, or enrollment for taxation. But instead of sending assessors to the people, according to the present custom, the arrangement then was that every male citizen must report himself at the headquarters of his own family line. This was the occasion for the coming of Joseph and his espoused wife, Mary, the mother of Jesus, to Bethlehem, their native city, or family city, for they were both of the house of David (tho through different lines), and Bethlehem was "the city of David." Thus in a providential manner and by a decree over which they had no control whatever, Joseph and Mary were brought to the very city in which most appropriately the great heir of David should be born, as had been foretold by the prophet.—Micah. 5:2.

The noting of these little incidentals by which divine providence prepared for our Saviour's birth and for the sending forth of the Gospel message, are strengthening to the faith of the Lord's people. Realizing God's care in the past over even the little things, gives a foundation for confidence in his wisdom and provision for the features of his plan which are yet future—the fulfilment of all the exceeding great and precious promises which centered in him who was born in Bethlehem. And so also a realization of the divine providence in the larger affairs of the divine plan stimulates faith also in the Lord's providences as respects the personal and more private affairs of his people. Let us more and more realize that, as even the smallest incidents connected with the birth of our Saviour were ordered of the Lord, so also he is both able and willing to order all of the affairs of his spiritual children. Let us reason with the Apostle that, if God loved us while we were yet sinners, so as to make such careful provision for our redemption, much more now that we are no longer rebels, aliens, strangers, foreigners, but have become his sons, fellow-heirs with Christ and all the saints, we may have *confidence* in his love and in his providential care, that according to his promise all things shall work together for good to them that love him—to the called ones according to his purpose.—Rom. 5:8-10; 8:28.

The same decree that brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem brought many others of the numerous family of David, and as the inns or hotels of that time were comparatively limited in numbers and in capacity, it is not surprising that the inn proper was full of guests when Joseph and Mary arrived. Indeed, it was rather the custom for many travelers to carry with them their own lodging outfit, and to provide for their own conveniences in the courtyard connected with the inns. And hence the experiences of Joseph and Mary were by no means exceptional. When therefore the Babe Jesus was born, a manger became his most convenient cradle.

The city of Bethlehem still exists, and probably is not so dissimilar to what it was in that day, for in that land customs seem to have changed but little in centuries. A certain grotto is claimed to be the one which nineteen hundred years ago was the stable of the inn, and a certain stone manger is shown, which it is claimed, was the one in which the Babe Jesus was laid. Over this has been erected a Catholic church, and various ceremonies are continually performed in and about and connected with "the sacred manger." With such ceremonies we can feel little sympathy, believing them to be rather of the nature of idolatries. To us the center of interest is not the holy ground on which our Saviour trod, nor the holy manger in which he lay as a babe, nor his holy mother; yea, tho we reverence his flesh, and are deeply interested in all that pertains thereto, especially in all its experiences, from the time of its consecration to death, at baptism; nevertheless, our still greater interest is in our risen Lord, the new creature perfected, the spiritual One, far above manhood, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named—next to the Father, and exalted to his right hand of power The Apostle voices this sentiment well, saying, "Tho we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him [so] no more"—our knowledge of him as the risen and glorified Lord and Saviour thoroughly outshines all of our interest in his earthly life. (2 Cor. 5:16) And yet his earthly life is interesting and profitable to us, as we have seen and shall see.

Had the people assembled at Bethlehem realized who this was that had come to their city—that he was from the heavenly courts, that he was the Logos made flesh, that he had come to "save his people from their sins"—how gladly they would have welcomed him into the inn and have given to his use and comfort its choicest apartments! But they knew him not, and hence lost this great privilege of ministering to him Similarly, in every city and town where the Lord's people are (his true saints), there are many who would make them welcome and give them the best at their disposal, did they but recognize them as the messengers of Jesus and of the Heavenly Father; but as the Apostle says, "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (1 John 3:1) The disciple must not expect to be above his Lord, and hence, even when going upon missions of mercy and benevolence and as ambassadors for God, we should expect that the Lord's providence would furnish for us, not the most palatial conditions, but more probably very humble conditions. And when we find it thus we should rejoice that to some extent at least we have experiences which harmonize with those of our Lord. The Lord's people will obtain a blessing in proportion as they are prepared to receive all opportunities for God's service as divine favors and to appreciate them, no matter how humble the conditions, and it is noteworthy that neither Joseph, nor Mary, nor Jesus, nor the disciples, nor the Evangelist who recorded the incident, offers the slightest complaint or suggestion of dissatisfaction with the arrangement provided by divine providence. In proportion as they would have felt dissatisfied with the arrangements provided, in that proportion the divine plans would not have worked for their good.

The vicinity of Bethlehem is a pastoral country, and today is covered with flocks. It was the custom at that time for the shepherds to remain with their flocks by night as a guard against thieves as well as against wild beasts It was in this vicinity that David (afterward king), when a shepherd-boy protecting his flocks, slew on one occasion a lion and at another time a bear. The shepherds as a class were not particularly well educated people as respects schools, and yet many of them were thoughtful and thus secured, in their leisure time while watching their flocks, by reflection and by conversation, considerable knowledge, so that they might be termed an intellectual and thinking class of people—their minds being turned more to reflection on large subjects than are the minds of some who are constantly immersed in trade and of mechanics. The shepherd whom God honored in making him king of his typical kingdom, was a great poet, and evidently much of his time while shepherding was given to the muse, and one of his most beautiful poems (Psalm 23) represents Jehovah himself as the Shepherd of his people,—his flock, for which he cares. It was to men of this thoughtful class, and no doubt men familiar with David's Psalms, and with the Messianic hopes therein set forth, that the Lord sent the first message respecting his Son made flesh.

The description of the appearance of an angel, and of the fear which the brightness of his countenance engendered, is both simple and natural. All mankind more or less feels instinctively a fear of the supernatural, a trepidation at the very thought of being in the presence of the holy angels. And this is proper as well as natural, for all realize their own imperfections through the fall, fearing more or less that the results to themselves would be unfavorable if divine justice were laid to the line and to the plummet in respect to their affairs. All seem instinctively to realize their need of mercy at the hands of him with whom we have to do. And so it was with these shepherds, they were affrighted as they beheld the heavenly visitor in their midst; but his message was not one of justice nor in any sense of condemnation, but of divine mercy. He soothed them with the words, "Be not afraid; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." Can we wonder that joy took the place of fear in their hearts as they heard the gracious words? Surely not. And so it is with all who from that day to the present

time have heard this true Gospel message, not merely with the outward ears, but truly, with the ears of their understanding—comprehending it.

How false and how sad has been the understanding of this message by many of God's people as it has echoed to them down the ages! How few have heard it gladly, appreciatively! How remarkable that nearly all of the different churches and their thousands of ministers and hundreds of thousands of Sunday School teachers should unite in a *complete contradiction* of this message of the angels—a contradiction which not only wounds their own sentiments and grieves their own hearts, but which robs our dear Saviour's mission of nine-tenths of its majesty, and thoroughly dishonors and maligns the name of our gracious Heavenly Father by its misrepresentation of the salvation which he has provided in Christ Jesus.

Some perhaps may be surprised, and even shocked, at such an arraignment of the message which they and other well-meaning but blinded Christians are delivering in the name of the Gospel—for the word "Gospel" is derived from the words "good tidings." We are quite ready to believe that the vast majority of those who promulgate the *bad tidings* of eternal misery, as being the divine message and sentence to the vast majority of mankind, are wholly unaware of how seriously they misrepresent the divine character and government in the message which they carry to men;—they misstate the Gospel, not of intention, but of blindness, the very blindness mentioned by the Apostle as originating with the great adversary—the blindness by which he blinds the minds of the vast majority, to hinder them from realizing the glorious light of God's goodness revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.—2 Cor. 4:4.

Oh, if we could only get all true Christians to study this tenth verse of our lesson, and to see the depths of its significance, it would quickly revolutionize the teachings of Christendom! But as our Lord declared some of the deep things of the divine plan are hidden from many of the wise and prudent according to the course of this world, and are revealed only to the humble—the babes. Nevertheless, the testimony of God standeth sure, and all whose understandings have been opened and who have been enabled to comprehend some of the lengths and the breadths, and the heights and the depths of God's love, may rejoice that the ignorance of the world in general on this subject and the opposition of the great adversary who is blinding them, cannot continue forever, but must soon give place, when the Lord's due time shall come;—when he who died on Calvary for the world's redemption shall begin his glorious reign by binding that old serpent, the devil, Satan, that he should deceive the nations no more for the thousand years of the Millennial reign. Then all shall see out of obscurity; then all shall discern what at present is the privilege of only the favored few to see, respecting the divine character and plan—that the message of the angel was true, every word of it—that the grand results to flow from the birth of the Saviour in Bethlehem justified the message sent by the great Jehovah,—a good message of great joy which eventually shall be to all people—whose enlightenment and blessing shall have no hindrance, no restriction, and as a result all shall come to a knowledge of the truth and to an opportunity of availing themselves of the grace, mercy and peace provided for *all* in the great salvation secured by the ransom-sacrifice of our Lord Jesus.

The angel further explained his great Gospel message, showing its basis, and declaring that all the good things mentioned should come to pass because the Saviour, Messiah, had been born—the one so long looked for in Israel, the promised seed of Abraham in whom not only Israel should be blessed and exalted to honor, dignity and co-operation, but in whom also "all the families of the earth should be blessed." And let us here remark that the order of presentation used by the heavenly messenger, and evidently divinely ordered, is the proper presentation of this subject which should be adopted by all who seek to be used of the Lord as his ambassadors in the calling of the elect church. First, there is the grand pronouncement of divine favor and blessing, that it is a cause for joy, and that ultimately it shall extend to every creature; secondly, there is the specific explanation of how all this is to be accomplished—through a Saviour, a Deliverer, who, as stated in our Golden Text, in order to deliver his people from the wages of sin, death, into eternal life and blessing, must first of all save them *from* their sins. And we see from other Scriptures that this salvation *from* our sins signifies not only the payment on our behalf of the penalty for Adamic sin, but also, subsequently, man's instruction in righteousness and lifting out of sin; in which uplift each one is required to co-operate to the extent of his will and of his ability.

So all teaching of the grace that is to come to mankind should be coupled with the philosophy of the salvation—the Saviour made flesh and the flesh devoted or sacrificed for our sins, and the Saviour glorified, that in due time after the selection of his church he might, with her, according to the divine plan, establish his kingdom of righteousness for the uplifting of the world of mankind out of ignorance, superstition and general degradation into which the great adversary had gotten them through the fall and through his subsequent blinding and misleading. In this connection it is well to remember that our Lord's name, *Jesus*, signifies *Saviour*, and that all who would be of the elect Church must have the spirit of the Bridegroom (as well as by faith be covered with the garment of his imputed righteousness): and that his spirit is one of *opposition to sin to the extent of self-sacrifice*. We also are to "resist unto blood [death] *striving against sin*."—Heb. 12.4.

Then the angel gave the shepherds an intimation of the humble conditions under which this great King of earth was born into the world—as a babe, wrapped in swaddling bands and lying in a manger. This was necessary, not only to their identification of Jesus, but necessary also to bring down their thoughts from the great and grand *results* to its humble *beginnings*, lest they should be misled in their expectations. And as it is with every part of the divine plan, so also it should be in respect to all of our proclamations of the same. We are not only to tell of the future glory and greatness and grandeur, but we are to tell also of the present humiliation—not only of our Saviour who humbled himself to take a low estate amongst men, and to die for our sins, but also to point out that the "elect" are called to walk in his footsteps, under similarly humiliating circumstances—to suffer with him, if they would reign with him; to die with him, if they would live with him. And thus also the prophets spoke not only of the glory that should follow, but also of the sufferings of Christ (head and body) which must precede the glory. (1 Pet. 1·11) The lesson to every one who has ears to hear it is, "No cross, no crown." Let us, then, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and rejoice in every step of the humiliation, that he may exalt us in due time to share the glories of his Son our Lord, and to share with him the grand work of blessing all the families of the earth.

It was a fitting climax that, after the one angel had told the surprised shepherds of the good tidings of great joy for all people and was ready to depart, he should be joined by our angelic host, singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This was but a reiteration of the Gospel message already delivered. It declared that the work which should be accomplished by the babe just born, should redound to the highest glory and honor of Jehovah God, his Father. It declared also that through this work to be accomplished by Jesus should come to earth divine good-will and consequently peace—and all that these would imply in the way of blessings of restitution and privilege of attaining everlasting life. But how much in conflict with all this are the erroneous theories which have gained credence in Christendom, which teach that, notwithstanding the ransom which our Lord Jesus gave, and notwithstanding the turning aside of the original sentence upon our race as the result of the propitiation for our sins accepted by the Father, the vast majority of the human family will nevertheless, to all eternity, be in rebellion against God, and in torture will continually blaspheme his name;—and that without ever having had a full, reasonable opportunity to know the Saviour or to accept his salvation. How strange that any should think that such a plan would be glory to God in the highest!

How strange that any should *refuse to see* the very plain statement of the Scripture that God has provided through Christ that every member of the human family shall have a full opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the truth, and then of relinquishing sin and of accepting new life of righteousness under the New Covenant—and that then whoever still refuses and will not submit himself to this righteous arrangement shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people—in the second death.—that none will be suffered to live in sin and opposition to God to blemish any part of God's dominions, but that all the incorrigible shall be as tho they had not been. In no other way can we possibly imagine that the time will ever come when there will be full peace among men. "There is no peace for the wicked, saith my God."

The only solution which God offers respecting the establishment of peace is in connection with the establishment of his kingdom, for which our dear Redeemer taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." That will mean peace in its fullest and most absolute sense. The Scriptural proposition does not include

the violation of any man's will, but merely the offering through Christ of an opportunity for his everlasting blessing and peace, or his cutting off in the second death if he fails to appreciate the divine offer.

The shepherds having heard of God's grace manifested their interest by visiting and paying their homage to the Saviour: and so each one who has heard of the grace of God with an appreciative heart can do nothing less than *seek* the Lord and do him reverence and serve his cause by proclaiming the gracious message with which he has been favored. Let us each do so, and thus more and more increase in our hearts the joys of the Lord and our appreciation of his grand gospel.—Galatians 3:8, 16, 29

Respecting the date of Jesus' birth, we hold that it was about Sept. 25th to Oct. 1st B. C. 1, and that the annunciation (Luke 1:28) was nine months earlier, namely Dec. 25th B. C. 2. The evidences *re* this position are given in detail in MILLENNIAL DAWWN, VOL. II., pages 54-62.

"JESUS INCREASED IN WISDOM AND STATURE"

JAN. 14.—LUKE 2:41-52.

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and Man."

Much peculiar speculation has been indulged in respecting the childhood, boyhood and young manhood of our Lord Jesus, with which we have no sympathy whatever. The Bible student should confine himself to the Bible record, and not give loose rein to imagination and speculation more likely to be untrue than correct. Had the Lord foreseen necessity for information respecting this period of our Saviour's career he undoubtedly would have provided for it in the inspired record. This does not imply that there was nothing noteworthy or commendable in our Lord's earlier life, but rather that by comparatively ignoring this the Lord would point us more particularly to the three and a half years of public ministry following his baptism, in Jordan, and by the holy Spirit. In a word, the Lord thus points out that it was not the *man* Jesus whose words and acts were valuable to us and lessons for our emulation, but the words and acts of *Christ* Jesus, the *Anointed* Jesus—Jesus after he had been anointed with the holy Spirit without measure. Nevertheless keeping strictly within the lines of the little that is written in the Scriptures we may draw some valuable and helpful lessons from the boyhood and young manhood of our Master.

Nothing is known respecting the first twelve years of our Lord's life, except that under divine direction his mother and foster-father took him down into Egypt, out of the reach of Herod, where they remained with him for a few months until after Herod's death, returning then to their home city, Nazareth in Galilee. It will be remembered that the occasion of the flight into Egypt was Herod's fear that a king should arise in the family of David, in harmony with the Jewish traditions, and that thus Herod's own family would be ousted from the kingly position. Herod was not of the family of David, nor a Jew at all—he was of the family of Esau, Jacob's brother. The story of the wise men coming from the East seeking a new-born king of the Jews will be remembered, and now Herod, learning of their mission, urged that when they had found the infant they sought they should inform him, Herod feigning that he also desired to do homage to the new king. But the wise men, under divine direction, ignored Herod's request. Subsequently, learning some of the particulars respecting the birth at Bethlehem, Herod caused the death of the male-children of that city of two years old and under—thus endeavoring to insure the death of the newborn king. It is not at all probable that the number of babes slaughtered under this decree was great; as the population of Bethlehem was small the number of male children of such an age would necessarily be few.

The Golden Text informs us that Jesus grew like any other boy—that his development was gradual, both as respects physical and intellectual stature. We are not, therefore, to think of Jesus in boyhood's days as a sage a teacher, a healer, etc., as we find him subsequent to his anointing with the holy Spirit. Nevertheless, we may properly suppose that the *perfect* boy would in many respects be keener and brighter than the average boy who inherits sundry imperfections from the fall.*

The testimony respecting Mary and Joseph leaves no doubt that they were pious people, and this is confirmed by the first verse of this lesson, which informs us that it was their custom to go every year to the Feast of the Passover: this requirement of the Law was observed by the most devout Jews only. It is as unnecessary as it is improper for us to go beyond the Scriptural declarations on this subject, and to assume, as some do, that Mary herself was miraculously conceived and born free from sin. Indeed, if we had no record testifying to Mary's piety the fact that she was honored by the Lord above all other women, in that she was chosen to be the mother of Jesus according to the flesh, would prove her nobility of character and purity of heart;—for it is not even supposable that the Lord would so specially honor, bless and use any other than a noble character. Whom the Lord uses we may safely esteem honorable.

Although the Jewish Law does not so stipulate, tradition informs us that it was the custom to consider every boy who had fulfilled his twelfth year as "a Son of the Law," and to a certain extent from that age amenable to the requirements of the Law: and the narrative of our lesson seems to confirm this tradition, telling us that when Jesus was twelve years of age (in his thirteenth year) he accompanied the family to the Passover Feast at Jerusalem. Is there not a lesson here for all godly parents, suggesting that the training of the infancy period should be of such a character as to prepare the child for the consideration of sober and religious matters at the very threshold of boyhood? We think there is. And we think it a serious mistake made by some well-intentioned parents when they conclude that their children of twelve years have sufficient mind to have grasped the elementary principles of a secular education and to be prepared for higher studies of a secular character, but unfit for higher religious studies. The children who are ready at that age for higher secular studies have already been carefully instructed along elementary lines; and if any are unprepared for higher studies in religious matters it is at least possible that their elementary religious training may have been neglected by their divinely appointed instructors—their parents. No Christian parent can avoid this his natural responsibility toward his children—in moral and religious training as well as in the secular and physical.

The Feast of the Passover continued seven days, but it was the custom for many of the pilgrims from distant parts to remain over only two days, until after the principal ceremonies. It is probable that Joseph and Mary, in company with their kinsfolk, started on the return journey on the third day of the feast. It was customary for the women of a caravan to move on ahead, the men coming after, and a boy of Jesus' age might be with either of the parents and not be missed until nightfall; and so it seems to have been in this case. As one day had been spent in the journey, so another day was spent returning, and a third day in searching throughout the city; finally they found Jesus in the Temple, sitting with the teachers of the Law, the "Doctors." This was not so unusual as might at first appear; for at that time information was gained less from books and more from oral teaching, and the Doctors of the Law were supposed to be ready to instruct all who desired information, especially during the holy Passover week. Many young men availed themselves of such opportunities, and the custom seems to have been for the Doctors to sit on a special semi-circle of seats, while before them were low benches for the older students: the younger boys sat on the ground, literally "at their feet." Thus Paul, as a youth, was a pupil to Gamaliel, or, as the record reads, "sat at the feet of Gamaliel," to learn of him. Gamaliel was one of the chief Doctors of the Law in his day.

We are not to understand that the boy Jesus was bold, and that he went before the learned men of his day to denounce them as ignorant and as incapable teachers, and to show himself off, as some precocious but ill-trained youth of today might attempt to do. On the contrary, we are to suppose the boy Jesus to have a well-balanced mind, which probably recognized the fact that he had lived but few years in the world and had comparatively small experience in life, and that he by no means knew all, but recognized many questions upon which he would like to have further information, and that he asked his questions honestly, with a desire and hope of obtaining satisfactory answers from the teachers who "sat in Moses' seat."

The nature of the questions is not stated, but the time and surroundings would seem to indicate that they were of a religious character, and that the mind of Jesus was already grappling with the great questions which properly belonged to him as a member of the Jewish race to which God had made

* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. V, Chap 4.

certain great and precious promises as the Seed of Abraham; —promises of divine blessing under Messiah, of exaltation to be the chief nation of the world, and of the subsequent privilege of blessing all nations and of being the mediaries through whom all mankind might be brought to the knowledge of God and to his service. From what we know of the operations of our own minds at the age mentioned, we may presume that Jesus was brimful of questions respecting the hopes of Israel, and no doubt from his mother he had received some intimation at least that divine providence had indicated that he himself was to bear some important part in connection with the fulfilment of the Scriptures; and he was seeking to know the part marked out for him by the Heavenly Father in the testimony of the Law and the Prophets.

Although he did not have a Bible in his home, that he could consult respecting the divine testimony, he did have the common privilege of the youth of his day of attending meetings in the one little synagogue of Nazareth, which was but a small country town. There, from Sabbath to Sabbath, he heard the law read and to some extent commented upon, sometimes also the psalms and prophecies. With these sources of information the eager mind of the boy had grappled, and now, on the occasion of his first visit to the great city of Jerusalem, nothing attracted him so much as the Temple and its symbolical services, and happening upon a court or chamber in which the great questions of the Law and the Prophets were being discussed by the ablest teachers of the time, Jesus became so deeply interested and enthused in the Bible study that seemingly he forgot all earthly things, so intent was he in studying about the Heavenly Father's business—the plan of God, in which he himself was to be so principal an actor.

Naturally his questions would be deeper and more logical than those of other boys of his age, and naturally the Doctors of the Law would be deeply interested in him because of this in conjunction with the modesty which we may be sure accompanied it. And as during these feasts great hospitality was exercised, especially toward strangers from a distance, Jesus was probably entertained by one and another of these newfound friends.

The narrative records that, when found by Joseph and Mary, Jesus was both *hearing* the Doctors and *asking* them questions. There is a valuable lesson here for all young persons respecting their conduct toward their elders and instructors. How different the thought we get from this statement than we would have gotten had it read that they found Jesus *instructing* the Doctors, or attempting to teach them. We do not doubt for a moment that the Doctors were as much instructed by Jesus as he was by them, possibly more so on some points at least; nor do we doubt that if they were truly great men they would be humble-minded enough to receive instructions from any one—even from a child; and it is even intimated in the context that they asked Jesus certain questions, "and were astonished at his understanding and his *answers*." In both cases the proceeding was that of deference to the other, as implied in the asking of the questions: Jesus having deferred to the Doctors and asked them questions which manifested his depth of mind and clearness of understanding and logical reasoning, led them in turn to ask questions of him.

This question plan we commend to all of the dear friends of the truth as a wise and proper one, no less to us of today than to the boy Jesus and to the Doctors of the Law. We have seen instances in which some of the Lord's dear people have greatly injured their influence in the truth by display of too large a degree of self-confidence, *self-assurance*, in speaking of the divine plan to others—especially to the learned. Meekness is a jewel wherever found, and is especially desirable as an adjunct and sling for the truth. Let the truth be shot forth with all the force *it* can carry, but always with meekness and humility; and the question form of suggesting truth will often be found the most forceful.

Naturally Joseph and Mary were astonished to find their little son in the company of and receiving consideration from the greatest teachers of their day, and probably nothing was said to Jesus publicly respecting their disappointment and their subsequent search for him: probably when alone Mary upbraided him for his neglect to be with the caravan: yet she did this in a very kind and moderate manner, which seemed to indicate that it was a very unusual occurrence, which in turn speaks to us of parental obedience on the part of Jesus.

Mary's expression, "Behold, *thy father* and I have sought thee sorrowing," has been questioned by some as being a confession that Joseph was the *father* of Jesus, but we answer, Not so; it would be unreasonable to suppose (1) that Luke would particularly trace the genealogy of Jesus through Mary, and ignore Joseph, and subsequently imply that Joseph was the father of Jesus; (2) Joseph having accepted Mary, accepted also her son, Jesus, and became his foster-father, and under just such circumstances today the child would be taught to consider such an one a parent, and to call him "father." (3) It is not at all probable that the story of the immaculate conception of Jesus was ever made known to any but the closest members of the family, and it is highly improbable that the subject had ever been discussed with the boy Jesus, only twelve years of age,—nor would it have been proper to do so. Mary's language, therefore, is entirely consistent with all the facts set forth in the Gospel narrative.

Quite possibly the mind of the boy Jesus, while investigating the subject of his own responsibilities toward the Heavenly Father and his plan, had wondered whether or not his mission might not in some degree begin with his thirteenth year, since at that time he was recognized as a "son of the law." Quite possibly some of his questions before the Doctors of the Law were along this line, and quite probably he had finally about reached the conclusion that the types of the priestly office indicated clearly that his mission would not begin until he was thirty years of age. His reply to Mary's chiding was along this line: Did you not expect me to be about my Father's business? Did you not know that I had reached the age when I am a "son of the Law," and that therefore certain responsibilities have come upon me in respect to the Heavenly Father and his Word and his plan? And then, as though remembering the conclusion that he had just reached in discussing the subject with the Doctors, he broke off the conversation, yielded himself to their wishes, and accompanied them to Nazareth, making (so far as recorded) no further suggestion of any other than the ordinary course of life until he had attained the age of thirty years. This is expressed in the words, "And he was *subject* unto them." Joseph and Mary realized clearly that the boy was more than ordinary, very extraordinary indeed, yet they did not fully comprehend the situation nor fully grasp the import of his words. Nevertheless, Mary treasured this with the other peculiar testimonies respecting him in her heart, and doubtless it was from her lips that Luke received the information contained in our lesson.

Tradition declares that Joseph died while Jesus was yet young, and that the latter took up the carpenter's trade and became the support of the family. This finds some support in the Scriptural testimony where Jesus himself is called a carpenter, and his mother and brethren are mentioned, but Joseph is ignored. (Mark 6:3) Furthermore, no reference is made to Joseph in connection with our Lord's ministry, though his mother and his brethren are several times mentioned. It is quite probable, then, that the long period of eighteen years of our Lord's life, from the time of the incident of this lesson to the time of his baptism, was spent in the performance of the ordinary duties of life. What a thought this gives us with respect to our Lord's development of *patience*—patiently waiting until the Father's time should come and he should begin his ministry; patiently studying meantime, as best he could, to know more and more of the Father's will and plan; patiently waiting for the baptism of the holy spirit, which would enable him to fully comprehend the situation and his own personal relationship to it. What a lesson there is here for all his followers, and everyone of us may well realize the truth of the words, "Ye have need of patience," and again, "Let patience have her perfect work." What a lesson there is for us also in the thought that we are not to attempt to hasten the divine plan, but to wait patiently for its unfolding—not to attempt to begin any work for the Lord unless we are sure that his time has come, and that he has called us to do it; then, like our Lord, to be instant in season and out of season, when convenient and when inconvenient, under favorable and unfavorable conditions; to do with our might what our hand has found to do. And we gather the further thought that the most humble forms of labor are honorable when they are ours in harmony with God's providence.

Happily for us, we are not born under the Law nor under the limitations which hinder us from receiving the call and responding to it before thirty years of age. On the contrary, under the *New Covenant of *grace* it is our privilege to present our bodies living sacrifices to the Lord's service at as early an age as our knowledge of divine things and our enlightened judgments will permit. We, instead of waiting to grow to the fulness of stature mental and physical, are permitted to begin at once, as members of the Royal Priesthood, and to be growing at the same time we are serving. But let us not forget

* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

the necessity for growth,—adding to faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness love.—See 2 Peter 1:5-8.

"In malice be ye *children*, but in understanding be ye *men*."—1 Cor. 14:20.

INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—In regard to the work here in Boston the report is good. The Volunteer work is blessing all who engage in it and goes on grandly. Scarcely a Sunday but that we distribute the tracts at some church where the preacher's theme is Evolution. Two Sundays ago the Pastor of Tremont Temple preached a sermon advocating the doctrine of Evolution. This is the largest Protestant church in New England (congregation of 3000 and over), and the Pastor is the gentleman who notified police headquarters last June to have a stop put to further distribution of our tract. But he did not succeed. We are finding more work than was at first anticipated and are giving more books. Our report for month of November is as follows:—Nov. 5th in Dorchester 11 churches, 1024 booklets; Nov. 12th in W. Roxbury and Jamaica Plain 14 churches, 986 booklets; Nov. 19th in Dorchester and Roslindale 18 churches, 1269 booklets; Nov. 26th in Newton 13 churches, 1444 booklets; also in Brookline during month 4 churches, 154 booklets; total of 60 churches, 4877 booklets; average 81.2. We find churches larger than we anticipated. Quite a number with congregations of from 300 to 600 which accounts for our using more booklets than expected as well as the larger average. We still have 25 to 30 (brethren and sisters) engaged in work, and though we have accomplished a good work, the end is not yet. We are anxious to do all the important towns accessible by electric cars, provided you can keep us supplied. We leave that part for you to decide. Unquestionably all who work are receiving blessings, and are being built up in zeal and love in the Lord's service.

Sr. G. desires to be remembered. Your brother, in love and service of our Redeemer,

ALEXANDER M. GRAHAM,—*Massachusetts.*

[We are filling orders right along. Let the good work proceed. God bless the "Volunteers." EDITOR.]

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I am glad that at last I have concentrated my mind enough to write to you. Not till Mrs. Boehmer was here did I read and study anything in the truth so much as to do me any good, but while she was here my whole attention was turned. She gave me Vol. I. of M. DAWN but at first I could not read it without a great deal of will power. I read it only to show her I used the gift—it seemed so uninteresting. But at last it grew more interesting and I devoted most all of my time to reading it and I gave up almost all of my play especially with everybody but my brother and sister. (Do you consider this wrong on my part?) And I went to all the DAWN Circles and meetings here while she was with us, and mamma said the holy Spirit was upon me.

When Sister Boehmer left us all of my holy interests seemed to die out of me. I could read nothing Scriptural so that I could remember it or act upon it in my daily course of life. I think the reason why God let it happen so was because I got to thinking I was far ahead in the race and looked boastfully down on my neighbors. (Don't you think so, too?) But I went to meeting every Sunday and learned O, so much good! from Brother Wright and I think he is the best leader that could be chosen—that is, a human leader. But I could remember nothing through the week.

Now here is another case: A large "tough" is always trying to catch us for no reason at all but he claims for an excuse that we throw stones at him, but we did not. I wrote to Bro. Boehmer about it and he said I should avoid him as best I could, and in doing this I am obliged to run sometimes or get hit. Now do you consider this right or wrong? Twice we stopped and asked him what he wanted but he only hit us.

When Bro Boehmer was here he said it would do me good to enter a gymnasium which I did the 1st of Nov. It is in a Congregational Church. I am also entitled to a privilege of boys' club and six lectures. Do you think I will fall into wrong there?

Here is $1 which will at least be enough to make one WATCH TOWER which will help some one along just like the TOWER of Nov. 1 issue helped me along; especially the articles about Nehemiah which induced me to write. So many things fit my case exactly,—like where it says while we are in the truth we will be assailed the most, and when we get drowsy and lazy about studying the truth we will not be assailed. This is exactly right because it went so with me and I shall be happy in the hardest of earthly troubles. Your remark that each should build the walls near his home, has opened my eyes enough to see that I was in the wrong, because I do better in school and away from home than I do at home. Now I will try to do the best I can at home but will not lose my good part away from home.

I felt like opening my whole heart to you, and I have done it with the best intentions. I hope that your answer to this letter will come soon and bring tidings that will do me good.

Yours sincerely, HUGO KUEHN,—*Ohio.*

[REPLY:—I am always deeply interested in the young who give their hearts to the Lord. My Christian life began at about the same age as your own (13), and I know how great a blessing it is to become a soldier of the cross at an early age. At no time do we more need divine wisdom and grace than in boyhood and entering manhood, and how comforting it is to all such to be able to realize that having committed their all to the Lord he is caring for them, guiding and shaping their affairs in the course which will be most to their advantage as respects the present and the eternal life.

In re the rude youth disposed to attack you with stones: My advice would be that you go to play in another quarter, and that generously you consider that the man may be just as much unbalanced in mind or as soured in disposition as some who in the language of Scripture. "Shoot out arrows, even bitter words, at the righteous." (Psa. 64:3) On the whole I believe that those who throw literal stones are much less dangerous than some who are outwardly more decorous who have the "poison of asps under their lips" (Rom. 3:13), and who backbite, speak evil of and slander others—even the Lord's "brethren." Let us thank God that the time is coming when there will no longer be in the world any except those who have the "spirit of a sound mind"—the disposition of the Lord.—2 Tim. 1:7.

Respecting your attendance at a gymnasium, and the hearing of lectures: It would seem to me that no evil need result from merely availing yourself of these privileges, and should advise that you do so, unless there would be something in the way of a bondage connected with this—some obligations—and quite likely there are none that would be objectionable in such a club. With much Christian love, Your brother and servant in the Lord, THE EDITOR.]

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY.

DEAR BRETHREN:—The Volunteer distribution of the booklets, *The Bible versus the Evolution Theory*, has been completed in the District of Columbia, after a campaign lasting seven months. Fourteen Volunteers—brothers and sisters—visited 154 churches and distributed 10,934 booklets, besides other tracts. The congregations in the various churches varied all the way from 400 down, the average attendance being 71.

This work was taken up in accordance with the offer made in TOWER of April 15th, '99, it being our desire in this manner to show our love and appreciation of the Lord and his truth—by engaging in a work which might result in the blessing of his true "brethren." The work has progressed with perfect harmony of hearts, hands and a willingness to serve in any channel, however humble, and has most evidently been under divine direction, for we have had many indications of providential guidance in selection of churches to be worked, etc.

We have been greatly blessed in this work which has given us many opportunities for letting our light shine for the Master,—upon some occasions the brethren being invited within the church building to explain the object of the visit and something of God's plan as testified to in the literature distributed. We were well received on the whole, notwithstanding some cases of opposition. We are thankful to God for these great privileges of serving his truth, and also to Brother Russell and the Tract Society as instruments in his hands We are still "Volunteers," and ready to carry the good warfare into the adjacent towns with the booklets still on hand.

With love to all who are similarly engaged in the Volunteer work. Your fellow "Soldiers,"

THE CHURCH AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

CHURCHES AS SOCIAL CLUBS

Rev. John Watson, widely known in "orthodox" circles (as "Ian Maclaren," his literary *nom de plume*), wrote for publication recently, that in his judgment the churches of various denominations are rapidly becoming social clubs—ceasing to appreciate or use the place hitherto considered the true position of the church. The text for his criticism was found on a printed postal card sent out by an American Y. M. C. A., which read word for word as follows:

"DO NOT FORGET

"The next Social.
"The next Candy-pull.
"The next Entertainment.
"The next Song Service.
"The next Gospel Meeting.
"The next meeting of the Debating Club.
"The next Chicken-pie Dinner.
"The next date when you ought to make the secretary happy with your cash."

Commenting upon this card, he says:—

"This remarkable list of operations, combining evangelistic zeal, creature comforts, and business shrewdness, requires no commentary; the items give us a convincing illustration of an up-to-date religious institution—a veritable hustler of a Y. M. C. A.

"The Christian church and a Y. M. C. A. are of course very different institutions, and the latter is free from any traditions of austere dignity, but one is not surprised to find that the church has also been touched with the social spirit and is also doing her best to make religion entertaining. One enters what is called a place of worship and imagines that he is in a drawing-room. The floor has a thick carpet, there are rows of theater-chairs, a huge organ fills the eye, a large bouquet of flowers marks the minister's place; people come in with a jaunty air and salute one another cheerily; hardly one bends his head in prayer; there is a hum of gossip through the building.

"A man disentangles himself from a conversation and bustles up to the platform without clerical garb of any kind, as likely as not in layman's dress. A quartet advances, and, facing the audience, sings an anthem to the congregation, which does not rise, and later they sing another anthem, also to the congregation. There is one prayer, and one reading from Holy Scripture, and a sermon which is brief and bright. Among other intimations the minister urges attendance at the oyster supper, when, as is mentioned in a paper in the pews, there will be oysters and meat—turkey, I think—and ice-cream. This meal is to be served in the 'church parlor.'

"No sooner has the benediction been pronounced, which has some original feature introduced, than the congregation hurries to the door, but although no one can explain how it is managed, the minister is already there shaking hands, introducing people, 'getting off good things,' and generally making things 'hum.' One person congratulates him on his 'talk'—new name for a sermon—and another says it was 'fine.'

"Efforts have been made in England also to make church life really popular, and, in one town known to the writer, with some success of its own kind. One church secured a new set of communion plates by the popular device of a dance; various congregations gave private theatricals, and in one case had stage property of their own. Bible classes celebrated the conclusions of their sessions by a supper; on Good Friday there were excursions into the country accompanied by a military band, and a considerable portion of the congregational income was derived from social treats of various kinds. This particular town is only an illustration of the genial spirit spreading throughout the church in England. One minister uses a magic lantern to give force to his sermon; another has added a tavern to his church equipment; a third takes up the latest murder or scandal; a fourth has a service of song; a fifth depends on a gypsy or an ex-pugilist.

"If this goes on, the church will soon embrace a theater and other attractions which will draw young people, and prevent old people from wearying in the worship of God.

[Contrasting these modern and irreverent and unscriptural methods with those of the past, Dr. Watson continues:—]

"Perhaps it may be the perversity of human nature which is apt to cavil at new things and hanker after the good old times—which were not always good, by any means—but one is not much enamoured with the new departure, nor at all convinced that what may be called for brief the 'candy-pull' system is any improvement on the past. After a slight experience of smart preachers, and church parlors, and ice-cream suppers, and picnics, one remembers with new respect and keen appreciation the minister of former days, with his seemly dress, his dignified manner, his sense of responsibility, who came from the secret place of divine fellowship, and spoke as one carrying the message of the Eternal. He may not have been so fussy in the aisles as his successor, nor so clever at games, nor able to make so fetching a speech on 'Love, Courtship, and Marriage.'

"There are no doubt many points in which the congregation of the present has advanced on the congregation of the past, but it has not been all gain, for the chief note in the worship of the former generation was *reverence*—people met in the presence of the Eternal, before whom every man is less than nothing. And the chief note of their children, who meet to listen to a choir and a clever platform speaker, is *self-complacency.*" —*The Ladies' Home Journal.*

* * * *

We have frequently pointed out these same tendencies, but we are glad to be able to quote the words of another—of one who stands so high in Churchianity. But Dr. Watson will ere long find that he must not criticize "Babylon;" and that if he persists he will lose caste with the lords thereof. So conservative a journal as *The Advance* has already intimated that "Candy-pulls" and other *modern methods* of making Christianity attractive must not be interfered with by "old fogies."

And so say we! Let the innovations proceed—they are essential to the very existence of "Babylon." And besides, the sooner the social Churchianity clubs act out their real sentiments all along the line, the better it will be for *true* Christianity, whose separation from Churchianity is now due to be accomplished in this harvest time—"wheat" from "tares." The more it becomes apparent that, with the vast majority, religion is merely "a form of godliness," the more will those who have the power of it as well realize the width of the gulf which really separates the two classes in divine estimation. The louder grow the revelry and irreverence and the scoffing at God's Word by "higher critics" and the boasts of Evolution, the louder in the ears of the Lord's true saints will sound the Master's command: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen! Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. 18:2, 4.

* * * *

The Editor of the Washington City *Times* gives his opinion of some of the methods of Churchianity, thus:—

"A sensational Brooklyn preacher lately discoursed on subjects like these: 'Would Christ Belong to a Labor Union?' 'Would Christ Go to a Brooklyn Theater?' and so on. It is rather difficult to conceive the moral status of people who actually approve of sermons of this sort. Undoubtedly a large part of the audiences which they attract come from mere curiosity, as they might come to any other sort of show; and they might as well be at the theater for all the good that it is likely to do them. One of the most deplorable features of modern American life is the tendency toward sensationalism in the pulpit. It is bad from every point of view. It excites emotions which are in no way religious, and are all the worse for passing under that name. It is in execrable taste, it misleads people to a sort of contempt for religion, and it makes the churches which indulge in it odious.

"It has grown out of another bad feature of our modern life—the plutocratic ideal. Any sensible person may easily understand that when the attraction of a church for its members depends on this sort of thing, and on the ability of the people of the church to dress well and pay for a handsome building and a showy choir, there is no more real religion in the whole business than there is in a circus. . . .

"It would be much more to the point for the sensational preacher above quoted to ask himself, in private, whether his church is the kind which Christ would be likely to approve, or if it is full of money-changers and the sellers of doves.

"It is time that sensible and thoughtful religious people in this country understood what a church is really intended to be. It should not be a bad imitation of fashionable society, with all the meannesses, caste distinctions, pettiness, and jealousy of that society, veneered over with a coating of formal religion. . . ."

CHRISTIANITY IN JAPAN

Not long since Japan was considered the brightest example of progress in Christian missions, and with good reason. Everything coming from Europe or the United States was looked upon with favor—the Christian religion included. In a few years the number of converts to various shades of nominal "Christianity" ran up to 40,578 in 1878. However, a great change has occurred there: and within the past two years the total converts claimed by all the sects is only 403.

The beginning of this change of sentiment seems to have dated from the time that the different denominations began more or less to *compete*. It would seem that at first denominational and creed differences were considerably hidden from the Japanese, and they seem to have embraced Christianity in something of its simplicity of spirit if not of doctrine. However, when they began to send some of their young men to American and English colleges, the fact of the great varieties of contradictory doctrines, all claiming to represent Christ's teachings, became known, and was naturally followed by denominational reapings, chiefly, we believe, Presbyterian.

The Japanese are a *practical* people, and concluded that, if Christians of the West were so confused and divided respecting the teachings of the Bible, the Japanese could properly exercise their own judgments on the subjects also. In doing so they are rapidly tending toward agnosticism, doubt, uncertainty, unbelief, just as thinking people everywhere are doing, except as they get the truth and with it the spirit of a sound mind. How we would like to put into the hands of these Japanese and all truth-seekers the light of present truth showing forth the divine plan of the ages. We are on the lookout for the Lord to bring forward to the light some earnest, fully consecrated Japanese capable of presenting the plan by translating DAWN, VOL. I., presenting it to his Christian countrymen. We thought we had found the one two years ago, but it proved otherwise;—Christianity was unpopular, but the truth much more so—too unpopular for him.

Rev. Dr. Christlieb, for years the representative of the "Evangelical Protestant Mission Society" of Germany, discussed the set-back in Japan in a volume just published, entitled, "The Tendencies of Japanese Civilization and Christianity," in which he explains:—

"The opposition now generally entertained by the Japanese against the Christian church is due to the changed attitude which they have in recent years developed in so marked a degree to all influences from abroad—a conservative reaction of a pronounced type. This return to nativism is largely due to the easy success in the war with the Chinese. This reaction from the former enthusiasm for innovation has assumed a particularly determined character. The Japanese have reached the conclusion that they had been too hasty in discarding the old in favor of the new, and this spirit has found its way even into the Christian elements of Japan, which aspired to the establishment of a church independent of the churches in countries that had been Christian for centuries. Although the Japanese have known Christianity only for thirty years and there is scarcely a single adult native who has been a Christian since his childhood, yet they began to regard themselves more capable to develop a Christian culture and life than those who brought them the new faith.

"These ideas and ambitions are largely due to the fact that attempts were made to build up a Christianity wholly divorced from the national character of the people. The reaction is, to a certain extent, the result also of the radical anti-Japanese type of life that representatives of Western Christianity aimed to develop, completely ignoring the many excellent traits that make up the national character of the people.

"Still another element that has entered into this reaction is the fact that the Japanese, who is naturally not too deep intellectually and who is but half civilized, has been made acquainted with Western agnosticism and atheism as found in the writings of Schopenhauer and Herbert Spencer. Through these a certain dangerous contempt for the supernatural has been developed, especially among the younger generation. All these factors and others have united to produce the modern opposition to Christianity in the Japanese empire."

PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER

JAN. 21.—LUKE 3:1-17.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

Doubtless many commentors on this lesson will claim that John the Baptizer's ministry began with the year A. D. 26, and by positiveness of assertion seek to make up for their lack of evidence on this subject. Let all therefore bear in mind that such a dating of John's ministry will be purely arbitrary, to make it conform to the erroneous view which prevails among scholars in respect to the date of our Lord's birth. It should not be forgotten, however, that, although it is well established from the Scriptures that our Lord was six months younger than his second-cousin, John, there is no other Scriptural date which so closely and definitely connects the history of our Lord and of John the Baptizer with general history, as does the statement of this very lesson, that John began his ministry (when he was thirty years of age) in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar. Those who claim that Jesus began his ministry A. D. 27, instead of A. D. 29, claim that John's ministry began in A. D. 26; and in order to make this fit with the statement of the first verse of this lesson, they are obliged to count the reign of Tiberius Cæsar two years before its admitted date. For a particular discussion of this subject, however, we must refer our readers to MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., p. 54.

Of John it is written that he was filled with the holy Spirit from his birth. But we must not misunderstand this to mean that he was begotten of the holy Spirit, in the sense that Christians are begotten of it, for he lived before the time of spirit-begetting—in the Jewish age, not in the Gospel or Christian age. Thus our Lord said of him that, although there had not arisen a greater Prophet than John, nevertheless, the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he—the least one in the house of sons is on a higher plane than the greatest one in the house of servants. (Matt. 11:11; Heb. 3:5, 6) The Apostle again explains that "the holy Spirit was *not yet given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified."—John 7:39.

In harmony with this we must understand that John was filled with the holy Spirit, holy power or influence from God from his birth, after the same manner that the other prophets throughout the Jewish age had been under that holy spirit. The expression would lead us to understand that, although John was not born immaculate, as was Jesus, he nevertheless was well born, under holy influences, which tended to develop in him natural characteristics suitable to the mission he was intended of God to fulfil. This does not involve the thought of divine interference with the free will of the individual, for Paul tells us that he also was chosen of God from his birth to be a special servant to do a special work. (Gal. 1:15) Nevertheless, the Lord did not interfere with his exercising his own free will, even permitting him to go so far into blind error as to become the persecutor of the church. And even when the Lord rebuked him in the way to Damascus, that was not an interference with his *will* or nature, but merely a removal of his blindness, his ignorance, permitting his true will to come into exercise. And so no doubt others of the Lord's people from time to time have been from earliest childhood special subjects of divine Providence which has guided and shaped their experiences without interfering with their wills, so as to make of them *special instruments* for the accomplishment of divine purposes.

Of John's life from infancy to manhood we know nothing except the bare record, "The child grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the desert until the day of his showing unto Israel" (Luke 1:80)—not in the sandy deserts, but more properly in the wilds, the uncultivated regions, perhaps in the "hill country," where his parents resided at the time of his birth. Possibly a part of the Lord's providence in respect to John's training for his work consisted in the ordering of the affairs of his parents, so that possibly they were forced by circumstances to reside in such a wilderness-home, where they would have comparatively little intercourse with others, and where John, probably as a forester, would have the experiences which the Lord saw would best fit him for the work intended. All Christians should learn to trust to the Heavenly Father's guidance, remembering his special promise, which is applicable to each one who is in Christ, *viz.*, that "all things shall work together for good to them that love God," and remembering this they should be content with the lot which Providence seems to mark out for them—not indolent, but content, when they have done all that their hands find to do,—not restless, peevish, dissatisfied, complainers against God and his providence. "Trust in the Lord and do good." It may be that the Lord is fitting and preparing us individually for some special service, and that the permitted experiences alone will prepare us for that service. Indeed, we know from the Word that God designs his "elect" for joint-heirship with our dear Redeemer in the glorious Millennial kingdom; and we can well realize that because of our imperfection we need much moulding and fashioning, chiseling and polishing to make us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." We are to remember also that we are incompetent to judge of our own imperfections, and hence incompetent to judge of the experiences which would be most helpful to us. It is difficult for us sometimes even to see ourselves as others see us; much more difficult, undoubtedly, it would be to see ourselves from the divine standpoint. Here faith in God comes to the front—"This is the victory which overcometh the world, even your faith."

The time of John's "showing" or presentation to Israel

was undoubtedly the time when he reached the legally required thirty years of age; and then it was that the word of the Lord came unto him, causing him to begin his mission. We are not to think of this expression as having to John the same signification as it has to us who are of this Gospel age. The word of God came to John as a prophet, for our Lord declared,—"There hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist." The Lord made clear to John that the time had come for the beginning of his ministry, not merely by an impression or surmise, but with positiveness, as in the case of all the prophets. In harmony with his commission he went to the thickly settled regions in the vicinity of the River Jordan, preaching repentance—that the people should reform—and baptizing in the Jordan those who professed a reformation. For this reason John sought the pools or deep places of the river;—for instance, he went to Enon, near to Salem, "because there was much water there"—a pool sufficiently deep for the purposes of immersion.

We are not to fall into the too common error of supposing from the record that John preached to the people that *repentance and baptism* would work for them *a remission of their sins*. To so interpret these words would put them in direct conflict with the entire testimony of the Scriptures, which is to the effect that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. The usual representation of this subject is therefore clearly in error. To the contrary, we are to understand this verse to mean that John preached a baptism signifying repentance *unto*, or *preparation for*, a remission of sins. The time had not yet come for the blotting out of the sins, and John neither had nor could have obtained authority to declare sins remitted because of repentance and baptism. Had it been possible for him to have made such a proclamation, truthfully, it would have proven that there was no necessity for the coming of our Lord Jesus to *give himself a ransom* for Israel and for all the families of the earth. If repentance and immersion in water would bring the forgiveness of sins, the "Saviour and a great one" whom God had promised to Israel for so long would have been wholly unnecessary. But when we view John's work and preaching as merely a preliminary one, to make ready a repentant people, desiring to have their sins forgiven, desiring full at-one-ment with God, and expecting a Saviour to accomplish all this,—then all is harmony.

And this thought, that the remission of sins was a work future from John's day, a work to be accomplished by Christ, is fully borne out by the succeeding context, a quotation from Isaiah the Prophet, which has not even yet been fulfilled, but includes the entire work of the Millennial age. That age will be one for *remission of sins* and *blotting out of sins*, and the full reconciliation of so many as will accept God's grace in Christ under the New Covenant. (Compare Acts 3:19-21) In that time, under those favorable conditions, and not before, will the statement be fulfilled, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God."

We are to bear in mind that John's work as a messenger was exclusively to Israel, and had nothing whatever to do with any of the Gentiles. To Israel he acted as the Elijah or Forerunner of *Messiah in the flesh*, seeking to induce that nation, in *its* "harvest" time, to accept the formal offer of God's kingdom by accepting Jesus as the King. But John's mission was not successful to his nation, and profited only a few of the people; those few who believed John's testimony, and received it into good and honest and repentant hearts, were prepared to *receive* Jesus and to appreciate and *receive* the remission of sins offered by God through him. The remainder of that nation, rejecting John's teaching, and being in an unrepentant condition of heart, were not properly exercised, were not ready for Jesus, and did not appreciate the offer of remission of sins through his blood as a consequence, and as a nation were rejected of God and wholly overthrown.

While John thus acted as the Elijah in introducing Jesus in the flesh to fleshly Israel, and gathered out a certain class who were ready to receive Jesus, and who were blessed by him, so we see that in God's plan there is a greater antitype of Elijah than was John, as there is a greater Christ than was our Lord Jesus. The greater Christ is the spiritual one, "The Lord from heaven"—"Now the Lord is that Spirit." And this glorified spirit Lord is the Head of "the church which is his body," and this body of many members will, in "the first resurrection," be made like him and to share his glory, and with him and under him constitute the *great Messiah*, who shall take unto himself his great power and reign, establishing God's kingdom amongst men, and causing his will to be done "on earth as it is done in heaven." (Matt. 6:10) The coming into power of this great Christ, the spiritual Christ (head and body) constitutes the second advent to mankind—"the manifestation of the sons of God" for the deliverance of the groaning creation. (Rom. 8:17-19) Thus the second advent of Christ the Head (with the church his body) will be seen to be on a very much higher plane than was the first advent of our Lord in the flesh, although the first advent was all-important in that without it and its sacrifice for sins there could have been no second advent of Jesus, the Head, in the glory of kingdom power, and there could have been no glorified members of his body to be associated with him.

After thus noting the relationship of the two events, it is proper for us to note also that as the blessings of the first advent were offered to nominal fleshly Israel so the presentation of the blessings of the second advent will be to nominal Spiritual Israel ("Christendom"), and as a Forerunner or herald was appropriately sent to fleshly Israel, to prepare them for the first advent, likewise it would be appropriate that a proportionately greater Forerunner should precede the second advent, and seek to make ready therefor all nominal Spiritual Israelites. As we have already shown,* this greater Elijah, who heralds the spiritual Christ, is composed of many members; Jesus in the flesh was himself the Head of this Elijah class, and all of his true followers, who will be, when glorified with him, members of the glorious Christ, will have previously been in their earthly lives members with him of the Elijah class, whose mission it is to show forth the principles of righteousness and true holiness, and to exhort both by word and conduct all men to repentance and to preparation for the second advent—the glorious appearing, the setting up of the Messianic kingdom, the actual blotting out of sins, the straightening of every crooked way, the leveling up of deep crevices of character, the leveling down of the hills of pride to the proper level of humility; and in every sense of the word *seeking to prepare all flesh* to see the salvation of God.

Nevertheless, we are to remember that the Scriptures distinctly indicate that the testimony of this greater Elijah will be equally unsuccessful with that of the lesser antitype of Elijah, John the Baptizer. The church in the flesh has not succeeded in making straight the paths of the Lord for a triumphal entry to his kingdom upon the earth. A few have heard, but the message has utterly failed as respects the vast majority, even those who profess respect for and to be waiting for the kingdom. Nevertheless, all God's good purposes will be ultimately accomplished, though necessarily introduced by troubles, calamities, distress upon "Christendom," in the end of this age or "harvest" time, similar to those troubles which came upon fleshly Israelites who were unready for the Saviour, and "knew not the time of their visitation," at his first advent. All this unreadiness, however, shall not hinder the work of the Messiah. As at his first advent he gathered all Israelites indeed to the new dispensation, so now he will gather his elect "little flock" to himself; his kingdom will be established; it shall rule over all; it will accomplish the straightening of every crooked path; it will level up the path of righteousness and holiness, and make of it "a highway" freed from stumbling blocks of error and from Satan's deception. (Isa. 35:8, 9) All mankind then brought to a knowledge of the *truth* will have the privilege of progressing through the times of restitution up this grand highway of obedience to the grand perfection lost for himself and his race by father Adam's transgression, but redeemed for Adam and his race by the precious blood of Christ. All flesh indeed shall see the salvation of our God, and so many as will may share therein, for this is the blessing which God has provided for all the families of the earth, through the true spiritual Seed of Abraham —Christ and his elect church.—Gal. 3:16, 29.

It would seem that John's ministry at first was somewhat popular, notwithstanding his probably uncouth "backwoods" appearance and great plainness of speech; so that great multitudes came to him: amongst these were some who seemed to John to be so vile that he could not properly accept them until they had given some proofs of reform. These he denominates "children of vipers"—very harsh language, we would be inclined to say. We are not to understand that such language is proper to be copied by the Lord's people of today. We are rather to suppose that there were special conditions at that time which made this language appropriate, and that John, as a prophet, was divinely guided into giving this sharp reproof. The Lord's people of the Gospel age are instructed on the contrary to speak with meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, etc.,—"in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves"—"reproving with all long-suffering." The Lord's people of today are under general instructions of God's Word, as regards all their conduct, and are not to depart therefrom unless it would be under special divine direction, as were the

* MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, Chap. 8.

prophets of old—such as is not given to any at the present time so far as we are aware.

When John speaks of his hearers "fleeing from the wrath to come," we are not to get the thought that he preached, or that the people believed in, the doctrine of eternal torment, and that the words referred to this. Quite to the contrary, there is no such teaching in the Scriptures. The "wrath to come" referred to by John prophetically was the trouble that was about to come upon that nation unless they would receive Messiah, who had not yet been offered to them, but who would shortly appear, and for whose appearance they were to make ready by true repentance and baptism. The "wrath to come" *did come* upon the nation because of its rejection of Messiah, as our Lord and the Apostle Paul specially testify. (See Luke 21:23; Rom. 9:22; 1 Thes. 2:16) It burned fiercely against them in the great time of trouble which led to the collapse of their national polity in A. D. 69-70, and they have been under that wrath and unable to reëstablish themselves as a nation from that day to the present time We shall find confirmation of this interpretation of the "wrath to come" further down in this lesson

In John's preaching he found one difficulty, and that was that his hearers were imbued with the thought that they were God's specially chosen, "elect" people, whose glorification had been foretold in the prophets, and that since there were no better people in the world it was unreasonable to suppose that God would pass by the very best. They reasoned that he must take some, in order to fulfil his promises; and that they were not only the most obedient to his law outwardly, but also were the natural seed of Abraham, to whom the promises were made. Likewise the principal opposition to the teaching of holiness, entire consecration to the Lord, today throughout "Christendom," is the same error. A false theory has gotten into the minds of Christian people, which leads them to reason that holiness cannot be essential to the Lord's favor. Their process of reasoning is this: Out of the sixteen hundred millions of the world's population there are only about three hundred millions that make the slightest profession of Christianity, and this includes all the Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics, and what Bishop Foster (M. E.) designated the "ring-straked and speckled" of Protestantism—infants and all. Now, say they, God must certainly intend to have some, and if he takes *all* kinds of Christians he will have only comparatively few, and if merely an ambition to be ahead of the devil were to move him, he could scarcely reject any who claim to be Christians, and who are even half-way decent. Consequently they reason that holiness to the Lord, sanctification of thought and word and deed, cannot be essential to divine favor, and is therefore rather carrying matters to an extreme. The declaration that only "the pure in heart shall see God," and that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," are, to them, extreme statements, and must be passed by, or else the word "holiness" must be considered as used in olden times in a very restricted sense, as meaning not openly or violently wicked.

Thus we see that the antitypical Elijah to the Jews encountered the same difficulties that are encountered now by the antitypical Elijah ministering to nominal spiritual Israel. But note John's answer; he laid down the conditions very strictly: Do not permit yourselves to be deceived into thinking that God is under compulsion to accept such as you, and that otherwise his word would become void; do not think that he could not get children of Abraham that would be purer than you, and therefore that he must take you; God is unlimited in power and unlimited in resource, and, if necessary, he could raise up children to Abraham out of these stones—out of some that you consider as far from the possibilities of being Abraham's children as though they were these stones at your feet. And similarly we answer "Christendom" today, that God utterly rejects hypocritical Christianity, as represented by the vast majority of its professors, still blinded by the god of this world, and ignorant of the true character of God and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent; because not pure in heart, not consecrated fully to the Lord. Would that we had a trumpet voice that we might tell the millions of nominal Christendom the true state of the case, and would that they had circumcised ears to hear and reform, and be prepared for the glorious events now due to be ushered in,—without being obliged to pass through the great trouble time. All we can assure them is that God will find the full number of his elect, and that the full number is nearly complete now, and that in all it is but a "little flock" to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom; and that soon these will all be glorified with their glorious Head and Lord, and that then the kingdom established will be revealed to bless all the families of the earth. Nevertheless, we deeply sympathize with them in the fact that their condition necessitates that the introduction of the kingdom shall be with a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, and, thank God, shall never again be.—Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21.

John, proceeding with his discourse, points out to his Jewish hearers that the time of *judgment* had come upon *their nation*. The axe was laid at the root of the trees; every Israelite who was not an Israelite indeed was to be overthrown, and to be cast into the "fire" of trouble with which that age and national polity terminated. The three and a half years of our Lord's ministry to the Jewish nation, and their final rejection by him, are represented by the barren fig tree parable, in harmony with the statement of John foregoing.—See Luke 13:6-9.

John evidently struck the chord of fear to some extent, but he struck it properly. There is a proper presentation of the truth, and a proper fear of God and his retribution, which may properly be kept before the mind of the transgressor; but this is wholly different from the terrorizing fear of eternal torment, which plays so important a part in all the theological teaching, directly and indirectly, today, and which has driven some to insanity, some to skepticism and infidelity, and has hindered the great majority even of saints from appreciating the true character and plan of our God. Let us present the wrath to come, truthfully, not misrepresenting the character of our God; for assuredly God will not hold them guiltless who blaspheme his holy name.

Under John's preaching the people began to inquire what course they should pursue, and summing the matter up John's instruction was that they should practice justice, mercy, love, generosity; they should avoid violence, extortion, etc.; and should seek to be content with such things as they had. This was excellent advice, and undoubtedly those who followed it would be in just the right condition of heart and mind to welcome the Lord Jesus, and his good tidings of *remission of sins through his blood* and thus to become reconciled with the Father. And similarly if any now inquire respecting the coming trouble, the wrath that is to come in the end of this age upon "Christendom,"—what must we do? We answer them,—Practice righteousness, truth, godliness, kindness, benevolence, justice, trust in the Lord, seek to walk in his ways. Or we may quote them the words of the prophet, specially bearing upon this time, viz., "Seek meekness, seek righteousness; it may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. 2:3) And furthermore, we may rely upon it that those who thus seek righteousness, etc., will be the ones most ready to welcome our King, and his kingdom, and we may be sure that when in this harvest time some fail to make their calling and election sure, and prove themselves unworthy of the crowns apportioned to them, the Lord will be pleased to select from among such penitent seekers of righteousness some as substitutes to complete his elect church.

So powerful was John's presentation of the truth, that the people began to wonder whether or not he might be the Coming One, the Messiah, but he set the thought at rest speedily, assuring them that he was so inferior to the Messiah that he would be unworthy the honor of doing toward him the most menial service of removing his sandals. Then, having given them a little glimpse of the character of Messiah, he proceeded to tell them respecting his work, that it would be higher than his own, and that those who received him would receive a higher baptism also: "He shall baptize you with the holy spirit and with fire"—some of them (the few) with holy spirit, the remainder (the mass) with the fire—judgments, the great time of trouble which destroyed their national life and many individual lives.

He gave them an illustration of the matter, showing them that they had reached the harvest-time of their age, and that now a separating was to be expected—the separating of the true wheat from the chaff; and he represented our Lord's work with Israel as being that of a reaper winnowing the "wheat," freeing it from the "chaff" element. How forceful was the figure! how true the facts! Our Lord indeed gathered from that nation all the true "wheat:" we may be sure that not a solitary grain was lost. All that wheat was gathered into his barn, into a place of safety, into a higher dispensation,—they constituted the beginning or first members of the Gospel church. It was upon this wheat class that the holy spirit came at Pentecost, and it has abode with this true church since. After the separating (winnowing) of the "wheat," and the gathering into the barn, and its baptism of the holy spirit, in due time, the "chaff" of that nation was burned up with *unquenchable fire*—a time of trouble which *nothing could stop* or hinder. It will be remembered that various steps were taken to hinder the destruction of the nation of Israel, but all failed: even the Roman Emperor was desirous of preserving

the nation, and of establishing order there, and the Roman army went 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 Gospel age shall 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 perish in the great trouble of this Day of Wrath), but it will completely consume earthly governments and Churchianity in a fire of anarchy. Nothing shall quench that fire, or hinder that utter destruction of present systems. But praise God that when this fire shall have consumed the stubble and the falsities and deceptions of present institutions, it will have but prepared the way for the great blessing which he has designed and provided for in his coming kingdom. This "fire," and the blessing to follow it, are particularly referred to in Zeph. 3:8, 9.

CONSECRATION FOLLOWED BY TEMPTATIONS

JAN. 28.—MATT. 3:13-4:11.

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

After John had been preaching and baptizing for about six months, about September, A. D. 29, Jesus, who had been residing in Galilee and was nearing his thirtieth birthday, set out to find John and to be baptized of him and to begin his public ministry at the earliest possible moment. He was to be a Priest as well as a King for his people, "a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec," and the law required of a priest that he be at least thirty years of age. Hence Jesus' ministry was hindered from beginning until this age was attained, but he was free to begin it at the earliest possible moment after that time.

He was of course acquainted with his second-cousin, John the Baptizer, who evidently well knew of his upright life and unimpeachable character, and who was astounded to have him apply for baptism, whereas the class John was seeking was the renegade and sinful. According to the original reading, John "would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Realizing that Jesus had no sins to wash away, it seemed to John inappropriate that this ceremony should be performed upon Jesus, for we are to remember that John's baptism was merely a baptism unto repentance—reformation—and not Christian baptism.—See Acts 19:4, 5.

Our Lord did not attempt to explain to John that he was introducing a new baptism, not for sinners but exclusively for holy ones, and not, therefore, in any sense of the word symbolic of the cleansing from sin, but symbolic of a *sacrificial death* for the sins of others. It was not then due time to explain Christian baptism, and to have done so would merely have confused John and those who might have heard, without profiting him any, because the new baptism belonged to the new dispensation which did not begin until Pentecost, except in the person of our Lord Jesus himself. And in any case the force and meaning of the symbol is merely what is understood by the *baptized one*. It is perhaps well that we call special attention to this point, in view of the fact that a large and influential body of Christian people* are even today practicing John's baptism, "for the remission of sins," wholly failing to realize the import of the new baptism—Christian baptism—first symbolized by our Lord Jesus himself.

Our "Disciple" friends will not dispute the Scriptural statement that our Lord Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and hence that he had no sins to wash away, and consequently that for him John's baptism of reformation would have been worse than meaningless; it would have been a contradiction of fact and contrary to faith; and "whatsoever is not of faith is *sin*." Hence it would have been wrong for our Lord Jesus to have been baptized for the remission of sins—John's only understanding of baptism. We may be sure, therefore, that since "in him was no sin," his act of baptism was the first of a new order of baptism—practiced by his followers after Pentecost. (Acts 19:4, 5) We here note the fact that Christian baptism is only for believers in Christ—not for unbelievers, *not for sinners*. Faith in Christ is the justifying power; we are justified through faith in his blood. When justified we are ready for Christian baptism, and not before, but when justified we have no sins to wash away, being "justified freely from all things." To the Christian believer, baptism symbolizes precisely the same thing that it did to his Lord, viz., *consecration*—the full surrender of his will, his life, his all, to the Heavenly Father's will. By such a surrender of his will he becomes *dead to the world*, to earthly hopes and aims, and becomes *alive toward God*, to walk in newness of life, and by and by to have that newness of life actually, as a sharer with Jesus, his Lord, his Redeemer, in the "first resurrection." All this is *symbolized* in the proper Christian baptism.

Our Lord, being free from sin, required no justification by another, and when he had reached manhood's estate presented himself wholly, unreservedly, to do the Father's will. At the moment of *consecration* his earthly life was yielded up as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world,—and this was symbolized by his immersion in water. The remaining three and a half years of his life were already on the altar, and he merely waited for his sacrifice to be consumed, crying with his last breath, "It is finished!" Likewise he has invited all of his faithful, elect church to become *joint-sacrificers* with him, and ultimately to become also his *joint-heirs* in the kingdom to be given to the Royal Priesthood. As Jesus' baptism, therefore, signified his death sacrificially *for sins*, so the baptism of Christians symbolizes their participation with the Lord in *his sacrifice* (after they have first been justified by faith freely from all things by the merit of his blood). In our Lord's case the consecration was quickly followed by the symbol, and with his followers the consecration should be followed by the symbol as quickly as they *recognize the meaning of the symbol*,—which for centuries has been beclouded and obscured.

Quickly following our Lord's consecration and its symbolization came the evidence that his *sacrifice* was accepted of God: the heavens were opened unto him. This probably signifies that he was granted a vision of heaven, confirming to him his relationship to the Father, and connecting up the interim of his experience as a man with his prehuman experiences: and there came a voice declaring him to be God's well-beloved Son, and he as well as John (John 1:34) witnessed a manifestation of the divine blessing descending upon him like a dove. We are not informed that the people saw the heavens opened, heard the voice and saw the dove; on the contrary, the records seem to indicate that only Jesus and John saw and heard, and that the latter was granted the privilege to the intent that he might bear witness to the fact.

A dove was a favorite figure with the Jews as an emblem of peace and salvation. Indeed, Noah's dove, with its olive branch, seems to have become a symbol to all civilized peoples. It was most appropriate, therefore, that since some figure was to be used as an outward evidence of divine blessing, the dove should be that figure. Yet we are not to suppose that the holy spirit is a dove, nor that it has bodily shape like a dove, but as instructed in all the Scriptures, that it is a divine power or influence. The dove represented fittingly the meek and quiet spirit which is one of the striking ornaments of all those who possess the spirit of holiness unto the Lord. Such experiences as these which our Lord enjoyed are not granted to his followers nor to be expected today,—neither the voice nor the opened heavens, nor the dove. The coming of the holy spirit to the church at Pentecost was signalized by an outward demonstration, *which serves the entire church* throughout the age. Such outward demonstrations were essential at the beginning, as assurances to us that we are not following some vain imaginations of our own or other men's minds in respect to the holy spirit, and now we merely have the realities, which at first were symbolized or represented in tangible form. All who, after believing unto repentance, are justified from their sins, and subsequently present themselves to the Lord to be baptized into his death (Rom. 6:3), receive an opening of the heavens before them in the sense of an opening of their minds to see heavenly things, to appreciate spiritual matters; as the Apostle declares, "God reveals them unto us by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God,"—things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of [the natural] man." (1 Cor. 2:10) They also by faith hear the voice of the Father, speaking unto them, saying that, having thus come unto him through Jesus, and having thus consecrated their lives to him, they are now beloved sons, accepted in the well-beloved One. They also receive the blessing of the holy spirit, in the shedding abroad in their hearts of the peace-giving, meek and gentle spirit of holiness, and this becomes more and more a reality with them as they become more and more "filled with the spirit."

* The Christian denomination, otherwise termed "Disciples"

Jesus was led of the spirit—his own spirit, illuminated by the spirit-baptism which he had just received—to go apart from John and the concourse of people into quiet solitude, and for this purpose he chose a wilderness place. Mark says he was impelled or "driven" of the spirit into the wilderness. The thought we get is that there was a great pressure upon our Lord's mind at this time. In a previous lesson we noted his study at Jerusalem at an early age respecting the "Father's business," and how he should go about it. We found the Law instructing him that it would not be proper for him to engage in the Father's business until he was thirty years of age, and that in consideration of this fact he desisted and served his parents. The momentous time for which he had been waiting for eighteen years had come. He hastened to present himself at the earliest moment, that his service should not be delayed; but now, under the enlightenment of the holy spirit, instead of beginning his ministry precipitately, he felt that he must know definitely the proper course to pursue: he must not make a mistake at the very outstart of his service; he must know the Father's will, that he might render his service in harmony therewith. Such motives impelled him to seek solitude for thought and prayer, and for reviewing the various Scriptures which hitherto he had studied and but imperfectly comprehended, but which now began to be luminous under the influence of the holy spirit which he had received.

How proper it would be that all of the Lord's people, when they have made a consecration of themselves to the divine service, should be impelled by the new mind, the new spirit, to go apart first and to commune with the Father, and to study his Word respecting how they should render their lives most acceptable in his service! Were this course pursued how many lives would be totally different from what they are; how many failures and changes and turnings, hither and thither, would be avoided! Our Lord expressed the matter in one of his parables, when he said that anyone taking up his cross to follow him should sit down first and count the cost—learn what the Father's will would be, as well as the results to be sought. And if any of God's dear children have neglected thus to seek the right path at the beginning of their consecration, we refer them to the example of our dear Master, who was wise in this as in all things, having not only the spirit of a sound mind, but a sound mind itself, through which that spirit operated perfectly. However, our study of the divine will need not be so completely alone as was our Master's—we have "brethren," he had none, being himself the forerunner. We may profitably take counsel of such as give evidence of faith in and consecration to God, that we may learn the more quickly and the more thoroughly the Father's will concerning us; especially may we have the aid of the words and example of our elder Brother, Jesus. We must never forget, however, that our consecration is to the Father's business, and that brethren can only be really helpful to us as they assist us in understanding the Father's plan and our part therein: otherwise they might become hindrances by substituting their own or sectarian plans and seeking our consecration thereto.

Our Lord's temptations may be said to have begun at this point—those temptations in which "he was tempted like as we are, yet without sin." It was not the boy Jesus, nor the youth Jesus, that was tempted "as *we* are." And our Lord's temptations after his consecration were not like the temptations which beset the world, but like the church's temptations. In other words, our Lord was reckoned a *new* creature from the time of his consecration at Jordan, as we are counted *new* creatures in him from the time of our consecration; and it was the *consecrated* Jesus who was tempted and tried like as his *consecrated* followers are tempted and tried. We shall see further evidences of this as we proceed to notice the character of our Lord's temptations, and to compare them with the temptations which come to his consecrated "brethren." Many have wondered why their temptations seemed to commence after their consecration to the Lord, rather than before: seemingly they expected that after consecration the adversary would flee from them, and they should have little or no temptation—totally misunderstanding the divine arrangement. Such temptations or tests of character as come to the consecrated are not appropriate to the unconsecrated: the present is not the judgment day of the world, but the testing time for the church.

It would appear that our Lord's temptations progressed throughout the entire forty days, but that the three temptations specifically described were the culmination of that period of testing. We may imagine our Lord in the wilderness solitude, intently thinking over the various prophetic references to himself, and linking these together, as an architect would first draw the outline of a building and subsequently fill out feature after feature of its internal arrangements. The outline before our Lord's mind from the Scriptures, beyond any peradventure, was the kingdom. He was to be the King, the Seed of Abraham, under whose gracious government and wise instruction all the families of the earth were to be blessed. This, the profile, was already clearly delineated in his mind, but other features needed to be properly adjusted. How was he to fulfil the type of the Law which represented the priest as giving up his life for the sins of the people? Where would come in the type of the everlasting priesthood? Where would come in the class of Israelites represented by Rebecca, as he himself was represented by Isaac, and the Father by Abraham, in the type? And if Israel would receive him, and become the Rebecca, where would come in the sacrifice, and how? And then other prophecies no doubt pressed his mind for a place in the plan, viz., the declaration that although Israel were as the sand of the sea only a remnant should be acceptable, and how then would the predestinated number of the "elect" be found, to complete the glorious royal priesthood; and by what process would the blessing come to all the families of the earth, if himself, as the High Priest, and his true followers, as the royal priests, were all to suffer and to die for righteousness' sake, as sacrifices?

We may well suppose that adjustment and re-adjustment, fitting and refitting, with much reflection and prayer, occupied many of the forty days, and there may have been temptations intermingled with these all; as for instance, questionings respecting the necessity of those features represented in the types and specified in the prophecies of the sufferings of Christ which must take precedence to the glories that would follow. There may have been temptations, too, to deal dishonestly with the records, to "wrest the Scriptures," and thus self-deceived, to choose a way not in fullest conformity to the divine outline; but we may safely suppose that as soon as such suggestions, one after another, presented themselves, they were promptly rejected.—our Lord being fully determined that he would be absolutely obedient to the Father's will and accomplish the work which he had sent him to do in exactly the manner prescribed.

So intent had been his study, and so earnest his desire for quiet fellowship with the Father and his law, that forty days were spent under such conditions, and apparently so deeply absorbed was our Lord that he did not even think of food Nor does this appear so strange to us, when we remember that he was perfect, while we are imperfect, physically as well as otherwise. "He afterward hungered."

It was at the close of this period of Bible study and prayer, when our Lord was weak from fasting, that the Adversary assaulted him with three temptations particularized in our lesson.

The word here translated "devil" is *diabolos*, and is used with the definite article—*the* devil. The arch-deceiver is thus Scripturally distinguished from the fallen angels, who throughout the Scriptures are spoken of in the plural, designated by another word signifying *demons*. Here, then, is one place in the Scriptures where the personality of the prince of devils is definitely affirmed, and his person and power acknowledged by our Lord himself. It is not necessary for us, however, to assume that Satan appeared to our Lord in a human form; he may or may not thus have been personally manifest. If personally manifest, we may rest well assured that he presented himself in his very best appearance, as an angel of light. Indeed, we may well remember that our Lord, in his prehuman condition, had, as the Father's agent, been the Creator of Satan, and we remember that Satan was an angel of very high order, whose sin consisted in an attempt to usurp authority and to become the potentate of earth, by stealing the sympathy, affection and obedience of humanity, and that on this account he fell under divine reprobation. We can imagine that a visit from him to Jesus would not be at all inappropriate, as he undoubtedly knew the facts of our Lord's consecration, and to some extent knew of the work which the Father had given him to do in the redemption of the fallen race of men. We can imagine him even presenting himself in a friendly manner, and assuring our Lord Jesus that he felt a great interest in him and in his work; that he himself had been painfully surprised to note the penalty of sin upon mankind, and the dreadful degradation which had resulted; and that now he would be glad indeed to have something done by which poor humanity might be delivered from its groaning, travailing, dying conditions. As a friend, thoroughly versed in the situation all around, and interested in its success, and thoroughly conversant with the mental moods and foibles of humanity, he was in a place where he felt qualified to offer some suggestions respecting the very work which our Lord Jesus wished to perform, the plan for which he was now considering.

TEMPTATION TO USE SPIRITUAL FAVORS FOR PERSONAL PROFIT

First, he manifests his personal interest in our Saviour by suggesting his weakness from lack of food and the necessity for taking proper care of his physical health if he would do the great and noble work he had undertaken. He reminded him also of his present power—that he had just been imbued with divine power, and that he had now full ability to supply his wants, and need only to speak the word and have the stones turned into food. Thus also, he suggested, he would be demonstrating to himself the verity of the new power which he witnessed coming upon him, and had subsequently felt. What more cunning temptation could be devised than this? Compliance with it evidently meant, not only the relief of his hunger and the strengthening of his physical frame, but additionally it apparently meant the conversion of Satan, who now seemingly was in a repentant attitude, and desirous of co-operating with him in the undoing of the evil work of the long ago. It was a strong temptation.

Such temptation comes also to all the consecrated; not in exactly the same form, nor in the same language, but somewhat similarly—suggestions that the new relationship with God, and the strength which it brings, may be used to some extent at least in creature comforts—may be utilized for our temporal advancement; may be made to make us shine before men as very honorable and favored of God; may be used to command large salaries, or at least as a means for seeking them, even if never found. We may then all note carefully how our Lord resisted his would-be friend and his worldly-wise suggestions. He flatly refused the suggestion of using his spiritual power to serve his temporal wants. The spiritual gift could no more be used to procure temporal comforts than it could be sold for money to Simon (Acts. 8:18-24); but without going into details, and without boasting that he was too holy to think of such a sacrilegious use of the power entrusted to him, Jesus simply answered the adversary in Scriptural language, that man's life was not wholly dependent upon what he should eat, but that obedience to the Word of God would be a surer guarantee of life. And after this manner each of the Lord's followers should answer every question which in any manner proposes the acquirement of earthly blessings and comforts at the sacrifice of the spiritual. To quite a number of the Lord's "brethren" the adversary has presented this same temptation in this form: If you follow too closely to the truth, and permit the holy Spirit of the truth to make you very zealous in its service, you will soon have no bread, no food, for the world's people with whom you must deal do not appreciate such things. They will discharge you from their employ, or they will cease to deal at your store, or they will dismiss you from being their pastor, or they will withdraw from you their fellowship, their society, etc., and you will starve for all the good things of this present life. The proper answer is that God is able to take care of all those who respect his spiritual blessings too much to sell them for a mess of pottage, as did Esau in the type; and that we are convinced that whoever lives according to the Word of God, tho he may lose some of the comforts of the present time, will eventually gain the far better, the life eternal with exceeding glory.

Our Lord's positiveness of reply shut off the temptation quickly, and discouraged the adversary from further proceeding along that line; and so it is with us, his followers: if we are positive in our rejection of temptation it increases our strength of character, not only for that time, but also for subsequent temptations; and it disconcerts to some extent our adversary, who, noting our positiveness, knows well that it is useless to discuss the matter with persons of strong convictions and positive character; whereas, if the question were parleyed over, the result would surely be the advancing of further reasons and arguments on the adversary's part, and a danger on our part that we would be overmatched in argument, for, as the Apostle declares, the devil is a wily adversary, and "we are not ignorant of his devices." Prompt and positive obedience to the word and spirit of the Lord is the only safe course for any of the "brethren."

TEMPTING GOD BY UNAUTHORIZED EFFORTS

Disappointed in his first effort, the adversary quickly turned the subject, not even dissenting from our Lord's judgment in the matter. The second temptation he presented is like all others that came to our Lord and that come to his consecrated followers, viz., not a temptation to gross wickedness—to steal, to kill, etc.—but a temptation to do the Lord's work in another way than that which the Lord had planned—the misuse of the divine powers given him by endeavoring to accomplish good results in an improper manner.

Satan took our Lord Jesus to Jerusalem and up to the flat roof of one of the wings of the Temple—not physically, but mentally, just as mentally we can go to various places and do certain things without change of physical location. The suggestion now made was this: I (Satan) can give you a good suggestion respecting a way to bring yourself quickly into prominence before the people of Israel, and you will be pleased with it, because it is a Scriptural way; indeed I have found that it is foretold in the prophecy that Messiah at his coming will do this: and the people will readily recognize it as a fulfilment of the words of the Prophet David, and thus they will embrace your cause quickly, you will become the leader of the people, and your work will go on most grandly: and as I said before, I will rejoice in seeing the prosperity of the work, for I am heartily sick of the degradation which I have witnessed for now four thousand years. My suggestion is that you go to the roof of the southern wing of the Temple which on its rear part overlooks the Valley of Hinnom, towering above it six hundred feet, and which also overlooks the court of the Temple in which there are hundreds of devout Jews: then leap from this eminence, and arise unhurt by the fall. This will demonstrate more quickly than anything else you could do or say that the power of the Highest is upon you, and that you are the Messiah. This, I say, is referred to in the Scripture which says,—"He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."—Matt. 4:6.

Similar are the temptations which Satan presents to the consecrated followers of Jesus:—Make a great show before the world and the nominal church; attract their attention by any means, and not simply by the preaching of the cross of Christ; use the spiritual powers and blessings that you have received for doing some great and striking work, which will appeal to the natural man, and thus secure quick and great success; do this instead of doing the quiet and less conspicuous work of presenting spiritual things to the spiritual class, which work the vast majority can in no wise appreciate, but will only shun you, consider you peculiar, and which not only will lose you the sympathy of the mass, but will bring you specially the hatred of some of the principal professors of Christendom.

Again our Lord answered promptly and correctly: "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Satan would like to have us walk by sight, not by faith; he would like to have us continually tempting God, and demanding some ocular demonstrations of his favor and protection, instead of accepting the testimony of his Word, and relying thereon implicitly in faith. In the light of the unfolding of the Scriptures we see that Satan, probably unwittingly, quoted a passage of Scripture wholly out of its proper meaning and interpretation, a passage which referred, not to the literal feet of Jesus, and to literal stones, and to literal angels, but to the symbolic feet-members of the body of Christ today, and to the stones of stumbling, doctrinal and otherwise, which are now permitted in the pathway of the faithful, and to the angels or ministers of divine truth who in the present harvest-time would be commissioned to bear up the feet members with such counsels, admonitions and expositions of Scripture as would be necessary for them.—Psa. 91:11, 12.

TEMPTATION TO OBTAIN DESIRED GOOD RESULTS BY COMPROMISE

Satan's third temptation we may presume was presented likewise in a friendly and sympathetic manner, indicative of a desire for co-operation in our Lord's great work. He took him to a high mountain—not literally, but mentally. Indeed, there is no literal high mountain near Jerusalem, nor anywhere in the world, from which all the kingdoms of the world and their glory could be seen. Satan took our Lord mentally to a very high symbolic mountain (kingdom). He pictured before him the immensity of his (Satan's) own power throughout the world, his control of all the nations and peoples to a large extent, and this our Lord subsequently acknowledged when he referred to Satan as "the prince [ruler] of this world." This panoramic presentation of Satan's power and influence throughout the world was designed to impress upon the mind of our Redeemer the thought that Satan's friendship and assistance would be most valuable—nay, almost of vital importance to the success of his mission, and hence that it was very fortunate indeed that at this juncture Satan had called upon him in so friendly a mood, and that he apparently so sincerely welcomed his efforts and was ready to co-operate therewith.

Satan possibly pointed out to our Lord that Messiah was specially referred to as the King of Israel, and to bless Israel, and he may have admitted that a light of influence would extend to all nations through him, but the center of his argument would seem to be that he proposed to Jesus a still larger

kingdom than Israel. He proposed to him a kingdom embracing all the nations of the earth, and that he should have the control of all these, and be able to bring in the blessed reforms which were designed of God, only one condition being insisted upon, viz., that whatever kingdom or rule or authority might be established must recognize Satan. The adversary thus seemed to see what he thought a favorable opportunity for consummating his original plans, for we cannot suppose that his original intention was to gain control of a dying and depraved race, but that he much rather would be the lord or ruler of a highly enlightened and well-endowed people. He was willing, therefore, to see carried into effect all the gracious work which God had designed, and willing to reform himself and to become the leader of reform, provided only that he should be recognized as having the chief place of influence in connection with mankind. It was after this manner that he wished our Lord to do worship or reverence to him—to recognize his influence and co-operation in the work, and not for a moment can we suppose that he expected him to kneel before him and to worship him as God.

Our Lord's reply to this last temptation shows that it fully awakened him to a realization of the fact that there was no real reformation at work in Satan's heart; that he was still ambitious, self-seeking, as at the beginning of his downward course; and he realized that to even discuss the matter further with one who had thus avowed his real sentiments would be disloyalty to the Father, and hence his words, "Get thee hence, Satan"—leave me; you cannot co-operate with me at all; my work is in full accord with the absolute standard of the divine will; I can be a party to no program contrary to this, however alluring some of its features might be in promising a speedy conquest of the world, and a speedy establishment of a reign of righteousness and blessing and an avoidance of personal suffering; I cannot serve two masters: I can only recognize the one supreme Jehovah, as Lord of heaven and of earth, and therefore could not recognize you in any position of authority except as the great Jehovah would appoint you to it, which I know he would never do, so long as you are of the present ambitious spirit. I am operating along the line of the declaration, "Thou shalt worship [reverence] the Lord thy God, and *him only shalt thou serve.*"

We may readily discern that this temptation of our Lord was but a sample illustration of such as beset his followers all along the narrow way, from the same source, directly or through agencies. Satan through his various mouthpieces is continually saying to the saints, Here is a more successful way of accomplishing your object than that which you are pursuing, a more successful way than the Lord's way. Bend a little; make compromise with the worldly spirit; do not hew too close to the line of the word of God and the example of the Lord Jesus and the apostles; you must be more like the world, in order to exert an influence—mix a little into politics, and a good deal into secret societies; keep in touch with the fads and foibles of the day, and above all things keep any light of present truth under a bushel,—thus alone can you have influence and accomplish your good desires toward men. But our dear Master assures us that we are to be faithful to the Lord and to his plan, and let things work out as best they may along that line; and that we may rest assured that in the end the Father's plan not only is the best but really the only plan for accomplishing his great designs, and that if we would be associated therein with him as colaborers, it must be by recognizing him as our only Master, and with an eye single to his approval.

Our Lord's utter refusal of every other way of carrying out his mission than the one which the Father had marked out, the way of self-sacrifice, the narrow way, was indeed a great victory. The adversary left him, finding nothing in him that he could take hold of or work upon, so thoroughly loyal was he to the very word and the spirit of Jehovah. And then, the trial being ended, we read that holy angels came and ministered to our Lord—doubtless supplying him with refreshment such as he had refused to exercise the divine power to obtain for himself. And such we may recognize as being the experience of our Lord's followers: with victory comes a blessing from the Lord, fellowship of spirit, refreshment of heart, a realization of divine favor that makes stronger for the next trial.

Another lesson here is that temptation does not imply sin. As our Lord was tempted "without sin" so may his brethren be if they follow his example and with purity of heart, purity of intention, seek only the Father's will. Sin could only come through yielding to the temptation. But let us not forget that hesitancy after the wrong is seen increases the power of the temptation. And we may note here that while Satan is tempter, endeavoring to ensnare us into wrong paths and wrong conduct, God is not so; "he tempteth no man" (Jas 1:13), and even tho he permit the Adversary and his agents to beset his people, it is not with the object of ensnaring them, but with the opposite object, that they may by such trials and testings be made the stronger, developing character through exercise in resisting evil. Let us remember too for our strengthening, the Scriptural assurance that God will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to resist and overcome but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape.

To avail ourselves of this provision requires merely faith, and the more we exercise our faith in such matters the more of it we will have, becoming stronger in the Lord and in the power of his might; and thus by divine grace and under the Master's assistance we may come off overcomers—conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood.—2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Cor 10:13; Eph. 6:10; Rom. 8:37-39.

A LITTLE WHILE

A little while with weary feet to tread the narrow way,
A little while, the time will not be long,
A little while the sinless One to follow day by day,
A little while to suffer and be strong.

A little while with faltering tongue to testify for God,
A little while to suffer scorn and shame,
A little while with voice and pen to spread the truth abroad,
A little while to glorify his name

A little while with humble faith to wage the goodly fight,
A little while, grasp firm the two-edged sword,
A little while, Satanic hosts shall all be put to flight,
A little while, then, trust thou in the Lord.

A little while, a little while, Oh, let this be our song,
A little while, lay not the armor down;
A little while, a little while, the strife will not be long,
A little while, and we shall wear the crown!

—GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT.

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THE PEOPLE THAT KNOW THE JOYFUL SOUND

"Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."—Psalm 89:15

Salvation is the joyful sound, as the poet has well expressed it,* saying:

"Salvation! O the joyful sound,
What tidings for our race!
Deliverance for the world is found
Through God's abounding grace."

This joyful salvation sound is the Gospel, as declared by the angelic messengers—"Good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people." But alas, how few have heard this joyful sound! As mentally we glance over the sixteen hundred millions of the world's population, we find that even the most extravagant claims would show that not one-fifth of the whole have ever heard these blessed tidings; the four-fifths are totally blinded by the god of this world, and see nothing and hear nothing of God's grace. And the matter has been as bad as this, or worse proportionately for six thousand years. How we should rejoice that under divine providence we were born in lands where the light of truth sends forth at least a feeble ray, and where many are not totally deaf to "the joyful sound!"

Yet coming to civilized lands, we are surprised, almost appalled, at the gross darkness which beclouds the minds of the people of so-called Christendom, and by the dimness of vision and dullness of hearing of the vast majority in these most favored parts of the earth—of the majority of those whose lines have fallen unto them in pleasant places comparatively. Mentally we see nearly two-thirds of the so-called enlightened

* POEMS AND HYMN OF DAWN No. 255

fifth of humanity bowing to the Virgin Mary, addressing her in prayer, and crossing themselves with reverence at the mention of her name, and generally grossly ignorant of the divine character and plan—believers in an eternity of torment for all except those of their own communions, and in long periods of purgatorial agony for the great majority of their members. Heart-sick with the picture, we exclaim, O that these people could hear the joyful sound! for evidently they have at very most merely heard an indistinct strain of it conglomerated with the jargon of Babel's confusion and Satanic discord.

Looking expectantly to the remaining third of the so-called enlightened fifth of humanity, known as "Protestants," we inquire, Are these the blessed people who know the joyful sound? A hundred *discordant* voices answer, Yes! but we inquire, If you have heard it, why such discord, such clashing of doctrines, such separation from each other by creed-fences? Are not all the people who know the joyful sound one people —the one church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven? This at once arouses doubt respecting "Protestantism," and we hearken for evidences to the contrary, that many at least, if not all, know "the joyful sound." We perceive that in many respects amongst these are found people who know more respecting the divine character than do the outside fifteen hundred millions; and yet here also we find great blindness, obscure mental vision, great deafness to the voice from heaven. Truly amongst these also the great adversary has done a work, so that although in their midst more may be heard of "the joyful sound" than amongst other classes of the world, yet Satan has here also introduced the discords so as almost to drown the heavenly music—"the joyful sound." For while to some extent Protestantism discerns God's love and justice, the adversary has beclouded its vision and dulled its hearing for the truth, by whispering theories that are at variance with divine justice and love, and make void and meaningless "the joyful sound." To some he whispers that God never had either sympathy or provision for any except "the elect;" to others he whispers that God has the sympathy for all, but lacks the wisdom and power to give practical assistance to any but the few: and thus in the minds of nearly all "the joyful sound" is reduced to a song of praise and joy and thanksgiving and salvation from a little flock, with which will mingle to all eternity the anguishing wails of the vast majority of thousands of millions.

There are a few (but alas how few!) who not only hear "the joyful sound," but who discern that the discord is of the adversary, and that the joyful sound, if separated from Satanic inharmonies, is beautiful, harmonious beyond any other sound or song. Full of the spirit of the song themselves, they haste to make its beauty known to others, and to point out the origin of the discord. They feel certain that it will be merely necessary to indicate the discord and its source to have others like themselves instantly discern and reject the discord, and rejoice more fully than ever in "the joyful sound"—the true Gospel. But alas! what disappointment is theirs: they find that even amongst the "Protestant" fifteenth of humanity not only is the darkness great, but the depravity of heart and mind are so dense that the darkness and discord are *preferred*, and "the joyful sound," the good tidings of great joy for all people, is spurned, and considered to be the discord that is of the adversary. Only here and there can any be found who "*know* the joyful sound"—who can distinguish the joyful sound of the heavenly message from those by which Satan has "deceived all that dwell upon the earth."—Rev. 18:23; 19:20; 20:3.

SOUNDING THE JUBILEE TRUMPETS

The question may arise, Why did God permit Satan, through his human agencies, to bring false doctrine amongst his people during the dark ages, thus to blind and deafen them to the true light, and the heavenly harmonies of the divine plan?

We answer that God's purpose during this age has been the selection of merely the "little flock" of "overcomers" to be joint-heirs with his Son in the coming Millennial kingdom which is to "bless all the families of the earth;" and by permitting darkness to come upon this nominal church class he has (1) taught a great lesson both to angels and men concerning the necessity of not only starting right, but remaining loyal to the Lord and his Word, and maintaining a teachable attitude of heart. (2) Doubtless the majority of the "little flock" has been selected from the two ends of this Gospel age —its beginning and its closing years. (3) There may have been much more knowledge of the joyful message amongst God's people during "the dark ages" than we now have means of knowing, since the history of that time had few recorders, and their records then dealt chiefly with the error-blinded systems and ignored or misrepresented the unpopular instrumentalities used by God in making "the joyful sound"—some of whom quite probably were denominated heretics, because they knew the joyful sound of the true Gospel, and proportionately denounced the popular "doctrines of devils."

At all events, under divine providence the joyful sound is now heard above the din of "Babel" by those who "have an ear to hear," and it is found to be the very same gospel which was preached by the Lord and the Apostles and announced by the angels on the plains of Bethlehem—a "joyful sound," "good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." Moreover, as we have seen in other studies,* we are now in the early dawn of the *Millennial day*, which in the Scriptures was typically represented to Israel by their *Jubilee year*—of release from bondage and the return to original possessions, etc. And as the *priests* were to announce the Jubilee year in the Day of Atonement, by the blowing of silver jubilee trumpets, so here we have the antitype: the royal priests in this, the close of the antitypical Day of Atonement (the Gospel age), are to blow the trumpets of truth (silver being a symbol of truth), announcing to the people that the grace of God is come nigh unto them, and that during the Millennial day (of one thousand years) now dawning the great High Priest, also Prophet and King, shall stand forth as God's representative, and by virtue of his own sacrifice shall give the needed *blessing of knowledge* to all mankind, and shall lift up out of degradation and sin and death, by his providence and grace, all who seek to come back to righteousness and fellowship with the Father through him.

So then, *as* it was appropriate in the type that this announcement should be made at the close of the Day of Atonement, *so* that indicated that it is a part of the divine plan that the sounding forth of the joyful sound, the message of the Jubilee of divine love and favor and blessing should be given at the present time—just in the closing days of the Gospel age—the closing hours, so to speak, of the great Day of Atonement,† and at the dawning, so to speak, of the Millennial age of Jubilee.

Now another matter, little in itself, and easily overlooked in our translation of the Bible, is the fact that the very word (*turnah*) used in our text, rendered "a joyful sound," is the same Hebrew word that is used in Lev. 25:9, where the *sounding of the Jubilee trumpet* is commanded. How strikingly the Lord has arranged his Word, to make it a basis for faith and joy to his people. How clear it is to those who "know the joyful sound," and yet how obscure to all others! Well does our text say, "*Blessed* are the people who *know* the joyful sound!" The blessing upon them is certainly not because of their own merit, for we are all conscious of the fact that in our flesh dwelleth no perfection, and that none of us could be commended to God by our own righteousness—all of these blessed people who know the joyful sound have reason, therefore, to give thanks unto him who loved them, and who bought them with his own precious blood, in whose merit alone they have standing with the Heavenly Father. And yet these blessed people have *something* to do with the matter of their blessing —something to do with the fact that they have *heard*, and hearing have *known* or discerned the joyful sound, while others hearing have not discerned it. They have the hearing of faith: from the little which they first heard they must have *cultivated* a love for righteousness, and a hatred of iniquity; they must have *cultivated* honesty with themselves, honesty with the Lord, honesty in handling his Word—"not handling the Word of God deceitfully." (2 Cor. 4:2) They must have consecrated their hearts fully to the Lord, and thus have come fully under the guidance of "the spirit of the truth," else they would not be able to discern better than others between the joyful sound of the truth and the discordant sound of error. Evidently in these we see fulfilled the Scripture, "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him [to know him, to know his will]."—Heb. 11:6.

THE NEW SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB

Our Lord in symbol pointed out to us the fact that the message of his grace in the closing days of this Gospel age would be so different from the commonly accepted message, misnamed the Gospel, that it would properly be termed a *new song*, although it would be the old song of Moses—the message of blessing typified by the writings of Moses and by all the ceremonies of the Law, and the message of the Lamb, the good tidings announced in connection with our Lord's birth, and throughout his own ministry, when all the people "bare him record, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth" (not threats of eternal torment to nine-tenths of the human family); and the testimony of all the apostles respecting the Lamb of God and the great work to be accomplished by him in taking "away *the sin of the world*." It is

* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, Chap. 6
† *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices*

merely this same song that is now being sung by those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of present truth—it is "the joyful sound" which only the people thus blessed *know* or can sing.

It is a worldly proverb that truth is stranger than fiction, yet this proverb is illustrated throughout "Christendom" today—the vast, vast majority of professed followers of Christ are strangers to the truth, but thoroughly familiar with the fictions of human invention—"traditions of the elders," which "make void the Word of God." It is in full accord with this that the angel declares to the Revelator that no man can learn to sing this song except the elect—the 144,000, the "little flock." (Rev. 14:3) Indeed, nothing is more manifest than that it is necessary to be somewhat of an "overcomer" of the world and its spirit which pervades nominal Christendom, ere any would have the courage to sing this song—to declare before men the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the goodness and grace of the divine plan, of which Jesus and his sacrifice are the center. To all others "the fear of man bringeth a snare," and stoppeth their mouths from speaking "forth the praise of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." "But the people that *do know* their God [his character and plan] shall be valiant and do exploits," and like the apostles of old will feel and say, Whether it be right to obey God or men, judge ye; but we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.—Dan. 11:32; Acts 4:19, 20.

Nor need we suppose that the fact that only the 144,000 can sing this song implies that those able to sing the song could not fall from their steadfastness and become castaways, and lose the privilege of singing it. On the contrary, the Scriptures most distinctly assure us that only by *unceasing* faithfulness will any be permitted to continue to be reckoned as members of that elect company, foreknown and prearranged of God. Our Lord clearly intimates that he will blot out the names of those who are unfaithful that other names may be written in their stead. He clearly intimates that unfaithfulness will cause that the crown set apart for the faithful will, if he prove unfaithful, be given to another.—Rev. 3:5, 11.

THE WALK OF THE BLESSED PEOPLE

In harmony with the foregoing is the intimation of our text which implies that in order to be of the people who will know the joyful sound it will be necessary to "walk in the light of God's countenance." Or, reversing the statement, the thought is that all who walk in the light of God's countenance shall be his blessed people, and shall know the joyful sound.

What a lesson of holiness is here: not a lesson of human perfection and self-commendation to God, but a lesson of *abiding in Christ* under the robe of his righteousness, and of walking continuously *with him* and in the path of the just, which "shineth more and more unto the perfect day." And whoever would walk with Jesus in the light of divine favor, in the smile of divine approval, must needs walk the narrow way of self-control and self-sacrifice—"even unto death." Whoever delights in sin and sinful practices cannot walk in the company of Jesus, cannot be recognized as a member of his body or under his robe—can have neither part nor lot in this matter, whatever may be done with him or for him in the future age. As the Apostle expresses it, those accepted of Christ, and who would maintain affiliation with him, must remember that all of the "royal priesthood" are given the truth, not to make them vain or boastful, or heady and high-minded, but to purify them, and to sanctify them. He declares "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

A TEXT FOR THE YEAR

We suggest to the friends of the truth the adoption of the precious words of our text as a talisman for the year, if not for the remainder of the pilgrim journey. We believe that these inspired words will help all who understand them to more and more measure up to the divine ideal which they present to our minds: "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound—they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

Another line, in full harmony with this, from the succeeding Psalm, might profitably be added: "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Only those who see the beauty of the great King, who discern something of his justice, his mercy and love, his wisdom, his power, can clothe their new minds with these glorious graces which more and more shine before our anointed vision as the beauty of the Lord our God. And the more clearly they are discerned, the more faithfully can we copy them, and the better do we love the joyful sound, and the better can we sing the Song of Moses and the Lamb.

THE VOLUNTEER WORK

The open winter has been very favorable to the Volunteer work thus far, but we advise that those who have not already commenced this work make all their preparations for the springtime, when we hope to hear from all, and to have a goodly supply of reading matter ready for their use.

Meantime you will do well to have a meeting, call for enlistments in the service, appoint a committee with a central head to lay out the work systematically, that all congregations in your city may be served without duplicating, appoint your scribe to communicate with the WATCH TOWER office respecting the number of volunteers, the number of churches, the average attendance of each, and the time for distribution.

WE HAVE FOUND HIM! EUREKA!

FEB. 4.—JOHN 1:35-46.

After his wilderness temptation, Jesus returned to Bethabara, where John was preaching, fully convinced of the character of his mission—that it was not to be after the manner of Satan's suggestion of worldly methods, leading on to popularity and honor of men—that on the contrary it would be his part to bear witness to the truth in such a truthful and simple manner as would commend it and him to such only as were Israelites indeed. No doubt by this time he saw that before the glorification could come the new Israel must be selected, the "royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people"—antitypical or spiritual Israel. He had reason to expect that there was at least a remnant of this class in the nation of Israel after the flesh, and although fully realizing that no man could come unto him except the Father which sent him should draw him, he nevertheless recognized the propriety of putting himself in the way of those whom the Father would draw, that he might receive them as quickly and as favorably as possible. Hence his return from the wilderness was to the vicinity of John's mission work, where not unreasonably he might expect to find some of the Israelites indeed.

Our lesson shows that the Heavenly Father had made use of John the Baptizer's Mission and had exerted through it a drawing influence upon the hearts of some who by this time were quite ready to learn of Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life—the channel of approach to God. The drawing power which the Father exerts during this age is the truth—the knowledge of divine compassion toward mankind manifested through the sending of Messiah to save the people from their sins—to deliver them from the power of sin and Satan, as well as from the death penalty.

It was after our Lord's return from the wilderness that the delegation of priests and Levites, sent from Jerusalem, came to John asking, "Who art thou?" to whom he replied that he was not the Christ but merely a forerunner, a herald. To these John pointed out Jesus, saying: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," explaining how he knew Jesus to be the Messiah by a previously appointed sign which God had given him—the descent of the holy Spirit in the form of a dove.—Verses 19-34.

It was the very next day after this testimony to the priests and Levites that John, in the presence of two of his disciples, looking intently upon Jesus as he passed near (no doubt wondering how our Lord's Messiahship would be made known), exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God!" This was the same testimony (only abbreviated) that he had given to the priests and Levites, and which had evidently fallen, in their case, upon dull ears. But note the difference in the case of those who were "Israelites indeed:" the two disciples immediately followed Jesus. John's testimony became to them the *drawing power of God*, because they were in a condition of heart to be susceptible to that influence. Thus we see clearly illustrated how some are drawn and others are not drawn by the same message, and we see also that the divine drawing does not operate arbitrarily, but in accordance with certain fixed principles pertinent to the divine plan. It was not sufficient that a testimony should be given, it was not sufficient that a curiosity should be aroused; it was necessary additionally that the interest awakened should be so powerful as to lead to action on the part of those who were drawn, as the poet expresses it,

"He drew me, and I followed on."

The Lord is seeking not merely the curious, but the truth-hungry, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, and for

fellowship with himself, and here, as in every instance, he that seeketh, in this proper attitude of heart, findeth. The two disciples had not followed the Lord far until their faith and zeal began to be rewarded: the Lord turned to them and was the first to speak, and thus he illustrated his own words respecting those drawn of the Father to him, "He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Had our Lord not thus condescended it would have been a difficult matter for these humble fishermen to have approached one so far above them in dignity and in appearance—one whom they had just learned was the great Messiah, long promised of God to be the Prince of the kings of the earth. Applying this feature of the lesson to ourselves, and remembering that the Lord is the same yesterday, today and forever, helps us to appreciate his condescension manifested toward all who would come unto the Father through him—we who now come to him because of the hearing of faith and the sight of faith, as well as those who then approached him because of the sight of the natural eye and the hearing of the natural ear.

Our Lord's salutation, "What seek ye?" not only overcame the diffidence of those who sought him, but the more they would consider his words subsequently, the more meaningful they would find them, as we do today. And this seems to be the question which the Lord puts to all those who approach him, and essay to become his followers, "What seek ye?" Are you seeking loaves and fishes of earthly advantage? Are you seeking earthly honor and social and political influence and preferment? The answer soon or later will be manifested by the conduct of the seekers, though evidently all do not realize, at the time, what are their real motives in seeking the Lord. It were better, however, that each should remember our Lord's own expression on this subject, and sit down and count the cost at the very beginning—that each one should learn that to seek the Lord truly is to seek after righteousness, fellowship with the Father and with the Son; and that this means the forsaking of sin, so far as the heart is concerned, and so far as possible the purifying of the flesh by the "washing of water through the Word."—Eph. 5:26.

All should learn also that seeking to be disciples of Christ implies not only a fellowship with him in the glory that is soon to be revealed, but also a fellowship with him in the sufferings of this present time—a "filling up of that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." If, as our Lord suggested, each one would sit down and count the cost beforehand, there would be less subsequent disappointment, and although the number of his followers would be much smaller, there would be many less "tares" amongst the "wheat," and this would mean the better spiritual prosperity of the "wheat."

The would-be disciples of Jesus heard the question without discerning, of course, its depth, nevertheless, being in the right condition of heart their answer was along proper lines—Rabbi (master), where are you stopping? They seem to have understood that like themselves he was a Galilean, and that like themselves and others he was merely visiting in that vicinity on account of John's mission work, which drew great multitudes. Their question implied in a pleasant way a desire to become more intimately acquainted with Jesus. And he accepted it in this manner, and invited them to his stopping place; as it was about four o'clock in the afternoon they remained with him the remainder of the day, and we may well imagine what the Evangelist has not recorded respecting the pleasure and profit which came to them during these hours of intercourse. As a result they were convinced of Jesus' Messiahship—their own intercourse with him tending to corroborate John's testimony. And thus it is with all who of a true heart seek to know of God's appointed way; not only are they kindly received by the Lord, but the very opportunities for knowledge, fellowship and communion which they desire are granted to them.

Andrew was one of these two disciples of John, and altho the other is not definitely mentioned it is the general supposition that it was the Apostle John himself, who seems to have been of a very modest disposition, quite unwilling to make his own name very prominent in his writings. Thus on other occasions he mentions himself not by name, but as "that disciple whom Jesus loved."—John 13:23; 19:26.

Andrew and John both had brothers, and the implication of the Greek text seems to be that both at once sought their brothers, to bring them to the Lord, but that "Andrew *first findeth* his own brother Simon," and it may be surmised that John through modesty neglected here to mention that he also found his brother James, and brought him to the Lord. This is a good illustration of the proper course for those who have found the Lord—they should at once begin to think of their brethren, friends, neighbors, and should carry the good tidings to them as quickly as possible. It was quite proper that these disciples did not follow the course that some are inclined to follow today, *viz.*, to seek to learn of the Master all that he would communicate, and then go forth and pose as wise ones amongst their friends, giving them the information they had received in driblets, and avoiding the mention of Jesus as the Father's channel of communication of the truth to them. Properly, they investigated privately to an extent sufficient to justify their confidence, and then immediately began to tell the good tidings to their friends. So each one who has found the Lord should seek to make him known to others; and more than this, like Andrew, we should not only seek to acquaint our friends with the fact, but should seek to bring them to the Lord for personal contact with him—such spiritual contact that they may see him with the eye of faith, and hear him with the ear of faith, that they may know him, whom to know is life eternal. Too many take a different course, and are satisfied merely to tell the good news to their friends without bringing them through faith and consecration into contact with the Lord. Let us more and more learn the right way to serve our friends. Let us learn that knowledge is valueless except as it succeeds in bringing the hearer into faith contact with the Saviour.

When Peter was brought to the Lord, "Jesus looked upon him," or as we might express it, "read him through and through," and then said, Your present name is Simon, and you are the son of John, but you shall be called Cephas—Hebrew for Peter (Greek, *petros*, a stone). This may be understood as a kind of prophecy on our Lord's part respecting a great change in Peter's character Peter was naturally very impulsive—not sufficiently solid, too easily carried about; and yet our Lord evidently saw in him sterling qualities of heart, honesty, sincerity of purpose; and knowing the influence which his teachings and the holy Spirit would exercise upon such a character, he foretold a change which would make of Peter one of the staunchest and most substantial of his corps of disciples. This prophecy of change was implied in the new name given him, signifying solidity—a stone—whereas his previous name, Simon, signified a listener.

Although Peter was the only one of the twelve whose name was thus changed, we may readily suppose that the characters of all were considerably changed, under the influence of the great Teacher and of the holy Spirit, which came upon them at Pentecost. And so it is with all who become the Lord's disciples: to enter the school of Christ and to remain there means, as the Apostle expresses it, that we will be "*transformed* by the renewing of our minds." And the Lord promises all such that they shall have "a new name," expressive of the new character, but which no man can appreciate except those who receive it—the name of Christ—Rev 2:17.

In the case of Philip, the order of procedure was reversed, and instead of his coming to the Lord, as did the first two, and instead of his being brought to the Lord, as in the case of Peter and probably James, the Lord, on the contrary, "found him" or approached him on the subject, inviting him to become one of his disciples. This shows us the diversity of divine operation in respect to those who are ready for the truth. It may reach them in one way or in another, but all who are ready for it we may be sure will be brought in contact with Messiah—drawn of the Father. We are not to question that Philip had been previously under divine preparation and drawn into a condition of heart ready to receive Jesus, else he would not have become his follower when invited.

Philip was doubtless acquainted with Andrew and Peter, since they were of the same city, and like Andrew he seems to have thought at once of telling the good tidings to another, and he remembered his friend Nathaniel, whom he knew to be God-fearing, and living in expectation of the fulfilment of the divine promise of the Messiah. We note with pleasure the directness of his presentation of the subject, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law [in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament] and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth." He did not attempt to interest Nathaniel merely with the prospect of joint-heirship in the kingdom, though that of course would be implied indirectly; but he drew attention to our Lord's person. And his language shows that he was not a mere enthusiast, but that he had been making a study of the fact that Messiah had been described by Moses and the prophets, and that he had evidently been endeavoring, to the best of his ability, to test our Lord's title by those predictions and had found satisfactory evidence that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the Sent of God. So it should be with all of us when we attempt to present the message of Christ to the attention of others. We should have the promises of God and their fulfilment in mind; and these should be our argument. It is not calling attention to Christ, nor at all following the example of Philip, to assail men with threats of eternal tor-

ment, and to urge them to join some human society called a church; nor is it following Philip's example to present as inducements the prospect of financial and social prosperity through church affiliations. On the contrary, the message to be delivered is respecting our Lord, and that he is the Deliverer whom the Father has sent, and that whoever would have the Father's fellowship and blessing must come to Messiah and in him find the wisdom of God and the mercy of God unto salvation.

Nathaniel is commonly understood to be another name for Bartholomew, and he probably, like the others, had been in attendance at John's mission. We may readily suppose that John's work not only attracted to him the social outcasts of Israel, seeking a life of reformation, but that it drew to him also certain colaborers in the work, who were known as his "disciples," and who assisted him in administering baptism to those who came as repentant sinners. (John 4:1, 2) This offers another suggestion respecting these Israelites indeed, who were of John's company, and were thus introduced earliest to Jesus, and were ready to become his disciples: their fidelity to righteousness, and their endeavor to serve the Lord according to the best of their ability, led directly to their more intimate association with Jesus and his service. So doubtless we will find it today, that some who are engaged in works of reform from proper motives are specially prepared for deeper truths, and grander privileges in connection with the present harvest work, and we should be willing to put ourselves in the way of such, after the example of our Lord with these his first disciples

Nathaniel seems to have been rather of the incredulous type of mind; he was fearful that his friend Philip was being deceived by an impostor, and he began to offer objections. Nazareth itself was noted as being rather a fanatical city; besides, no doubt Nathaniel had in mind the declaration of the prophet respecting Bethlehem as the city that would be honored as Messiah's birthplace, and so he inquired. Is it reasonable for us to expect that any great good would come from Nazareth? Is there any Scripture to that effect? He was of course ignorant of the fact that our Lord was born in Bethlehem, and taken as an infant to the home of Joseph in Nazareth. His question, and the reasoning which it implies, were evidently very proper. But as we note Philip's reply, we are full of admiration for its simplicity and wisdom. He did not attempt to explain matters which are difficult to be understood, and which had not yet been explained to him; nor did he waver in his faith because of this suggestion of doubt. On the contrary he said, "Come and see" when you have seen the man, and have heard him as I have, no doubt will remain in your mind that he is no ordinary man, and that he is all he claims to be

It would be well if all of the Lord's dear followers would learn well a proper, simple directness of approach on religious subjects, exemplified by Philip's words to Nathaniel; and also they should learn not to attempt to take the Master's place, but to bring all true Israelites direct to him, as the Teacher, the explainer of the obscure features connected with himself and his work. Matters often look differently on the outside from what they appear on the inside, as faith and greater privilege display them. God has purposely arranged it so that those who look from the outside only see many inconsistencies, inharmonies and undesirable features, while those who get to view matters from the inside standpoint of faith can see riches of grace, beauty, harmony, divine workmanship. And this exterior view is the one that naturally comes to all of us first, as it came to Nathaniel, and the proper course to be pursued is that suggested by Philip—come on the inside and see how it looks; take the standpoint of faith in the divine revelation, and from that standpoint note the grandeur of the divine plan.

This same lesson is pointedly illustrated by an anecdote told by Pastor Spurgeon, deceased, of a man who was invited into an orchard to eat some of the fruit; he refused, for he said that he had picked up some of the apples by the roadside that fell from the trees, and they were poor and bitter. The owner replied those trees were placed there on purpose, so that bad boys would not be attracted into the orchard to steal. "But," said he, "come inside, and there the apples are delicious." Thus it is with those who see Christianity only from the exterior. They see many misrepresentations of true religion and true faith in prominent places, and even if they be able to distinguish as between the true Christianity and its misrepresentation in churchianity, they are apt to see only the self-denials, the crosses, the persecution for righteousness' sake, etc., and know nothing comparatively of the heavenly peace and blessing enjoyed by those who have entered into newness of life with Christ, who are supported well by the gracious promises of the divine Word and by the fellowship of spirit granted to them, which permits them to rejoice even in tribulation and count their disadvantages as but light afflictions enduring but for a moment, when compared with their higher joys, and their hopes that these shall be eternal

Let us leave this lesson with two thoughts specially clear before our minds: (1) The importance of finding the Lord, and not merely of gaining information about him. (2) The propriety and importance of seeking out the "brethren," and of bringing them not merely to a knowledge of abstract truth, but especially to the Lord, and to intimate communion and fellowship with him.

THE KINGDOM ATTAINABLE ONLY BY A NEW BIRTH

FEB. 11.—JOHN 3:1-18.

Nicodemus was evidently a good man, and "not far from the kingdom"—not far from the attitude of heart necessary to the attainment of the kingdom. He was a man of learning and influence, a prominent member of the chief sect of the Jews, and one of the judges of their chief or Supreme Court, the Sanhedrim. His wealth, learning, etc., gave him advantages over many of the poor and unlearned, and yet they also brought disadvantages, as our Lord on another occasion expressed it: "How hardly [with what difficulty] shall they that have riches [of any kind] enter into the kingdom of God" It would naturally be more difficult for a man of large influence and social standing to receive instructions from Jesus, and to become his follower, than for humble fishermen to do so; pride, social caste, thought of what people would think and say, etc., would all tend to hinder him. For these reasons, as well as possibly with a hope to have a more quiet conversation, Nicodemus visited Jesus by night—semi-secretly.

Evidently he had been impressed by the teachings and the miracles of our Lord, for we find him ready to acknowledge Jesus as a great Teacher sent of God, although not ready to confess him the Messiah. Our Lord's ministry, while commending him to Nicodemus, was evidently a very different one from what he had expected of Messiah. As a Jew he of course had the usual Jewish thought respecting the kingdom of God, *viz.*, that Israel was that kingdom, merely shorn of its power by the Gentiles until Messiah should appear for its deliverance and to subjugate all nations before Israel, that the Jewish law might become the law of the world, going forth with power from Jerusalem. Nicodemus discerned the wide difference between such hopes and the kind of a kingdom proclaimed by Jesus and his disciples. We may reasonably infer, therefore that his queries, though not stated, were along this line and our Lord's replies, quoted with greater detail, so intimate

It was with astonishment that Nicodemus heard from the great Teacher that himself and others of the Jewish nation could not possibly enter the kingdom without being born anew; and naturally his mind ran to the natural birth and he inquired how it was possible that a full-grown man could be born over again. Such a question was desired by our Lord, and gave opportunity for the explanation that the first birth which all experience, *viz.*, the birth of the flesh, by which mankind is born to human nature, and with a *flesh body*, is a type, a figure, an illustration of a higher spiritual birth, to a spiritual nature with a *spirit body*. "That which is born of the flesh is *flesh:* that which is born of the spirit, *is spirit.*" As a man cannot see trees, houses, flowers, etc., nor enter into the enjoyment of these, until after he has been born of the flesh, so likewise no one can either see or enter into the heavenly kingdom, except he be born of the spirit. In other words, a human being can see earthly things, but only a heavenly or spirit-born one can see and share in the heavenly things; and the long promised kingdom of God, the Millennial age, for which Israel was waiting, is to be a spiritual kingdom and not an earthly one, composed of spirit beings and not flesh beings; and only those born of water and of the spirit would ever see or enter into that kingdom

The reference to water was probably suggested by some question from Nicodemus, respecting John and his baptism unto repentance—whether or not this had anything to do with the new birth. Our Lord's answer associates John's baptism of water unto repentance with the spirit begetting which began at Pentecost. Repentance from sin was essential to the right condition of heart which would prepare a Jew for transfer from the earthly typical kingdom, and make him ready for the

begetting of the holy Spirit through which, if obedient, he would finally be born into the heavenly kingdom in "the first resurrection." This use of the word "born" as representing resurrection is a Scriptural one, for do we not read that our Lord Jesus in his resurrection was "the first-*born* from the dead"—"the first-*born* amongst many brethren"—and was it not in respect to these "brethren" who would with him be *sharers in the kingdom* that he addressed Nicodemus?—Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15, 18.

While we hold that this Scripture in its full, ultimate meaning, relates to the first resurrection of the kingdom class into kingdom power, glory, honor and immortality, we nevertheless concede that the word *genao* is sometimes rendered *begotten*. We concede also that every one who is to be *born* of the spirit in the first resurrection must first be *begotten* of the spirit in the present life. We concede also that the new life now begun is frequently spoken of as though the new creature were *already born* by a figurative resurrection to newness of life. "You hath he quickened [made alive, by a figurative resurrection] who were dead in trespasses and sins." But these partial and figurative uses of the words "alive" and "resurrection" and "born" should not be permitted to discount our thought respecting the realities and powers and glories which can be attained only by a share in the actual first resurrection—"born from the dead."

While Jesus was talking with Nicodemus quite probably the wind whistled through the apartment in which they were sitting, rattling the doors, etc., and Jesus seized upon this as a good illustration by which to convey to the mind of Nicodemus the difference between human beings and spirit beings, and to give him a clearer conception of the nature and powers of the class who would compose the spiritual kingdom when set up in power and great glory. He said, The wind blows where it pleases; you hear its sound, but cannot know whence it comes nor whither it goes; and so it will be with those born of the spirit—all inheritors of the heavenly kingdom: they will be as invisible and can go and come as the wind, and men in the flesh will be unable to see them, as they are unable to see the wind, though they will be everywhere present and influential, as is the wind.

Nicodemus was astounded at the thought that the kingdom of God would be so different from what himself and others had expected. All this should not have been so strange to Nicodemus: he should have remembered that the powers which our Lord described as those which would belong to the spirit-born class were the very powers which in the past from time to time had been manifested through holy angels, who being sent on special missions appeared suddenly, and when their mission was accomplished, vanished just as suddenly, coming and going like the wind—none knew whence or whither. Nicodemus as a teacher of the Law, should have had these things in mind, and our Lord rather reproves him for not grasping the subject quickly: Are you, a teacher in Israel, ignorant of these things? Is it difficult for you, who are acquainted with the Law, to realize these teachings? I have been telling you only such things as are known and to a considerable extent have been demonstrated amongst men through the ministry of angels, yet you are unwilling to receive the testimony. How could you expect to believe, if I should proceed to explain to you heavenly and spiritual things pertaining to that kingdom? You surely would be unprepared for such information. Nor would Nicodemus have been to blame for not understanding spiritual things if our Lord had told of them; for only the spirit-begotten can clearly grasp and appreciate those things. Our Lord was explaining to him that he must not expect a comprehension of such things at that time, but should merely expect a partial understanding, sufficient, however, as a basis of faith; clearer comprehension would come with the spirit baptism at Pentecost. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. . . . God hath revealed them unto us [spirit-begotten ones] by his Spirit" (1 Cor. 2:14, 10), and we may enter into the realities when born from the dead in his likeness.

Continuing, our Lord reminded Nicodemus that no man had ever ascended into heaven [none had ever been there, or seen heavenly things] except he himself, who had come down from the heavenly condition to the earthly condition—even the Son of Man.* Although aside from the main line of this lesson, it is not amiss that we here note the harmony of our Lord's words with the words of the Apostle Peter in his discourse on the day of Pentecost, "David is not ascended into the heavens." (Acts 2:34) All the testimonies of the Scriptures are in harmony on this subject, although opposed by nearly all uninspired writers, heathen as well as Christian, who follow the traditions of men instead of giving heed to the sure Word of God

Having thus answered Nicodemus' questions to the very limit of possibility at the time, our Lord turned the subject, and by way of showing the grand basis for this spiritual kingdom, and that he himself could not enter into that kingdom while still in the flesh (1 Cor. 15:50), but that he must also be "changed" to spirit conditions by resurrection, he points out his coming ignominious death, and how it was illustrated and typified by Moses and the brazen serpent in the wilderness. The whole world is bitten by the fiery serpent of sin. The whole world is dying, and it was needful that our Lord Jesus should be lifted up as a sin-offering on behalf of the world, that he might subsequently be lifted up in glory, and in order that having thus paid the penalty for all, eternal life might be offered to all—"that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

In passing the point, let us notice that our Lord said not a word respecting any danger of the world going into eternal torment, nor did he utter a word respecting the salvation of any in ignorance His declaration was that the world was *perishing*, and that the only way in which they could obtain eternal life at all would be through believing in him. So then to all who are willing to take the simple statement of God's Word, it is clear enough that the wicked who reject the Lord cannot have eternal life, and hence could not spend an eternity in misery, because without life there can be no feeling—without life they are *perished*. It is clear enough also that whoever shall be saved in this age or in the age to come must be saved by *believing* in Jesus, and cannot be saved through ignorance, according to this Gospel, which is the only authorized one

Then our Lord gave Nicodemus a brief statement of why the Heavenly Father has provided the blessing which he had been describing—the kingdom, and the lifting up or sacrifice of the Son of Man as a prerequisite. The reason is God's sympathetic love for humanity. He beheld that although mankind were sharers in father Adam's sentence of death, yet many amongst them would, if granted an opportunity, gladly accept the divine arrangement, and come back into at-one-ment with their God, and rejoice to abide in his favor and to do his will On this account God had sympathy for mankind, and prepared a great plan of salvation, of which the first coming of Jesus in the flesh as a *sacrifice for sins* was the first step or manifestation. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son [to humiliation and sacrifice in death], that whosoever believeth in him should not *perish*, but have [obtain] everlasting life" It has been said by some one that this 16th verse is the golden verse of the Bible, containing more than any other one a condensed statement of the Gospel Luther called this verse "the little Gospel," or "the little Bible"

Perhaps in answer to another question, or perhaps merely as a part of the further discourse to Nicodemus, our Lord next explained to him that God's object in sending his Son into the world was not to have the world condemned, for the world was already condemned, sharing with Adam the original condemnation or sentence of death. On the contrary, God sent his Son to save the world—*to recover mankind from that sentence or condemnation*. This is in harmony with another statement of Scripture which declares of believers that "There is now . . . *no condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8:1), yet only believers have thus escaped, all the remainder of the world are still under wrath, "children of wrath," and there is no other way of escape except through Christ, for "There is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved."

The 18th verse is in harmony with this thought, that believers escape the condemnation that is on the world, but that those who do not accept of Christ *remain under the condemnation* already upon them at birth, as Adam's heirs. Nevertheless, as is declared in the 19th verse, the condemnation already upon men is justified by their course, if after seeing the light they do not love it, but reject it, and fight against it. However, we are to remember in this connection the Apostle's declaration that many in the present time see only in part, the god of this world blinding them more or less completely. (2 Cor. 4:4) And we rejoice in the assurance of the same Apostle (John 1:9) that Jesus is the true Light, which ultimately, in the kingdom, shall be a great Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his beams, which shall shed forth light and knowledge to every member of the human family during his Millennial reign; so that all shall have the fullest opportunity of ceasing to be "children of wrath," and of escaping the condemnation that is on them through Adam's disobedience, and of coming back through the Mediator, during the times of

* Oldest Greek MSS. omit the words, *"which is in heaven"*

restitution, to all the good things lost through sin.—Acts 3:19-21.

While our Lord in his discourse to Nicodemus dealt only with the new birth of "the church which is his body," and which with him, born of the spirit, shall constitute the heavenly kingdom that shall bless the world, he nevertheless elsewhere intimates that the restitution blessings which shall come to mankind will be also after the nature of a new birth, though not a birth to spiritual conditions. Speaking to his disciples of the Millennial kingdom, when they should sit with him in his throne—the times of restitution—he calls that Millennial age and work *regeneration*—Greek, *palingenesia*. (Matt. 19:28) This is not the same word rendered "born again," but signifies more nearly restitution, restoration or renovation.

NOTHING TO DRAW WITH AND THE WELL IS DEEP

FEB. 18.—JOHN 4:5-26.

"God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Samaria was the name of a stretch of country lying between Judea and Galilee; we might call it a county and say that its chief city, of the same name, was its county seat. Its inhabitants were known as Samaritans, and the Jews, while dealing with them commercially, would have no intercourse with them socially and religiously, but treated them in every respect as they treated Gentiles in general, as being outside of divine favor, "aliens and strangers to the commonwealth of Israel, without God, and having no hope in the world." (Eph. 2:12) The ancestors of these Samaritans were Gentiles, and were transported to Samaria centuries before, as the Israelites were transported to Babylon, by Nebuchadnezzar. (2 Kings 17:24-41) These Gentiles, through contact with the Jews, and through intermarriage with certain renegade Jews, obtained a smattering of knowledge of the Jewish hopes and worship, combining these to some extent with false ideas of their own. As a people they are described by the Apostle's words as feeling after God, if haply they might find him (Acts 17:27) But the time had not yet come for God to reveal himself to the world, or in any sense of the word to accept Gentiles; thus far all divine favor had been concentrated upon Israel, the seed of Abraham and upon only such of those as maintained their covenant relationship by circumcision; hence the Jews were *right* in not acknowledging the Samaritans, and in having no dealings with them religiously, nor intermarrying with them socially. This was not a matter of bigotry, but of divine regulation and prohibition.—Deut. 7:1-6.

It will be remembered that our Lord distinctly set the seal of his approval to this course, when sending forth his disciples to declare the kingdom of God at hand. He said to them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and *into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not*; for I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the *"house of Israel."* We remember, too, the city of the Samaritans concerning which the Apostles James and John said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire from heaven, to consume them?" To whom Jesus answered, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of. The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Nevertheless, we remember that Jesus would not perform his miracles in healing the Samaritan sick, and that it was for this reason that the Samaritans resented and would not receive him, or permit him to pass through their city on his journey.—Luke 9:51-56

It was during one of these numerous journeys from Judah through Samaria, en route to Galilee, that our Lord, wearied from the exhaustion of preaching and from the further exhaustion of his vitality in healing the sick, and from journeying, rested at Jacob's well, while his disciples turned aside to a village to purchase provisions.

Jacob's well had a great reputation throughout that region, because of the purity of its waters; that being a limestone country most of the water found was brackish, but Jacob's well, sunk to a depth of over a hundred feet, and about eight feet in diameter, struck a crevice in the rock, which yielded a large supply of desirable water. We are to remember, too, the scarcity of water in that part of the country, especially at some seasons of the year, which accounts for the fact that the Samaritan woman of our lesson had quite a distance to come to obtain her supply at this good and never failing well-spring. When she arrived, Jesus, who was sitting on the curb of the well, resting, was at once recognized by her as a Jew, and she was at once recognized by him as a Samaritan, not merely by facial lineaments, but also by distinctive features of dress—the Jews having a white fringe on their garments, while the Samaritans used blue.

For a Jew to make a request, to ask a courtesy, of a Samaritan, was unusual, and consequently when Jesus asked for a drink of the water the woman was drawing she was astonished enough to inquire how it came that he, a Jew, would make such a request of her a Samaritan, and her question has in it the element of boldness, which is explained later on by her acknowledgment that she was not a virtuous woman. All this, however, makes it the more remarkable that our Lord would condescend to have any intercourse with her. There is a lesson in this, however, along the line of the Apostle's words, "Condescend to men of low estate." We cannot avoid supposing that the reason why many Christian people would utterly disdain to speak to such a woman is that they have almost unconsciously to themselves imbibed the spirit of their religious teachings, which would declare that God would so abominate such a person that he would deliver her over to the devil, to be eternally tormented, as soon as she came into his hands at death. They reason, almost unconsciously, that one so despised of the Lord should be shunned and spurned by humanity. They need a clearer knowledge of the divine Word respecting God's attitude toward sinners, his unwillingness that any should perish, and his provision that the wilfully wicked, who reject all his mercies, shall not be tormented, but be blotted out of existence. (2 Pet. 3:9; Acts 3:23) True views of the divine character and plan are very helpful to God's people in shaping their course properly.

Had there been a company of Jews to whom the Lord could have talked at this time, we are bound to suppose that his energies would have been expended on their behalf, to the neglect of the disreputable Samaritan; but there being none of the "children" to be "fed" at the time, he let some of the crumbs of knowledge and blessing fall to the Samaritans, who, like the Gentiles, were not "children," but in comparison were "dogs." (See Matt. 15:27) Our Lord's course here is an instruction for his followers, an illustration of the Apostle's words that we should "do good *unto all men as we have opportunity*, especially to the household of faith." Further, it illustrates our Lord's own declaration, that it was his meat and drink to do the Father's will, to be engaged in the Father's business. Although he was weary, and knew that further talking would interfere with his rest and refreshment, he was ready to sacrifice his own convenience that he might be helpful to another, even to a social outcast. So the Apostle exhorts all of the Lord's people to be "instant in season and out of season," in preaching to willing ears.

There was wisdom in our Lord's method of introducing himself to the woman. He made a request that would not be difficult for her to comply with, and at the same time he laid himself under obligation to her; and experience shows that this is one of the best methods of approaching all—condescension and an expression of confidence in their generosity, with the implication which it gives of willingness to return the favor in some manner.

Not heeding the rudeness of the woman's reply to his request, our Lord proceeded to teach a lesson respecting the grace of God, using the good water of Jacob's deep well as an illustration, telling the woman that if she understood the privilege she enjoyed she in turn would be asking him for "living water"—flowing water, not stagnant, always fresh. She perceived that there was some deep meaning to our Lord's words. He could not refer to Jacob's well, for he had no leather bucket and cord with which to draw from it; hence her inquiry, Whence hast thou living water? Father Jacob provided this well, and knew of no better water for himself and family. Are you able to provide better water than this? Are you greater than he? Our Lord then led another step in the exposition of spiritual things, assuring her that the water which he had to give was of a different kind; that it would not only satisfy thirst for the time being, but would be a continual well-spring within, ever giving satisfaction.

Water, living water, pure water, is a wonderful symbol, very expressive to everyone: and thirst is another. Thirst is desire, craving, longing. Physical thirst is said to be much more painful than physical hunger. The latter loses its powers gradually in weakness, but thirst continues and intensifies hourly until the very last breath. Water is that which quenches, which satisfies this demand of nature: and so there is also a soul-thirst and a water of life which alone can satisfy it.

Every ambition and desire is a thirst. A man's greatness, his individuality, is measured (1) by the number of his thirsts or desires; (2) by the character or quality of those thirsts or

desires, (3) by the capacity and intensity of those thirsts or desires. And true education is the instructor of men as respects proper and improper desires, or thirsts: and respecting which should be gratified, and how to do so most wisely. He who has no desires has nothing to satisfy, and is practically a nonentity. The lesson of life is not that we should be without desires and plenty of them, but that these desires should be transformed from sinful desires to righteous desires, from sinful cravings to holy cravings. Thus the followers of the Lord are to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and are to be filled—satisfied—not by losing their desires, but by realizing them—by appropriating the Lord's provision, which is abundant and continuous, satisfying all proper longings. Improper longings are to be resisted, controlled, rooted out, while proper longings are to be built up, cultivated, to be supplied and to be enjoyed forever.

This satisfying water of life can be obtained from no other source than our Redeemer, and all who have received it well know it and can never be sufficiently thankful for it; for in it they have the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruling in their hearts. Instead of thirst for honor amongst men, they have the thirst for fellowship and honor with the Heavenly Father and the Redeemer. Instead of a thirst for earthly wealth, their transformed desires now thirst for heavenly treasures. Instead of thirst for sensual pleasures, their desires are transformed so that their chiefest joys and desires are for spiritual pleasures. And all these thirsts are abundantly and continually satisfied through the refreshment of the Word of Truth, and the holy Spirit of the truth—the water of life, which is communicated to us by our Redeemer, and is in each one a perennial living fountain.

Of course the Samaritan woman did not grasp the meaning of our Lord's words, nor could we, under the same circumstances, for we are to remember that the well from which our Lord gives us to drink is deep, and that neither the Samaritan woman nor we have anything to draw with. We, however, living under the new dispensation of the holy Spirit, have been abundantly supplied, for, as the Apostle declares, "The spirit searcheth all things, yea, the *deep things* of God. . . . That we might know [appreciate, be satisfied with] the things that are freely given unto us of God."—1 Cor. 2:10, 12.

Our Lord did not answer the woman's request for the true water of life, (1) because the time for bestowing the holy Spirit of the truth had not yet come, and did not come until after the great sacrifice at Calvary—until Pentecost. (2) Because she was a Samaritan, and as such could not receive divine favor and the holy Spirit until the appointed time, which was not until the door of favor would be open to all Gentiles—not until three and a half years after Pentecost: nevertheless the woman's interest and faith and the faith of her townsmen seem to indicate an honesty of heart pleasing to the Lord, on account of which he let fall to them some "crumbs" of comforting truth which may have prepared them for the Gospel when later it was fully opened to them and to all Gentiles. (3) Because the woman was not yet in the condition of heart to receive the water of life. It was unnecessary to explain to the woman the first two reasons, since the last was a barrier which she could more readily understand, and hence our Lord called her attention to the fact that she was living in sin. She perceived that he was gifted with a prophetic insight which permitted him a stranger to know of her sinful course of life, without asking.

It may be queried why our Lord would thus confer with a woman unprepared to receive the blessings he had to give, and one to whom he could not have given the blessing then, even if she had been prepared. The answer is (1) that he was making use of an opportunity to its fullest possible advantage; (2) that despite her sinful course of life the Lord saw traits of honesty in the woman's character, evidenced from the narrative; (3) he might reasonably hope that the influence of this discourse might tend toward righteousness and toward a true thirst for the water of life, which six years later, under the general preaching of the Gospel (without restriction to the Jews) might bring some of these Samaritans to a realization of the fact that the well of the water of life is deep, that they had nothing wherewith to draw, and that if they would have this satisfying portion they must receive it as a gift from him who laid down his life that he might have the privilege of supplying the water of life to whosoever wills. And should the poor Samaritan woman never have come under the influence of the Gospel, with an opportunity to drink of the water of life, we have the assurance of the divine Word that such an opportunity will be granted to her in the future, together with all who do not now have an opportunity.

We praise the Lord for the information afforded us in his Word, that although the water of life is now given individually, and enjoyed only by the "elect," "even as many as the Lord our God shall call," yet the time is coming that it shall no longer be thus a well of water *springing up within* the Lord's people, but during the Millennial age will be a river of water of life, broad and full and clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and of the bride the Lamb's wife and joint-heir, to all the families of the earth: and that then there will not only be trees of life, whose leaves will be for the healing, restitution, of the nations but that the Spirit and the bride (then glorified) shall say, Come and he that heareth may say, Come, and whosoever will may come and have the water of life freely.—Rev. 22:17.

The Samaritan woman seemed anxious to avoid any discussion of her own character and life, and skilfully turned the question to a theological one—whether the Jews or the Samaritans were right in their different views respecting divine worship and its proper place. And in this we see that human nature is much the same today. Men and women of today would rather discuss theological problems and denominational controversies, than turn their glance inward, and note the inconsistencies of their own lives, with a desire to reform them. Nor did our Lord too closely press the moral question he had so promptly touched and to some extent made sensitive, and his course in this should be a lesson to his followers. It is sufficient that attention be called to a wrong, and often this is more efficacious than if they be teased and angered, and put on the defensive, by disrespectful "nagging."

Our Lord summed up in few words a great lesson respecting the proper worship of God. He told the woman most pointedly that the Samaritans had neither part nor lot in the matter, and worshiped they knew not what, while the Jews, on the contrary, were following the divine instruction. Nevertheless, he pointed to the fact that a great dispensational change was imminent, in which all distinctions and barriers of place and manner would pass away, and that under the new dispensation of this Gospel age any and all having ears to hear and eyes to see God's grace would be permitted to worship God anywhere, but only in spirit (with the heart, sincerely), and in truth, in harmony with the divine arrangement, in the true way—through Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and by whom alone there is access to the Father—the Messiah, the procurer and dispenser of the water of life.

An Oriental fable tells of a fountain whose waters were infused with a peculiar power, so that wherever a drop of this water fell on a barren plain it caused a new fountain to gush forth, so that provided with this water the traveler might pass through any desert, however wide or dry, and be always refreshed.

"Wild and fanciful the legend; yet may not meanings high,
Visions of better things to come, within its shadow lie?
Type of a better fountain, to mortals now unsealed,
The full, free salvation of Christ our Lord revealed!

"Beneath the cross those waters lie, and he who finds them there,
All through the wilderness of life the living stream may bear;
And blessings follow in his steps, until where'er he goes
The moral wastes begin to bud, and blossom as the rose!"

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

The anniversary of our Lord's death reckoned according to Jewish calendar will this year be April 13 at 3 P. M.—consequently the celebration of the Memorial Supper will be on the previous evening, April 12, after six o'clock P. M. We make this early announcement for the sake of friends afar off. Further statements and local announcements later.

Gethsemane can I forget?
Or there thy conflict see,
Thine agony and bloody sweat,
And not remember thee?

When to the cross I turn mine eyes,
And rest on Calvary,
O Lamb of God, my Sacrifice,
I must remember thee.

INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—A few days since dear Brother Norcott was in to call on me, and in the course of our conversation he mentioned you, and that he had often had a desire to meet you in the flesh, but that it was quite improbable now. He is getting very feeble, and it is a great effort for him to get about much, but he is anxious to do all he possibly can. Some time ago he felt a little better and took his horse and cart and went out and sold nine DAWNS. He returned beaming with joy that the Lord had so blessed his work. It is hard for him to write, and he wished me, some time when I would be writing to you, to tell you of his great love for you as a brother in Christ, and his gratefulness to you for all the interest you had taken in him while he was in the colporteur work. He said that doubtless you knew of his love and prayers already, but that sometimes it was strengthening to us if some of the brethren came to us with a message of love, and he was sure you would appreciate the motive with which it was sent. Also that he was remembering you before the throne of favor, that our dear Master would grant you the needed grace to finish the work before you. So I write this to you.

And, my dear brother, I can also add that that is my own prayer on your behalf. I sometimes think we are too apt to hide our love and not express it as we should, and thus others may come to feel that we do not love them. May the dear Lord bless you abundantly, more than you are able to think. We wish to thank you for the strong nourishing food you have been spreading before us in the TOWERS lately.

Your brother, by the favor of the Lord,

W. E. VANAMBURGH.—*South Dakota.*

[We cannot express in words our deep appreciation of the love of the brethren so often expressed in their letters as above. We assure these dear brethren and all that their love is most heartily reciprocated. We love the brethren and take pleasure in laying down our life in their service. We are glad to know that you remember us and the Lord's "harvest" work, which he has been pleased to center here in Allegheny, in your prayers. If we may judge from the letters received, thousands of prayers ascend daily on our behalf. We cannot tell you how deeply we appreciate this: it keeps us humble as we remember our needs, and it strengthens us as we remember the Lord's sufficiency and his willingness to pour out his blessings in answer to your prayers and ours. These prayers and the divine power to which they are attached are to our hearts a bulwark against the many Satan-blinded foes who beset you and us continually because of our loyalty to the Lord and his Word.

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
They shall prosper that love thee."—Psa. 122:6.

These words are as true of the Jerusalem the higher and her children of peace as of the earthly Jerusalem. Those who are praying the Lord's blessing upon his cause are seeking to serve it and are proportionately blessed. Those who are indifferent to the welfare of Zion and the Lord's cause now, are standing in a slippery place and are in great danger of falling.

Continue, dear brethren and sisters, to pray for us (1 Thes. 5:25; Heb. 13:18), and be assured that, as the Apostle Paul said, we have a care for all the churches and for the scattered sheep, and continually bear you upon our heart before the throne of the heavenly grace, and watch as well as pray for your interests and welfare.—See Heb. 13:17; 2 Cor. 11:28; 2 Thes. 1:11; Phil. 1:9. —EDITOR.]

DEAR BROTHER —Spiritual feasts, comforting, encouraging, instructive and edifying, did all the meetings, conducted by our dear Pilgrim Brother, Frank Draper, prove to be, and our only regret is that his stay with us was of necessity so limited although even longer than we had hoped for. The public meetings of which we had two, in a non-sectarian chapel were well attended considering the inclemency of the weather, fully [illegible] present truth. As an immediate result of one of these it is with pleasure that we announce at least one party was apparently thoroughly aroused and keenly interested, who come the opposed present truth.

We desire to gratefully thank you and those contributing to the support of these Pilgrim brethren, for the blessed season we have enjoyed and can heartily commend to any of the brethren in Faith Brother Draper as an able and loving expounder of the Word of God, doing indeed a noble work for the cause of Truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Redeemer, Exemplar and Lord, in thus visiting and exhorting to deeper consecration the little scattered groups.

Hearing of the beneficial nature of the recent conventions, it has been mentioned that perhaps much good would result in a similar gathering at this place during the State Fair and Exposition next fall and we were glad to learn through Brother D. that hopes of such a meeting were also entertained and mentioned by interested ones he had thus far met in Texas, Arkansas and Indian and Oklahoma Territories, and we therefore take the liberty of mentioning the matter to you for advisement. If so, a cordial, brotherly welcome awaits you and other friends, who would be entertained to the extent of our ability.

The Musical Towers ordered were promptly received and used to advantage at meetings.

Our prayers are with you and we crave yours, to the effect that we may be faithful overcomers, even unto death. Yours in Christ, E. W. BRENNEISEN.—*Texas.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I feel inclined to give you a brief account of our Volunteer work, even though you may hear from others concerning the same.

We put out about 450 of the booklets last Sunday evening. I felt compelled to go out with the others, as I had been thinking of the letters in last TOWER and of the blessed privilege thus offered us of sharing in the blessing that surely comes to those who do thus serve Him. I would urge all in every place to take up this good work of serving God's household of faith (of whom there may be many yet in Babylon) with this "meat in due season."

By a singular coincident I went first to the M. E. church, where I was converted 25 years ago. The second booklet I gave out was to a young man who offered to pay for it. Upon being assured that it was freely given to all Bible students, he still urged that I accept a dime and send it to the Tract Society, which I will do quite soon.

A little boy came running down, asking me if I would give him another one of those "little Bibles" for an old lady who wanted it.

How true that "Obedience is better that sacrifice," as it is first, or preëminent, and surely involves the true and acceptable sacrifice. How many we see, especially among the sisters of the Roman Catholic system, and also foreign missionaries who are making great sacrifices, yet not according to a knowledge of his plan, and consequently misdirected.

Jesus said, "My sheep hear (obey) *my* voice" "We ought to obey God rather than men." I firmly believe that all are doing this, who engage in the harvest work, which is evidently under the guidance of the Chief Reaper.

The church here has been greatly benefited by the publication of the Washington and Boston letters in last TOWER. This is clearly discernable in the increased zeal of all for the work. May we not reasonably hope that the increase of zeal here and in other places may be prophetic of a larger work during the coming year?

May our heavenly Father bless the work to the glory of his name, and preserve us all with you unto the establishment of his kingdom! Yours in the hope of the high calling.

MRS. C. A. OWEN.—*Indiana.*

[Two letters have been received from sisters in Christ who are mothers, who are surprised at our advice to Hugo Kuehn in the January 1st WATCH TOWER. One is surprised that we would approve of anything that would bring the boy into touch with sectarianism; the other wonders whether or not all boys' clubs under church auspices are of the kind known to her, and if so she wonders very much that we could advise boys who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus to have anything to do with them. She says that in addition to the gymnasium for physical culture, they have cigars, cigarettes, billiards, boxing gloves, etc., all calculated to lead a boy far from the narrow way of true discipleship

We certainly did not suppose that the basements of churches were used in such a manner, nor can we yet think that this is the usual custom; it would seem too extreme to be general. We hope that those known to this sister are rare exceptions. We assuredly would advise all boys who seek to walk in the footsteps of our Lord to shun all such places, and rather to do without the gymnastic exercises, if they could only be obtained under such conditions.

Our thought, in answering Hugo's question, was that the boys' clubs were merely lecture and recreation guilds, entirely harmless and at the same time profitable, and that the only question was whether or not its association with a nominal church system should properly separate from it those who sought to please the Lord. Our answer was along these lines, and we still think that a wide distinction should be observed as between joining a church, being bound with a misrepresenting creed, etc., and joining a boys' club without creed or other bondage except as respects good morals, and not for religious purposes, but merely for coöperation in obtaining the privileges of the lecture course and the use of the gymnasium at a moderate expense. To mingle with moral boys in this way is, in our judgment, merely a business transaction, and the same rules which would hinder a boy from thus associating with other boys in a moral and creedless club would similarly hinder the Christian father of the boy from dealing in any kind

of worldly business with sectarian Christians and others. The Apostle seems to imply this point in 1 Cor. 5:10.

But we would sincerely regret to be understood as advising countenancing or having any sympathy with the kind of boys' clubs described by our sister's letter. Far better that the Christian boy should have no use of gymnastic appliances, or that he should construct some for his own use; far better that he should never mingle with other boys at all, than that he should run the least risk of having his heart polluted; for we remember how broadly applicable are the Apostle's words, "Evil communications corrupt good manners."—1 Cor. 15:33.

—EDITOR.]

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

PULPIT VIEWS ON THE MILLENNIUM

The Philadelphia press recently interviewed the ministers of Pennsylvania and New Jersey on the subject of the Millennium, asking:—*Do you believe that the Biblical Millennium is at hand?* The majority of the responses denied faith in a Millennium, some expressed an expectation that the churches would bring it about by missionary effort, and a few declared faith in a reign of Christ near at hand, as follows:—

Rev. William McNally, Harrisburg, Pa., has made a careful study of the "Millennium" question. He says:—

"I believe that the millennium period is near—that we are living in the 'last days,' foretold in the Bible. The prophecies are all being fulfilled and the signs of the time all indicate it. There are 'wars and rumors of wars' now; there is moral laxity everywhere; the average church attendance is startlingly small, only 36 people out of every 100 attend any church in this country. There is moral and political corruption.

"All of these things indicate the approach of the millennium, as anyone may see by looking up the references in the Bible on this subject.

"The millennium will not be brought about by any human agency. We are not growing better."

Rev. Clarence E. Eberman, Lancaster, Pa., pastor of the Moravian church and president of the Pennsylvania Christian Endeavor Union said:—

"Sentiment or speculation can decide very little on this great question. The Bible alone offers the authoritative teaching. I believe confidently that Christ is coming again and that his second advent will usher in his kingly reign of a thousand years upon this earth."

Rev. George Fulton, Lebanon, Pa., pastor of the Fourth Street Presbyterian church, said:—

"I believe that the evidence of the nearness of the millennium is stronger than ever before. Signs have been found in every generation since Christ's ascent that pointed to his coming. The principal proofs are wars and earthquakes, distress of nations, sea and waves roaring, lawlessness and iniquity prevailing to an alarming degree. The Bible says 'When the Gospel of the kingdom shall have been preached to all the world as a witness unto all nations, then cometh the end.' This is a sign. It belongs only to our own age and the evidence here is strong. Another sign is the prophetic movement,—the restoration of Israel which has begun."

Rev. Sydney N. Ussher, West Chester, Pa., rector of the Church of the Sure Foundation, said:—

"The Millennium is a divine conception, with Scripture the only source of light and authority. No definite time is stated therein. I believe, however, the world is fast preparing for it."

Rev. William J. Houck, Carlisle, Pa., pastor of Grace United Brethren church, says:—

"I believe that the Biblical millennium is at hand."

Rev. M. E. McLinn, Bloomsburg, Pa., pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran church, says:—

"I am certain that a great change is imminent. Everything points clearly to a mighty social and religious upheaval and reconstruction. The very fact that this subject occupies men's thoughts so largely and that the 'secular press' asks the question is proof of it to me."

Pastor F. Jonte Stanley, of the First Presbyterian church, Atlantic City, N. J., believes "that the signs of the times, as I read them, point to the millennium as not being far off. One of the indications is the gathering of the Jews at Palestine; another that the Gentiles hear the Gospel the world over, and still another is that the nations are coming together commercially, intellectually and religiously."

Rev. W. W. Moffett, D. D., Lambertville, N. J., pastor of the Centenary M. E. church, says:—

"The trend of revelation on the subject of the millennium seems to teach that a time will come in the history of the world when the Gospel shall dominate all nations and Jesus shall reign in the majority of human hearts. To the close student of the world to-day there seem to be many indications that this happy period may be enjoyed in the near future."

Rev. Dr. James Lisk, Bordentown, N. J., pastor of the Baptist church, says:—

"As to your first question, I certainly do so believe. However students of the Word may interpret your phrase 'Biblical millennium,' there can be little doubt that some great change is soon to take place. The divine programme is being rapidly completed, so far as the present order of things is concerned. Prophecy is rapidly being fulfilled."

* * *

The majority of those who saw no evidence of a Millennium meant that they saw no evidence of the speedy conversion of the world to such a condition that God's will would be done on earth even as in heaven. And in this we must commend their judgment as sound. But alas! that so many should be so deluded by human theory as to so misunderstand the plain statements of God's Word—that Christ's Millennial reign is for the very purpose of *subduing* all things. (1 Cor. 15:25, 26, 28) False ideas of the "kingdom" and of the "judgment day," and imperfect views of the character and scope of the atonement, are at the bottom of this blindness to the signs of our times.

METHODIST FIGURES FOR 1899

Rev. A. B. Sanford, D. D., editor of the "Methodist Year Book," says in *"The Philadelphia Methodist,"*—

"Your readers may be interested to hear concerning the total membership of the church for 1899, as the statistics have been prepared for the new "Methodist Year Book," now passing through the press. In some measure, the result is preliminary, since the receipt of the figures from a few recent fall conferences will slightly change the additions that later appear in the General Minutes. The "Year Book" totals will not, however, be greatly affected, and show a decrease in members and probationers during the past year amounting to 21,934. In the analysis of this result, several interesting facts appear.

"1. The increase in full members through the whole church has been but 6,661. It is a serious fact that such strong bodies as the New England, the New York, the Philadelphia, the Central Pennsylvania, the New Jersey and the Wilmington Conferences suffered considerable losses, the decrease in these instances varying from the minimum of 1,368, to the maximum of 2,436.

"2. The decrease of probationers in the year 1899 has been 28,595.

"3. This decrease in members and probationers is accompanied by a decline in Sunday School scholars during 1899 of 16,716. It is a noticeable fact that the decline in Sunday School scholars thus occurs in the spring conferences, which as a body contribute a total loss in probationers of 22,572.

"It may be said in conclusion, that the net decline in members and probationers of 21,934 is the first positive decline that has occurred since 1881, and, with that exception, since the year 1863. The above facts are serious, but are such as it may be wholesome, for the church to know."

* * *

We do not rejoice in such evidences of a decline in denominationalism: nor do we expect it to continue. If the losses of denominationalism meant that God's children were getting out into *the liberty wherewith Christ makes free indeed*, then we would rejoice. But only a small proportion of the present decline can be credited to the spread of present truth. It means, therefore, indifference, worldliness.

It will not surprise us if in the near future a *Trust* Churchianity will have a season of great prosperity, lasting until the grand collapse which the Scriptures declare will be sudden.

PROPOSED FEDERATION OF PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN GERMANY

Prof. Beyschlag has issued an appeal to German Protestants which is being regarded favorably by many of them. It tends in the direction of the general religious federation we have long been expecting—which will revive religious tyranny and suppress religious liberty and stifle present truth; but

not until it has borne its witness and gathered the "wheat" of the Gospel "harvest." The Literary Digest gives a summary of the proposed plan as follows:—

"There is to be no formal union of the various state churches, nor are these to lose their historical identity in the proposed new arrangement. Not a union is proposed, but a federation of the state churches, with the Prussian church which represents the Emperor, the *summus episcopus* of the Protestant church of that kingdom, as the head. The confessional status of each church shall remain undisturbed.

"The object of the federation is to unite the churches of the empire for practical purposes. Chief among these purposes is co-operation in providing for the religious needs of the Germans in the Diaspora, *i. e.*, those who are scattered in the various foreign lands and need religious care. Then, too, the Protestant church of the empire must have some means by which it can, as a body, be represented, just as the Catholic church has a representative in the Pope. A further but later purpose is to secure unity in church government and polity. In other words, it is to be, with the necessary changes, a federation for the good of the church such as the organization of the empire has been for the state.

"This federation is to find its expression in an imperial Protestant synod, which shall consist of representatives of the various state church governments, as also of the congregations, in such proportions as shall be agreed upon. The officials of this synod shall be the representatives and the executive board."

A CONGRESS OF RELIGIOUS HISTORY

This, at the coming Paris Exposition, is proposed as instead of a Parliament of Religions such as was held at the Chicago World's Fair. It is proposed to avoid *doctrines* and merely to show *works*—missions, charities, etc., and in all these matters Catholicism hopes to make the chief showing, and reap the greatest advantage.

Disapproving of the proposed Congress *The Midland*, a United Presbyterian journal, refers to the Chicago Parliament of Religions as follows:—

"Missionaries tell us that their work has been made more difficult, in India at least, by the boasts of devotees of the false systems of religion there that in Chicago they had met and triumphed over Christianity. Tho not intolerant, the Christian religion is absolutely exclusive. It can have no fellowship with systems which insult the true God and know nothing of that blessed Name by which alone salvation comes to any human soul. Its mission is to expose and uproot all other systems and rescue men from their delusion and destructive influence. We are convinced that these parliaments tend to obscure the distinction between the only true religion and the systems of error it must seek to destroy. One such experiment was one too many. If a second is to be attempted we hope the good sense of Christian people will keep them from participation."

We are pleased to note an expression of so much loyalty to the Gospel, and the only Name in which is salvation. It is as rare as it is refreshing in these days of evolutionary *unbelief* and Higher Criticism *infidelity*. Would that this editor and his readers might see that the blessed day of Christ's Millennial kingdom is near, in the which all the deaf ears shall be opened to hear the joyful sound of salvation and to know of that only name and of the eternal life offered to all who will obey him.

"WITHDRAWAL LETTERS"

These are not samples to be *copied* by pen, but regular letter all ready to date and sign and can be posted unsealed for one cent each. It is a kind but plain statement of our view of the true invisible Church and its head Christ Jesus and its bondage of love as contrasted with human institutions under Synods, Conferences and Presbyteries and held together with creed-bondage. All who get free from "Babylon" should send one of these letters to *each* church member with whom he associated in "Babylon." It will do them good and it will insure that you will not be misunderstood and misrepresented *unintentionally*. Otherwise your withdrawal is almost certain to be misrepresented as "Infidelity"—as leaving the *true* church and not merely leaving a *human* organization never recognized by the Lord nor instituted by him, but by fallible men.

Order all you need with tracts and envelopes accompanying *free*—after getting a *sample* and deciding you wish to use them.

"THIS CHARGE I COMMIT UNTO THEE, SON TIMOTHY"

1 TIMOTHY 1:18.

More than a year ago we intimated a desire to do something more than has been hitherto attempted to assist God's dear "sheep" in Great Britain and Ireland to hear the great Shepherd's voice and thus to be led into the green pastures of present truth. Our thought was to send over one of the "Pilgrim" brethren, but the Lord's providence did not seem to open the way for it, and instead Brother Hemery, already there, was started as a "Pilgrim," and we believe with beneficial results, for which the Lord be praised.

Still we are not satisfied that all is being done there that could be done, and since our last annual report we have been seeking to know the mind of the Lord respecting the great increase of his work in the spread of the "harvest" message, which we believe we may reasonably expect in the next few years. While we expect that most of the increase will as usual be in this land, specially prepared and specially favored and favorable it seems to us that the thirty-five millions of Britain for several reasons deserve special consideration and special effort. (1) Because of our unity of language and religious ideals. (2) Because of the prevalence of a religious sentiment among the masses. (3) Because we have reason to hope that the present lamentable war is not only awakening the people, as wars always seem to do, but additionally because some of the reverses met with may prove to be blessings by bringing to the people a larger degree of humility and specially causing the religious to ponder over the evidences we present respecting the completion of the "elect" church and the speedy inauguration of the Millennial reign of righteousness. (4) Because so large a population of one tongue being within comparatively so small a space should make efforts there doubly effective of results, all other considerations being equal.

Accordingly we have planned, and from the first of the year have been arranging to send to Great Britain a representative to look the field over, with a view to the establishment of a branch office in London from whence that whitening field could be more thoroughly harvested. The proposition is, that the "Colporteur" work, the "Volunteer" work and the "Pilgrim" work could be much better carried on there from such a home office and by one thoroughly familiar with the methods the Chief Reaper has been pleased to bless here. True all these branches have already been started in Great Britain, but none of them work as smoothly and efficiently as we believe they will operate under the proposed plan. Many, we believe, hesitate to order tracts, papers, and books because of the distance, difference in money, etc.

The next question naturally was, To whom shall so important a mission be entrusted? And the question, under the requested guidance of our Lord, seems to be satisfactorily answered. With his hearty consent we have chosen our dear Brother Henninges, in whose efficiency for this service we have fullest confidence and who has given many proofs of his loyalty to the Lord and his cause, and of whose full consecration of heart to the Lord we have no doubt. He has had personal experience in all departments of the work for the past eight years—the last seven of which he has spent in the Watch Tower office and as a member of the Watch Tower family, whose "table talks" are in the nature of Bible schools.

We could not send you, dear British brethren, anyone in our judgment better qualified to assist you in carrying on the work we all so dearly love to serve. We trust that you will welcome him heartily and co-operate with him to the extent of your judgments and opportunities. We shall greatly miss him here, but will feel a pleasure in sacrificing our own conveniences for your sakes—that the grace of our Lord may abound toward many who have not yet "tasted that the Lord is gracious." May he always abound as at present in the knowledge of the truth and in its spirit of love for the Lord.

We have been in correspondence with the British Postmaster General and find that the postal rates and terms are less favorable there than we had expected—less favorable than ours: but having gone thus far we are not yet discouraged—hoping for some good results from a personal inspection of the field anyway. Brother Henninges will go direct to London, view the situation and write us,—meantime awaiting our reply, he will make a "Pilgrim" visit to various cities and

towns where already there are little gatherings of Watch Tower readers; and this alone we believe will justify, should the London "branch" proposition prove to be infeasible.

Of course, Sister Henninges will accompany her husband, not only as his natural help-mate, but as his helper in the Lord's work. We commend our dear sister very highly to you all as a very earnest and faithful child of God and servant of his cause; full of the spirit of self-sacrifice, and firm for every principle of righteousness as she discerns it. Sister Henninges has been a member of the Watch Tower family for twelve years; joining in the office work with her brother when quite young. May God's blessing continue with both these dear members of our family, making them blessings in various ways to the household of faith across the great deep

THE GOOD TIDINGS DISCREDITED

FEB. 25.—LUKE 14:16-20.

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not."—John 1:11.

Remembering the proverb, "A prophet has no honor in his own country," our Lord did not begin his ministry in Nazareth where almost twenty-eight years of his life had been spent and where consequently he was well known to the people. His ministry began in Judea, and the people of Nazareth undoubtedly heard considerable respecting the marvelous works and words of their suddenly notable fellow-citizen, before he came thither. All this would be in their favor, and tend to prepare them to receive Messiah and his message, offsetting the familiarity which so frequently begets contempt.

Our lesson shows that our Lord had been in the habit of attending the religious services of the synagogue every Sabbath day, and intimates that it had been his custom to do the reading of the law—which implied an education far beyond that of the majority of his day. As synagogue-attendance was not strictly a part of the law, our Lord's example in thus seeking to associate as far as possible with the most religious people of his day, and his willingness to take part in the public services, are a lesson to his people everywhere, in harmony with the words of the Apostle that we should not forget the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, for the Lord's worship.—Hebrew x:25.

The passage of Scripture read by our Lord from the prophecy of Isaiah was quite probably the stated Scripture lesson for that day, for it would appear that it was a custom of the Jews to have Scripture readings each Sabbath day, taking up various parts of the Old Testament Scriptures alternately. At all events, the lesson read by our Lord is easily identified as a Greek translation from Isaiah 61. He read the first verse of the chapter, and stopped reading in the middle of the second verse, closed the roll, and returned it to the servant having charge of the closet in which the rolls were kept, and then, according to the custom of the time, as an indication that he was ready to make remarks, Jesus sat down. How much of an explanation of the Scriptures he gave his hearers we are not definitely told, but doubtless he commented liberally upon the various features of the prophecy, summing up his remarks with that which is recorded, viz., that the prophecy was in process of fulfilment at that very moment.

The audience, composed chiefly of his acquaintances, had a mixed sentiment as respects him; with the natural feeling of irreverence for those with whom we are intimately acquainted was blended another feeling of pride in a fellow-citizen, who had attained such renown; and as they listened to his exposition of the prophecy they were filled with admiration, "and all bear him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." They said within themselves and to each other, We have never heard such wonderfully good tidings before in our lives, and this from our neighbor, the carpenter. Little did they realize, when thus admiring his gracious message, that something would occur in a few moments which would completely frenzy them, and lead them to desire to murder the one who now declared himself to be the fulfiller of this prophecy, the Anointed of the Lord, the Messiah, ready to give in due time the blessings mentioned by the prophet.

The people of Nazareth were more interested, however, in the miracles of Jesus than in his claim to be the Messiah. The miracles were practical, and they could appreciate them, but his teaching that he was the Messiah seemed far-fetched, when they had known him for so long as the son of Joseph, the carpenter. They therefore began to wonder, and possibly to question, how soon he would do in Nazareth some of the wonderful miracles done by him at Capernaum and elsewhere, of which they had heard. Knowing this to be the attitude of their mind our Lord anticipated their request for miracles, and explained that they must not expect miracles from him—though they evidently expected more miracles amongst his friends than they had heard of his doing amongst strangers. This made necessary a little explanation, which was not at all flattering to them.

Our Lord does not say that he was not permitted of the Father to do miracles at Nazareth, although this is implied in the fact that he did none, and implied also in the explanations and illustrations which he gave. Doubtless he was guided in the matter by certain principles governing his use of the power from on high. As we have already seen he might not use this power selfishly in his own interest; we may likewise suppose that he would not be at liberty to use it simply as a gratification to curiosity, but that it could be used only in response to proper faith. The people of Nazareth evidently were not in the attitude of faith, not therefore in the proper attitude of heart, to receive God's blessing—the wrong condition of their hearts was manifested by their actions, when our Lord refused to gratify their curiosity. We note the difference between this curious and unbelieving desire for miracles, and the course of action following it, in contrast with the faith of the Syro-Phoenician woman, her humility of heart, and the manner in which she received our Lord's first refusal to grant her request. (Matthew xv 22-28) We can but suppose that had the people of Nazareth been in a proper attitude of heart they would have accepted our Lord's refusal to work miracles in a different manner, and would have said "Well, we enjoy the gracious words from his mouth anyway for they have brought a healing and blessing to our hearts." And if such had been their attitude no doubt later our Lord would have performed miracles of healing in their city also.

By way of explaining to them why he might not perform his miracles in their midst, as well as toward others, our Lord cited two illustrations from the prophets of the past—Elijah sent to the poor Gentile widow, to be a blessing to her home, while widows of Israel were passed by; and Elisha healing Naaman of leprosy, while many lepers in Israel were passed by. These apt illustrations were unkindly received by his hearers, because, drawing the parallel, it likened them to starving poor and diseased lepers and implied our Lord's comparative greatness and superiority to them as a dispenser of divine bounty. After the same manner our Lord elsewhere told the Pharisees that he, as the Good Physician, had come to heal the sick and that the well needed not a physician. That this was their attitude of heart and feeling no need of him, and the blessings he dispensed, they did not realize their sin-sickness, and their deadness in trespasses and sins, and hence did not realize their need of redemption and deliverance from the power of sin and death.

The effect of our Lord's illustrations was almost electrical upon the proud hearts before him, whose only interest in him from the first had been that of pride in him as a fellow-citizen and hope for miracle-proofs of his power. Now, however, this pride was turned to bitterness, and they would murder the one who had spoken so disrespectfully of them as to compare them to hungry widows and lepers, needing his aid. The congregation immediately became a mob, filled with angry passion; and surging forth with him the crowd led in the direction of a precipice with a view to casting him headlong from it. But by the exercise of some power, possibly a power natural to a perfect human being, our Lord mastered them with his mind, and passed from their midst, none daring to stay him, and went on his way.

Let us note carefully the message which our Lord declared was in process of fulfilment that day. He declared himself to be the Anointed One mentioned by the prophet—his anointing of the holy spirit dating from the time of his baptism when John bore witness that the holy spirit descended upon him and abode with him. The anointing was for a purpose, as the prophet declared, and our Lord confirmed the same, saying that he was anointed to preach the gospel.

THE GOOD TIDINGS BORNE BY THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT

We are to distinguish between the preaching of the gospel or "good tidings" and the good things promised, which are to come to pass in due time. The preaching was begun by our Lord and has been continued throughout the Gospel age by all those who by the grace of God became "members in particular of his body," the church over which he is the head

forever. (1 Cor. xii.27; Eph i:22-23) After this preaching of the Gospel shall have been given, and shall have accomplished its purpose and intention, then will follow the glorious actualities referred to in it. And if the mere description of the coming blessings is called the Gospel, good news, good tidings for all people, what may we not hope respecting the blessings themselves, of which only the message is now given to the hearing and sight of faith?

The Gospel was to be preached by the Anointed Head and by the anointed members of his body, to all who have ears to hear it, in the special interest of one particular class, viz., the poor, the broken-hearted—not the literally poor any more than the literally broken-hearted, but the "poor in spirit," the humble-minded, who are also the sympathetic, the tender, the heart-broken, as in contrast with the hard-hearted. We make this distinction as between the poor in purse and the poor in spirit because it is a very necessary one, which some failing to discern have been misled into grievous errors. True, not many rich, either in purse or intellect, will attain the kingdom, the majority, being chiefly the poor of this world in purse and intellect, but rich in faith. (1 Cor. 1:26-29; James ii:5) However, it is not because of their poverty of intellect and of purse that there will be more of this class chosen, but merely because poverty of purse and intellect are much more favorable to the development of humility than are riches of any kind; and humility is a prime essential to an inheritance with the saints in light.

While all of the anointed gospellers may during this age bear their message without restriction as to nationality or color or sex, to whosoever has an ear to hear, Jew or Gentile, bond or free, and while they may not be able to discern in advance which will prosper, this or that—nevertheless they will not waste time and effort upon those whom they find to be mentally "rich and increased in goods, and feeling that they have need of nothing." (Rev. iii:17) No: they are rather to take note of those who, when they hear the good tidings, give evidence of proper "ears to hear," the meek, the poor in spirit, realizing that it is this class that the Lord is specially seeking during this age.

Similarly, the anointed ones are not to spend their time endeavoring to break the hard hearts of the worldly, for this is not a part of its commission. God himself, through various providences, is attending to the work of breaking the hard hearts; some are broken and softened by the trials, difficulties, perplexities and adversities of the present life; some are torn and bleeding through severe trials of life and earthly disappointments; and the time of trouble fast approaching is specially designed of the Lord as the time for breaking and melting many hard hearts, in preparation for the Millennial kingdom and its blessings of restitution, etc. Now, however, the message is to "bind up the broken-hearted."

How much there is of this very kind of work that needs doing! The poor in spirit, contrite and mellowed of heart, disappointed with the world, vexed with the flesh and the adversary, are to be found in nearly every quarter of the world; and whosoever has received the anointing of the holy spirit should realize that this power upon him is given to be exercised upon this needy class—pouring in the oil and the wine of the divine promise, to cheer and comfort and bless, and prepare for joint-heirship in the kingdom, some of the very class whom the Lord will be pleased to accept. To these the gospel may be preached freely; they will not turn again and rend the messengers, but will hear it, and it will comfort and bind up their wounded hearts.

If then we have found the class to whom the anointed ones are to specially address themselves, what is the special message of peace and blessing which they are to bear, and which the Prophet and our Lord denominate the "Gospel"—the good tidings? Is it the announcement of the election of a handful to glory, and the reprobation of all the remainder to an eternity of torment? No, this is not the Gospel which the Prophet and Jesus declared. Is it the message of God's goodness of intention, but incapacity of execution, which will result in a very few being saved and the great mass of humanity being eternally tormented? No, not so. Evidently our Lord was not sent to preach this gospel (?) of damnation, so common to-day—for it is no part of the message here declared, nor would such a reprobation to eternal misery be called "gospel" truthfully.

Let us see what is implied in this "Gospel" message set forth in the Scriptures. Let us know how widely it differs from the various messages of heathendom, and from the commonly accepted messages of "Christendom." Let us note the true Gospel message that should be proclaimed by all who have been anointed with the holy Spirit. It is divided by the Prophet into five parts: (1) Deliverance to the captives; (2) recovering of sight to the blind; (3) setting at liberty them that are bruised; (4) the announcement of the acceptable year of the Lord, as preceding these blessings; and (5) the announcement of a day of vengeance in the close or end of the acceptable year of the Lord,—a "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." This last part, tho proper to be proclaimed by the anointed "body," was not due to be proclaimed by the anointed "Head" at the time of our Lord's discourse. All mankind are captives, all are blind, all are bruised; hence it is a universal blessing that is announced in this Scriptural "Gospel" message.

(1) The captives are the slaves of sin; Adam and all his race, "sold under sin." (Rom. 7:14) Through disobedience in Eden the race was born in this slavery, "born in sin, shapen in iniquity." Some of the sin-enslaved race have already been remanded to the great prison-house of death, while all others are on their way thither. The "good tidings" which Jesus preached and which all his followers under the same anointing of the spirit must preach, is the resurrection of the dead, or as the Apostle expressed his teaching, it is "Jesus and the resurrection." (Acts 17:18) Jesus, the Redeemer, Jesus the anointed Head of the spiritual Seed which, as God's kingdom, is shortly to bring to mankind full opportunity of release, not only from the prison-house, but from all the other incidents of their slavery through the first Adam,—he having redeemed the first Adam and his posterity with his own precious life.

None but the anointed body of Christ are commissioned to preach this good tidings, and every member of that body is so commissioned irrespective of human distinctions of "clergy" and "laity;" and whoever does not fulfil this mission is unfaithful to his commission. And alas! as we look around us, throughout the length and breadth of Churchianity, falsely called Christianity, we find that evidently very few indeed have been anointed, because very few indeed know this message of the resurrection,—indeed that the majority of ministers in all denominations are heartily opposed to the doctrine of the resurrection because it is in direct conflict with their unscriptural theories.

(2) The promised recovering of sight to the blind has a far deeper signification than mere natural eyesight. It refers to the blindness which sin has brought upon the hearts of men, perverting their mental vision, hindering them from seeing the divine being and his divine attributes in their true light,—as loving, gracious and true, just and wise. The blindness that is upon mankind, and "the gross darkness that covers the people" in general, is described by the Apostle as being the work of the great adversary Satan, who by false doctrines not only amongst the heathen but also amongst Christians, has misrepresented the divine character, the divine Word, the divine plan, "putting light for darkness, and darkness for light," and has thus deceived the whole world, all nations, with the very small exception of the few whose eyes of understanding have been enlightened with the true light. We have no hope for this general opening of the blind eyes in the present age—only the few now get the eyesalve. In some respects indeed it is better that the majority should be permitted to remain blinded until by the establishment of the Millennial kingdom the condition shall be much more favorable than at present, that when then the eyes of their understanding have been opened, and their responsibilities proportionately increased, it may be under circumstances more favorable to them.

(3) "To set at liberty them that are bruised" gives the thought of sin's captives sore and distressed from the manacles with which they are bound. This figure fitly represents the bondage of corruption, infirmity, etc., which are concomitants to the death penalty. The promise for such a deliverance means "restitution" in active operation (Acts 3:19-21), in the assistance and uplifting of the world of mankind during the Millennial age—to all the glorious perfections lost for all through father Adam's disobedience, and his sentence of death. What a glorious hope is here! No wonder this also was included as a part of the good tidings. How comparatively valueless would all the other features of blessing be, if sickness and pain and imperfection continued. It is when we see not only Sin, the taskmaster, itself removed, but also all of its results counteracted, and all the sinner-race privileged to return to the full liberty of sons of God, and that all this is provided for through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and through the kingdom which is to be established in his hands for the blessing of all the families of the earth—then we discern why it is called "good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people," and hear the echo of John's prophecy from the standpoint of the future perfection, saying, "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying,

neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."—Rev. 21:4.

(4) "The acceptable year (or acceptable time or epoch) of the Lord" is this Gospel age, which began with our Lord's consecration at his baptism, and his anointing with the holy spirit, and which will continue until the last member of the body of Christ has "filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ"—until all the sufferings of Christ (head and body) are complete, when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.—Isa. 40:5.

This Gospel age is called the acceptable epoch, because during this time God is willing to accept sacrifices for sins. First he accepted the sacrifice of his only begotten Son our Lord, and secondly he has been accepting throughout the age all those who come unto the Father through Jesus, and who, justified by his merit, present their bodies living sacrifices to God as a reasonable service, and thus become joint-sacrificers with Jesus, and joint-heirs with him in the coming kingdom, as it is written, "Heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*—Rom. 8:17.

WE WALK BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT

However, it is well to notice that while the "Gospel" includes all the foregoing blessings for mankind in general, it brings a sooner and still greater blessing to the "little flock" whose ears are blessed that they hear, and whose eyes are blessed that they see, in advance of the world. To these all of the coming blessings are anticipated, not literally, but by faith, for "We walk by faith, not by sight." Already the true church ("whose names are written in heaven" Heb. 12:23) is not only justified by faith, and thus reckonedly released from captivity to Sin and Death, but also reckonedly is risen with Christ, reckonedly has become "new creatures" in Christ, reckonedly, under the New Covenant, are no longer in the flesh but in the spirit, and so accounted of God, and so accounted also of each other, who henceforth know each other, not after the flesh, but after the spirit—as new creatures.—2 Cor. 5:16.

See *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices*

These have a new sight, seeing with the eye of faith things that are not visible to the natural sight. They are guided into all truth, as it becomes due; yes, they discern "the deep things of God," because they possess the spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:9, 10), seeing with the eye of faith things which the natural eye hath not seen, hearing with the ear of faith things which the natural ear has never heard, neither has entered into the heart of the natural man to conceive of or imagine—the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him,—and who manifest their love by their devotion to him and his. The eyes of their understanding being opened, they are enabled to "comprehend with all saints the length and breadth, the height and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth (human) knowledge."—Eph. 3:18.

Altho this special class is not set at liberty from the bruises and imperfections of the mortal body during the present life, but require in this as in other things to walk by faith and not by sight, nevertheless, in one sense of the word they are set at liberty from these imperfections, because under the terms of the New Covenant* they have the assurance of the Lord that none of the natural blemishes and imperfections and physical weaknesses are henceforth counted against them, their standing being reckonedly that of new creatures, and their judgment in the Lord's sight being according to their intentions of heart, and not according to the weaknesses of their flesh, which is reckoned dead.

We exhort all of the redeemed who have made a covenant with the Lord, "a covenant of sacrifice," to remember why they are reckoned as members baptised into the body of the anointed one (the Christ)—here plainly set forth by the Head of our body, viz., that each one is to be a preacher of this Gospel and not of another Gospel. Let us be faithful for yet a little longer, until the great High Priest shall fully qualify us as the "royal priesthood" in the glory of the kingdom, that then it may be our privilege with him to bring to mankind all the wonderful blessings forestated in his gospel, for the blessing of all the families of the earth, with a full opportunity of attaining the truth and the liberty of the sons of God.

* See June 15, 1919, for critical examination of Covenants

"AND HE HEALED MANY THAT WERE SICK"

MARCH 4.—MARK 1:21-34.

Jesus made Capernaum his home and the center of his work in Galilee for a considerable time. It will be remembered that it was here that the Roman centurion, whose servant Jesus healed, lived, of whom the Jews testified that he was a friend of their nation, and had built them a synagogue or house of worship and Bible study. (Luke vii:5) Some ruins in that vicinity have recently been exhumed which are supposed by scholars to be the remains of this synagogue, because they seem to be on the site of Capernaum, and represent the most substantial synagogue structure in all that region, the walls being ten feet thick, seventy-four feet nine inches long, and fifty-six feet nine inches wide, with a roof supported by four rows of columns.

As indicating our Lord's strict attention to the Father's business, we have the statement that "straightway," at once, on arriving at Capernaum from Nazareth, our Lord went into the synagogue (probably the one built by the centurion), and began his teaching. This reads peculiarly at the present day, when custom has completely barricaded every opportunity for free expression of opinion in almost all places devoted to worship. The Jewish arrangement was certainly a liberal one, and every way favorable to the truth, because whatever errors might creep in, the truth always had an opportunity for challenging them and exposing their weaknesses and referring to the divinely inspired oracles. Who can doubt that if we had just such simplicity or arrangements today, by which truth could challenge the various errors which have crept into all sectarian teaching, the result would be favorable—not favorable to sectarian systems, it is true, but favorable to the establishment of each individual in the truth, as presented in the divine oracles.

The people who heard our Lord's discourse were astonished (1) At the things which he taught, and (2) at the manner in which he presented them. He taught with authority, that is to say, our Lord had a clear understanding of the subjects he handled, and his presentations were not vague suppositions and imaginations, and foundationless hopes and speculations; but were clear-cut and distinct; and well proven by the testimonies of the Law and the Prophets, so that they were conclusive in the minds of his hearers, who hitherto had been used to hearing the scribes guess, wonder, suppose, etc. Since the Lord has not seen fit to provide us with even a condensed statement of his discourse, it implies that a full knowledge of it would not be specially advantageous to us. However, a hint or inference respecting a portion of the sermon is furnished in the statement that during its progress a man present, possessed by an unclean spirit, cried out—evidently opposing something Jesus had said, saying, "Let us alone: what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us?"

The clear inference is that Jesus had been speaking against sin, and the power which it exercised over humanity, involving all in the death penalty, with its sickness and pain and trouble; and incidentally no doubt he had mentioned demoniacal possession, so common at that time—and more common today than most people suppose. It is our guess that the gospel preached at Capernaum must have followed somewhat similar lines to the gospel preached at Nazareth, declaring the time at hand in which God would be pleased to receive back into harmony with himself those who had been alienated through sin, and who had thus been brought under the bondage of corruption. He no doubt declared himself to be the great Life-giver, the Good Physician, sent to heal earth's woes and to reveal to mankind the Heavenly Father, and to become to as many as would avail themselves of it, "the Way, the Truth and the Life," by which they might return to divine favor in fullest measure. The language of the evil spirit, speaking through the man as its mouthpiece,* clearly implies that these fallen spirits had at least a general understanding of the time when their evil course would be run, and that they knew that the just wages of their sinful course is destruction—not eternal torment. They recognized Jesus and his mission and his holiness, and that he was the representative of the Heavenly Father, but they had no hope for themselves—no expectation other than that when the time should come they would be utterly destroyed, annihilated. From various Scriptures, however, we learn that these fallen angels, demons, wicked spirits, will not be destroyed without first being given an opportunity for repentance and reconciliation with God.*

Our Lord did not deign to hold conversation with these spirit beings, who had fallen under the ban of divine con-

* See *"What Say the Scriptures About Spiritualism?"*—Price 10 cents, this office

demnation, and with whom the Heavenly Father could no longer have intercourse. He did not, therefore, explain to them that his first advent was merely to pay the ransom price, and to start the gospel message which would select the "little flock" to be members of his "body" and joint-heirs with him in the kingdom, that when complete and glorified should bless and judge the world and judge the fallen angels also. (1 Cor. 6:3) And our Lord's course in having nothing whatever to do with these fallen spirits, but on the contrary commanding them to hold their peace, should be a lesson to every one of his followers, who should seek in this and in every other matter to walk in his steps. We have known some to get themselves into serious difficulties through curiosity—which led them either to spiritualistic seances or to privately have communication with these fallen ones. Their cunning and deceitfulness is far too deep for humanity, and he who seeks communion with them in any manner or degree does so in violation, not only of the Scriptural command (Lev. 20.6; Isa. 8:19), but in violation also of Jesus' example; and such run great risk of thus being entrapped and falling from their own steadfastness. The Apostle gives us to understand that even unwillingly and unwittingly we frequently wrestle, not with flesh and blood, but with these evil spirits, who inspire and use fallen fellow-creatures—Eph. 6:2.

The unclean spirit "tore" the man in coming out, that is, caused violent convulsions, and used the man's mouth in uttering a loud cry. Our Lord, of course, could have forbidden such manifestations of the demon spirit, but preferred to allow it to be so, that thus might be manifested the malignant disposition of the evil spirits, as well as the power of his command which, with all their malignity, they could not disobey. The effect of the miracle upon the audience of course was wonderful. They saw "the man Christ Jesus" exercising in their very presence a superhuman power—controlling spirit beings. No wonder they were amazed, and no wonder his fame spread throughout all Galilee.

Leaving the synagogue, our Lord, accompanied by James and John, went with Simon Peter and Andrew, his brother, to their home, where Peter's mother-in-law lay sick of a fever. Jesus visited her, and "rebuked the fever," took her by the hand and helped her up (Luke 4:39), and immediately the fever was gone, and even the usually accompanying prostration of strength did not remain, but on the contrary, she was able to entertain and serve her company.

The fame of Jesus spread rapidly, and at sundown, in the cool of the day, many sick were brought to him to be healed, and many possessed of devils, to have the evil spirits cast out. The concourse was a great one, from all parts of the city, and again our Lord manifested his mercy in healing ailments, and casting out demons; again, however, refusing to converse with the demons and even refusing and forbidding their giving testimony respecting him. Praise and commendation from an evil source are never to be desired.

The question naturally arises, Why did the Lord perform such miracles? If they were merely from benevolence and with a desire to help the afflicted, why did he not do more of them?—for instance, in the city of Nazareth, regardless of the condition of the hearts of those who were afflicted. Why did he not at one word rebuke all the fevers and all the other diseases which afflicted humanity, throughout the whole of Galilee, the whole of Palestine, the whole of Asia, the whole of Africa, the whole of Europe and the whole of America? Quite evidently the performance of these miracles was not merely from benevolence toward mankind.

Indeed, we have reason to question whether or not it would be a benevolent act to cure all the ills of humanity in the present time. The aches and pains, the troubles and sorrows, of humanity are in many senses of the word blessings in disguise, just as was the part of the original sentence of Adam, which declares: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." He who succeeds in avoiding the earning of his daily food by some kind of toil has succeeded in placing himself in an unfavorable condition, for idleness is not only the mother of vice, but the father of discontent. Similarly, there is a ministry of instruction in sickness and trouble which should not be overlooked. The Prophet refers to this blessing that inheres in tribulation, saying, "Before I was afflicted I went astray," and many of the Lord's people can if they will trace some of their greatest blessings and greatest helps in the development of true character to their experiences in various kinds of troubles and disease. Note where we will throughout the world the finest and the noblest and the best balanced characters, and trace these characters in their development, and we find that much of the chiseling and polishing which has made them what they are was done by affliction of one kind or another—guided, if they were consecrated Christians—by the unseen hand of Providence.

The miracles which our Lord performed in the little country of Palestine, by which a small proportion of their sick were relieved temporarily, was merely a prophecy of the great healing blessing, freeing from the power of Satan and sin, which he preached, and which is to be fulfilled in due time—during his Millennial kingdom.

His object in performing these miracles was not, however, merely to thus prophesy the future and greater universal blessings of his reign, but more particularly as signs, as evidences, as witnesses respecting his teachings. It was his doctrines or teachings that were to move men; so that as the power of God these might draw to him that certain class which the Father has given him during this age. If he would utter things respecting a heavenly condition, a birth of the spirit to a spirit nature, a spirit kingdom, etc., it would be eminently proper for any hearer to enquire respecting his authority for making such statements and promises, unknown to others and unproven from any earthly standpoint. It was therefore proper that our Lord should anticipate such enquiries respecting his authority for his teachings by giving miraculous demonstrations of his superhuman power, which he explained to be of the Father and witnessing to his integrity.

But someone may say, If such miraculous manifestations were proper and reasonable to the generation in personal contact with our Lord, why would not similar miracles be proper and reasonable for us of the present time, and for others all down through the Gospel age? We reply that some evidences, proofs or miracles would be proper now, and that greater miracles are before us today, as witnesses to the truth of Christianity. These are not of the same order as those which introduced the Gospel age in the "harvest" or end of the Jewish age; they are, indeed, of a far higher order, and more in harmony with the age in which we live. They are none the less real than the miracles of Jesus' day, though they may be less obtrusive and less likely to be noticed, except as attention shall be called to them. Our Lord seems to refer to these present-day miracles when he said to his disciples, "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go unto my Father"—Jno. 14:12.

Which is the greater work—the opening of the eyes of the naturally blind, or the opening of the eyes of the understanding? Which is the more valuable? In the end of the Jewish age our Lord healed eyes that were blinded either by accident or poison or a sting or what not, and that was a miracle, but today the Lord's disciples, under the guidance of the holy spirit, and through it, are able in many instances to open the eyes of the understanding, that those who are blind to spiritual things might see them—and this blindness, the Apostle tells us, is not a mere trifling thing or accident or sting, but is the skillful and intentional injury of the mental eye by the god of this world, Satan. (2 Cor. 4:4) Do we not, therefore, see many more miracles of this kind—the opening of the eyes of the understanding with the eye-salve of the truth in this harvest-time of the Gospel age—than are recorded of the natural sight restoration amongst the Israelites in the harvest of the Jewish age? And which is the more serious of the two blindnesses? Whether would we prefer to be blind naturally or to be blind to the spiritual things? Whether, therefore, is it the greater miracle to be relieved of natural blindness or to be relieved of spiritual darkness? Undoubtedly the latter.

Similarly with all the diseases, we might draw parallels and find these the greater miracles. Peter's mother-in-law was being consumed with a fever which the word of the Lord rebuked. But how many men and how many women throughout Christendom today are being consumed of a fever of ambition or pride or discontent, to whom the word of the Lord comes, through some of the household of faith, speaking peace, release from burdensome anxiety and cares of this life, lust for riches, and consuming ambitions and pride of life? How many have been restored to normal conditions and granted to have the peace of God ruling in their hearts, with thankfulness, and how many such have found their strength renewed, so that being released from these fevers they arose to do vigorously the Lord's business, to minister, to serve, the Lord and his "brethren?" Similarly also we might trace the lamenesses and impotencies of the past, and find analogies in the present—dead hands, worse than dead, used actively in the service of evil, have been recovered for activity in the service of the Lord; men and women dead in trespasses and sins, awakened to newness of life in the service of the Lord and of the truth. Such miracles as these, far greater than the ones of Jesus' day in the flesh. He is now performing through his willing servants and handmaidens, and these are the greatest witnesses imaginable to the reality of the Lord's gracious message that

he is the Messiah, the Sent of God, to bring salvation to the race of mankind.

The transformations of life and character, hopes and aims, by which some in the present time are blessed, like the physical healings in the harvest time of the Jewish age, are prophecies of what the grace of God can and will do for humanity when God's due time shall come, when his kingdom shall come, and through its administration of love and justice his will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven. He who can see now the earthly blessings and healings, accomplished by our Lord, were but foretastes of the coming general blessings to be accomplished during the Millennium, should be able also to see that the regenerations of heart and transformations of character now in progress in the "elect" church are merely foretastes or a first-fruits, illustrative of the blessings of transformed character which the kingdom will accomplish for all who will come into subjection to its righteous arrangements.

"THE SON OF MAN HATH POWER ON EARTH TO FORGIVE SINS"

MARCH 11.—MARK 2:1-12.

Following the miracle of our last lesson and probably other miracles not recorded in this connection, our Lord apparently made another preaching tour; after returning to his home city of Capernaum the incidents of this lesson transpired. Evidently our Lord, with his mother and brethren, had been making Capernaum his home for some time, and it is entirely probable that the house mentioned in this lesson was our Lord's own home. Dr. Schaff suggests that according to the Greek text this might read "at home," instead of "in the house." As we saw in our last lesson, however, Capernaum was the home also of Peter and Andrew, and the incident of this lesson might possibly have occurred there, though this is less probable.

The return of the young and wonderful Teacher to his own city and home was soon widely known—"noised;" the result was a considerable concourse of people, not only filling the house and the courtyard, but even the door or gateway. Amongst these callers were Pharisees and Doctors of the Law (rabbis, scribes), who came out of the various towns of Galilee and Judea to hear Jesus, and to note his miracles.—See Luke 5:17-18.

Our Lord's mission was the preaching of the Gospel, and, as already pointed out, the healings, miracles, etc., were incidentals, and not by any means his chief work or object—the "times of restitution" (Acts 3:21) not having come, the miracles of our Lord were merely attestations to and corroborative of his teachings respecting the kingdom and the kingdom class which he had come to call and gather—out of Israel and from amongst the Gentiles. Undoubtedly he preached the same message delivered in Nazareth respecting the Lord's spirit being upon him, anointing him to preach the good tidings to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted and to declare a coming deliverance to the captives of sin and death, and the restoration of sight to those blinded by Satan, and the setting at liberty of all the captives subject to the bondage of corruption, but probably this one message was presented from various standpoints at various times, and various texts used, as also various parables introduced in illustration of it. This, however, was the "Word," the message, which our Lord was commissioned to deliver, and we may be sure he did it faithfully.

While our Lord was in the midst of his discourse a paralytic, evidently full of faith, borne on a stretcher of some kind by four friends, sought opportunity to reach him, with full faith in his power and willingness to heal. Finding no opportunity of making their way through the crowd, the bearers took their burden onto the roof by the outside stairway, customary in that country—the buildings being usually but one story in height. It is not at all probable that the building and roof were of the ordinary kind that would have obliged that lifting of stones and cement and dirt, and the breaking of the plaster beneath, for this would involve an absurdity, and the falling of the stones and debris and dust upon our Lord and the congregation would have been insufferable as well as dangerous. The more reasonable supposition is that the house was one of the less common kind, enclosing a courtyard capable of accommodating quite a large audience, the living rooms being built around the wall of the courtyard at one end, and a veranda or porch-roof over a part of the open court, covered with tiles, which could be removed without much difficulty. The thought would be that our Lord stood under this veranda, preaching; that some of his audience were likewise under it and others standing out, exposed to the sunshine in the court. Dr. Thompson makes the following comment:

"The whole affair was the extemporaneous device of plain peasants accustomed to opening their roofs and letting down grain, straw and other articles, as they still do in this (Eastern) country. I have often seen it done, and have done it myself, to houses in Lebanon. I have the impression, however, that the covering, at least of the lewan (court) was not made of earth, but of coarse matting, or boards, or stone slabs, that could be quickly removed."—Compare this with Luke 5:19.

Our Lord was not offended by this intrusion. He doubtless remembered that all things work together for good to the Lord's people, who will accept them thus. So far from feeling offended at the intrusion and persistency, he entirely overlooked these when balancing them with the quality which he so much admires—faith. All of the Lord's people can well take note of this lesson, and learn more and more to accept the affairs of life as they come as being all subject to divine providence and all guaranteed in advance to be profitable, to work out some good result, if we will but so permit, by receiving them in faith. Let us learn also to overlook and forget rudeness, especially where there is evidence of sincerity of heart, faith, good intentions.

In various ways we learn that under the head of "paralysis" in olden times, in Oriental countries, various diseases were included, which are now specified under different names. For instance, titanus (lockjaw) would at that time and in that country be described as paralysis—indeed, any disease which would render the individual helpless, powerless—whether merely a deadness or accompanied by violent cramps. The incidents connected with this miracle would seem to indicate that it was a serious case, and had in it something of the element of urgency—necessity for seeing the Lord quickly and obtaining his help promptly. Otherwise propriety would have dictated a different course.

It might be questioned whether the faith was that of the palsied man or that of his friends, but we think the circumstances warrant the belief that the sick man himself exercised the faith and prompted his friends to take the steps they did in obedience to his request. This is implied in the fact that our Lord does not speak of the faith of the bearers, but does speak directly to the paralytic respecting his personal faith. Our Lord must have seen a very proper condition in the young man's heart, else he never would have said to him, unsolicited, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." Nor was this expression unpremeditated; our Lord evidently wished that the miracle he was about to perform should not detract from the preaching which it interrupted, but, on the contrary, should impress it as well as illustrate it. He foreknew also that such an unusual statement would awaken in his hearers questionings respecting his authority, and thus the miracle subsequently performed would emphasize the fact that he was the Messiah, and that the redemption of sinners and the forgiveness of sins had been committed to him by the Father.

The question of the scribes (that is, the Rabbis, the Doctors of the Law), Is not such a statement blasphemy? was a very proper one, and they are not to be blamed for making the enquiry. Our Lord did not deny its propriety, but answered it by saying, It would, of course, be easy for anybody to make the claim of forgiving sins, and it might be impossible to dispute his claim, but in my case I will substantiate my claim to be able to forgive sins by my power to heal this man physically; when, therefore, you shall perceive his miraculous cure of a physical ailment, it will be a lesson respecting the truthfulness of my statement in regard to his sins—that you may know that as the Son of Man I have power, authority, to forgive sins. (Compare Luke 5:24) Then came the healing of the paralytic, which, put in this form, became a proof, not only of our Lord's healing power, but also of his power to forgive sins. And when the sick man, in obedience to our Lord's command, took up his couch or stretcher and went forth in the presence of all, no wonder they were amazed and praised God.

Apparently all were fully satisfied with the demonstration, Luke saying that they were all filled with fear—reverence—in view of so mighty a demonstration of divine power in their midst. It was not a lesson of fear toward God in the sense of a dread of an unthinkable everlasting future torment, but a fear, in the sense of respect for the God whose love and sympathy and compassion had been so wonderfully manifested—a God who not only was willing to forgive sins, but also willing to help and to relieve his creatures from the difficulties

which sin had brought upon them Say what we will about the depravity and crookedness of human reasoning, there is, after all, a power of common sense in humanity which, if properly actuated, is the strongest possible lever in moving them in the right direction—far more influential with reasoning people than all the false and unreasonable theories which could be concocted.

One lesson for us, found in this incident, is that we, like our Lord, should seek to turn every earthly matter to some good account as respects our real mission in the world—the declaration of the good tidings, and the selection of the kingdom class to be joint-heirs with our Lord in his Millennial glory Another thought is that in every instance the healing of the soul from the sickness and condemnation of sin should be placed first, as the highest and most important thing, far outranking physical conditions and blessings.

Although our Lord proved to his hearers that his pronouncement of forgiveness was evidently backed by power and authority, as evidenced by the miracle, nevertheless he did not explain to them the how and the why of his conduct, and hence, while giving them proof, he left the questions of their minds unanswered His hearers belonged to the house of servants, and not to the house of sons—the holy Spirit of begetting and adoption not having yet been given because Jesus was not yet glorified (John 7 39) To the house of sons, however, this matter is explained in the Scriptures in the light of the holy Spirit so that we may understand the how and the why as well as the fact, thus.

There was a provision under the Jewish law for the forgiveness or covering of the sins of the people, through the offering of special sin offerings by the priests, but our Lord Jesus was not a priest of the Aaronic order, and the palsied man before him had not brought a sin-offering, under the terms of the Jewish law However, we see the situation in a new light when we realize that the paralytic evidently brought to the Lord the sacrifice appropriate to the new dispensation, "a broken and a contrite heart" full of faith, and remember also that our Lord at his baptism assumed the office of the antitypical high priest the moment he was anointed with the holy spirit, and that his sacrifice of himself was counted as given by him and as accepted by the Father, from the moment of his consecration to death, symbolized in his water baptism. Hence we see that our Lord's authority to pronounce the forgiveness of sins was in virtue of his having sacrificed his humanity (which was in process of consummation upon the altar) while he, as a new creature, was a priest of the new order, the "royal priesthood," fully empowered to forgive sins.

Furthermore, this willingness of our Lord to forgive and to heal gives us a suggestion of his willingness and ability to do these same things (forgive the sins and heal the body) when the times of general refreshment shall come from the presence of Jehovah—"the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began"—Acts 3:19-21

The various difficulties under which humanity labors, called diseases, illustrate sin in various respects; for instance, palsy or paralysis represents a condition of sin in which the individual loses his power—sometimes merely becoming impotent, in the sense of helpless: at other times, in combination with this may come an insensibility of conscience, a deadness to all principles of righteousness, such as the Apostle describes as "past feeling." In this condition are quite a good many at the present time; they are not only helpless as respects all ability to go to the great Physician, but additionally they are devoid of any desire, any appreciation of their need; they have no feeling on the subject. These must be left for the present, but we may rejoice that the time is coming, according to the promise of the Lord's Word, when all shall come to a realization, a sensibility of sin, and to a knowledge of the way of escape from its condemnation and its penalties. In the present time, however, some, like this paralytic, are not past feeling, and yet are so helpless as to need the assistance of friends in bringing them to the Lord

Every true Christian should be such a friend to every fellow-creature who has a desire for the Lord's blessing, and healing from sin-sickness; and such should be not only sympathetic but helpful in bringing their friends to the good Physician of the soul. Nor should they be readily stopped by impediments, obstacles, but like those in the illustration, they should be ready and willing to take advantage of every proper circumstance and condition to place their friend near to the Lord and his power, that the blessing might result. And will not the Lord be pleased with our faith as well as theirs, if we persistently do all in our power in their aid?

"True faith, like truest love, invents;
Denied the door, it circumvents."

Another thought here is that the first and most important thing for all is the forgiveness of sins It is in vain that any would endeavor to avoid this first essential step toward acceptable Christianity. Some are inclined to put doctrine instead of faith and repentance, but this will not do There is no use whatever in endeavoring to grow a crop of wheat on soil whose sod has not been broken The fallow ground must first be broken up ere the seed can find proper root and bring forth fruit. So only those whose hearts have been plowed and brought into the condition of meekness and contriteness, and a desire for fellowship with the Lord—these alone are proper subjects to be brought to the Lord. True, it is not within our power to break the stony hearts, nor to plow the fallow ground; all that we can do is to note those in whose lives experiences have produced such results, and to sow the good seed of the kingdom in such hearts. This being the case, we must not be surprised that not many are ready for present truth; but toward those who give such evidence we are not to make the mistake of leading them to suppose that repentance and forgiveness are nonessential, but rather we are to point them to these as primary conditions upon which alone they can properly make progress, both in knowledge and in grace, so as to attain ultimately to the gracious things which God has promised to them that love him.

THESE MANY YEARS

[This poem was a reprint of that published in issue of September 15, 1894, which please see.]

INTERESTING LETTER

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL —Enclosed find order for £5—being £2 10*s.* expenses incurred by bringing Bro. Houston to our October conference, which he handed back to us as a donation to the Tract Fund, to help defray the cost of "*Bible vs. Evolution.*" The remainder is from the church in Glasgow.

Sister Ferrie will tell you about our method of carrying out the Volunteer movement. Up to date we have given the books at 73 churches, and have distributed 10,093 copies, being an average of about 138. We have been greatly surprised at the smallness of the congregations. We distribute only at the forenoon service, which in most cases has the smallest attendance, but it invariably includes the more earnest portion of the congregation, and we are of the opinion that by this method the ripe wheat will be reached. There have been a few inquiries for further literature, from whom we hope to hear again. We have suffered no other annoyance than an occasional refusal to accept the booklet.

All the brothers and sisters who are able take part in the work, and some occasionally travel a considerable distance in order to enjoy this privilege. A few of us meet in the morning for a season of prayer before going out, and have found it most refreshing and helpful.

We note with pleasure your promise of another pamphlet for distribution at the churches which have received the one on Evolution. The church here feel very grateful for what you have given us, and deplore their inability to take a larger share in the financial responsibility. We are deeply interested in the work and are willing to do anything in our power to lessen your burdens.

Assuring you of the continued affection of all the members of our little company, and their high appreciation of your noble work, I am

Yours in the one hope, ALEX. TAIT,—*Scotland.*

[The "Volunteer" work in Great Britain naturally commenced later than here, but we are glad to note that it progresses splendidly. Ours is a campaign of blood—"the blood of the cross," and is far more worthy of time, energy, treasure and our life-blood than any other known in the world. Courage! dear fellow-soldiers. Steady! the eye of our Captain is for victory only by "laying down our lives for the brethren" as he set us an example. We regret that we are out of our error-destroying and new-hope and new-life-infusing ammunition. "Good Hopes" for this year justify us in beginning the work for this year liberally and paper mill already has our order for forty-six tons of paper for "Volunteer" work for immediate delivery. We hope to be able to begin filling orders about April 1.—EDITOR]

TEXAS AGRICULTURAL FRIENDS TAKE NOTICE

A brother in the truth in the Nursery business at Post Oak, Texas, finds himself financially embarrassed and asks our aid in disposing of his large stock of fruit trees which he describes as of excellent quality one and two years old and 4 to 6 feet high. He has a descriptive catalogue which we will forward to all interested. He says the prices are right. He offers the Tract Fund *one half* the receipts from this forced sale: but as we do no advertising we turn this advantage over to the friends, who can thus secure good trees for Texas climate at HALF PRICE: *packed free* and delivered at Express Office. No orders received for less than $2. Drop postal card for free catalogue to us.

The catalogue at hand besides the fruit trees includes grape and other vines and shade and ornamental trees. The prices seem reasonable and the goods at half price should be a bargain. This notice is quite a digression from our rule.

VOL. XXI ALLEGHENY, PA., MARCH 1, 1900 NO. 5

RE-ENLISTED VOLUNTEERS! TO ARMS!

The new lot of "*Bible vs. Evolution*" ammunition is not yet ready, but by March 15 to April 1 we will have plenty of the new ammunition for use where the *Bible vs. Evolution* has already been distributed. You will like it, we assure you this in advance. It will consist of "Which is the True Gospel?" and "What Say the Scriptures about Hell?" in the shape of a double number of the WATCH TOWER. Get your several squads together and let us have your orders stating (1) the number of white Protestant churches in the district; (2) the average attendance at service which the church members chiefly attend; (3) the number of Volunteers in your squad; (4) to what address would you prefer to have the ammunition sent.

"MARK THE PERFECT MAN! BEHOLD THE UPRIGHT!"

MATT. 4:25-5:12.—APRIL 1.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

What characteristics are essential to our attainment of the most blessed conditions God has to bestow? What must we be in order to inherit the kingdom, be filled with righteousness, obtain divine mercy and everlasting comfort, be called the sons of God, and be permitted to see his face, obtaining a great reward in heaven? What question, what topic, what Bible lesson, could be more interesting to us or a more profitable study than this one? The great Teacher made it the topic, the text, of one of his principal discourses at his first advent, and caused the gist of his argument to be recorded for the admonition of his true followers throughout this Gospel age.

While the character of our Lord, which we as his followers are to copy, is one; and the attainment of that one character or disposition means the attainment of all the blessings God has to bestow; nevertheless, in order to present the matter the more distinctly to our minds the Lord divides this one character or disposition into different sections, giving us a view of each particular part; just as a photographer would take a front view, right-side view, left-side view, rear view and angling views, of any interesting subject, so that all the details of construction might be clearly discernible.

THE FIRST ESSENTIAL

The first character-picture which our Lord presents we may reasonably assume was in some respects at least most important: It is humility. "Blessed are the humble-minded (poor in spirit) for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." We do not understand this to signify that humility is the only essential grace, and that whoever is humble will therefore attain the kingdom; but rather that to the attainment of the kingdom humility is a prerequisite of first importance. In other words, while all humble people will not attain the kingdom, the kingdom cannot be attained by anyone who is not humble: the kingdom is theirs, in the sense that it is possible for this class to accept the terms and to attain to the honors and blessings, while all of a different attitude of mind—the proud, the haughty, the self-conceited, are absolutely debarred from any possibility of attaining the kingdom so long as these contrary conditions lie at the foundation of their characters.

O that all of the Lord's people might see this point clearly and distinctly, and realize once and forever that "The Lord resisteth the proud and showeth his favors to the humble" exclusively! How this thought should put a guard upon every one of the Lord's little ones who is seeking to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son. How jealously they would watch and foster the development of this spirit of humility in their own hearts, and how it would be more and more discernible to others in their daily course of life, and what a blessing and what an influence for good, especially upon the "brethren," would result!

Growing out of this first essential quality or characteristic, as a tree of many branches out of the root, come the other graces of the spirit, which the Lord has declared blessed—divinely approved. How different our Lord's teachings in this respect from all human teachings! Earthly wisdom would say, on the contrary: Hold up your head; think well of yourself, if you would have other people think well of you; be high-spirited, instead of poor in spirit, a little haughty, rather than of humble demeanor; it will have a greater influence in many respects, for no one will think more highly of you than you think of yourself, nor give you credit for more than you claim; hence, think highly of yourself, and claim much, carrying a high head, and having a lofty and self-important look.

No doubt there is worldly wisdom in the worldly counsel; no doubt there is some truth in the worldly suggestion, so far as success in earthly matters in the present time is concerned. But here as in other instances, the Lord shows us that his ways are not as man's ways, but higher, as the heavens are higher than the earth. He assures us that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted in due time, while he who exalts himself shall be brought low, in due time. (Matt. 23:12) In the Scriptures he points us to our dear Redeemer as the illustration of the humble and obedient one, whom he has now exalted to the right hand of divine power; and our attention is also called to the great adversary, who, taking a reverse course, sought to exalt himself, and has been abased, and is ultimately to be destroyed.—Phil. 2:9; Heb. 2:14.

A sharp distinction should be noted between being poor in spirit and being poor in pocket, or in intellectual gifts and attainments. We have all seen people who were poor in these earthly senses, yet proud in spirit. The point to be noticed is that whatever our financial or intellectual gifts and conditions, the thing acceptable in the divine sight is humility of spirit. Such a disposition is essential to those who would receive the wisdom which cometh from above—they must have a humble appreciation of their own deficiencies and lack of wisdom, else they cannot receive freely, heartily, the wisdom which God is pleased to grant in the present time, only to those who are in the attitude of heart to receive it. And it will be seen also that this humility of mind is essential as a basis for the spirit of a sound mind—for who is in a proper condition to think justly, reasonably, impartially, except first of all he have a humble disposition? Hence we must agree that humility is a primary element in the disposition or mind of Christ.

CONSOLATIONS THE REWARD OF SYMPATHY

The second beatitude or blessed condition mentioned by our Lord stands closely related to the first—"Blessed are they that mourn." Mourning of itself is not a grace, but it betokens an attitude of mind which is acceptable in the Lord's sight. Nor should we think of a mournful spirit, without consolation or joys, as being a Christian spirit. We cannot suppose that our Heavenly Father and the holy angels are continual mourners, as they would certainly be if mourning possessed any merit of itself. The thought rather is, Blessed are ye that mourn now—to whom present earthly conditions are not entirely satisfactory and happifying—who are not blind to the difficulties and trials through which the human family as a whole is passing—sin and sickness, pain and trouble, dying and crying: blessed are those who have sympathy of heart under present conditions, and to whom they are not satisfactory; for the time is coming when, under God's providence, a better order of things shall be instituted, and their dissatisfaction with present conditions will but bring them into closer sympathy and fellowship with those better things for which the divine plan is preparing. When God's kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven, all cause for mourning and for sorrow and for tears will be done away: that will be a time for consolation, for satisfaction, to this class.

Indeed, a good measure of comfort comes to the Lord's people even in the present age—through faith built upon the

exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word. The fact that they are able to discern the wrongs, the inequities, the distresses of the present time, creates in this class that very condition of heart to which divine promises appeal, whereas others not so touched at heart with sympathy for the groaning creation, are unable to so thoroughly appreciate the hopes set before us in the gospel. Hence it is by a natural law that such are drawn to the Lord's Word, and are enabled to draw therefrom consolation which speaks peace to their hearts, and gives them an inner joy which the less sympathetic cannot know under present conditions. Blessed are the sympathetic!

As we can cultivate the first of these graces, humility of mind, and by cultivation develop more and more of this first and essential characteristic, so we can cultivate also the second grace, the sympathetic spirit. To do this we should frequently think of others—their interests, their trials, their difficulties, and should seek to enter into these as though they were all our own, and should seek to lend a helping hand and to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith"—Gal 6:10.

HOW THE GENTLE INHERIT

The third of these graces which the Lord declares blessed is meekness, or, as we should say, gentleness. Webster's Dictionary defines meekness to be, "Submission to the divine will; patience and gentleness from moral and religious motives." It will be perceived that there is quite a difference between this patient, gentle submission to the divine will, and the ordinary gentleness and patience which may frequently be exercised simply for the gratification of selfish desires. Patient submission to the divine will is impossible to those who have not the first grace in the list, a humble mind: the proud and self-willed find it impossible to be submissive to divine conditions; self rises up, perverts their judgments, and misleads their consciences to such an extent that they cannot have full confidence in divine providence, but feel that they must put forth their hand and steady the ark.

Moreover, patient submission can be developed only in those who mourn, in the sense of having large sympathies, and who have been comforted by the blessed promises of God, through which the holy Spirit comforteth his people. Realizing the evils of our time, and that they are permitted of God for the present for a wise purpose, these not only sympathize with the groaning creation, but this sympathy and the comfort received as its reward tend to make them patient, submissive to the divine will. Remembering that all things are working together for good to them that love God, they are prepared to recognize divine providence in whatever may befall them, and prepared also to look for the lessons of those providences, as blessings which will be helpful to them and to others, in preparing for the future and eternal joys.

This third grace—patient submission to the divine will—which can be noted by those with whom we come in contact, might be said to be the outer manifestation of the second grace, which is inward, of the heart, and which might not be outwardly discerned by our fellow-creatures. The grace of sympathy manifests itself in our patient submissiveness in all the affairs of life, realizing that to those who are in Christ all matters are under divine supervision, and this patience in respect to God's providences in our own circumstances and affairs leads also naturally and properly to patience with others in their weaknesses and failures and ignorance, and leads properly to helpfulness toward them as we have opportunity.

These "meek," patiently submissive to the divine will, shall inherit the earth. The Lord did not mean, nor is it true, that the patient and submissive to the divine will inherit the earth at the present time, quite to the contrary, the arrogant, the impatient, the aggressive, the selfish, succeed in grasping the chief things of power, of influence and of wealth now; and the patiently submissive have comparatively a poor chance. The reward of this grace, therefore, like the others, is future: following on under the divine leading, these shall be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; and the earth is a part of that great inheritance, which in turn, by divine arrangement, they shall bestow at the close of the Millennial age, upon the world of mankind who then survive—those proved worthy of eternal life by the Millennial tests.

Nevertheless, as there is a sense in which the Lord's people are comforted now, so there is also a sense in which they now inherit the earth—a figurative sense, by faith. The Apostle speaks of this when he says, "All things are yours—things present or things to come." (1 Cor. 3:21-23) Those who have the proper humble attitude of mind and are patiently submissive to the divine will, get more of blessing out of the things of the present time than do their actual owners, because their hearts are in the attitude in which it is possible to receive blessing. The world, full of selfish craving, is never satisfied, never contented; the child of God, patiently submissive to the divine will, is always satisfied—

"Content whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis God's hand that leadeth me."

FILLED WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS

The fourth blessing is that of hunger and thirst after righteousness. No one can have this hunger and thirst unless he previously have to a considerable extent the previous characteristics. If he have not humility of mind he will be satisfied with his attainments of righteousness, being unable to see beyond his own low plane, unable to discern the heights and grandeurs of the divine perfection. He cannot hunger and thirst after that which he does not in some measure comprehend. Unless he have the spirit of sympathy, which discerns the wrongs, the inequities of our present time (which in great measure mankind is unable to counteract and overcome—by which some of the human family, very deficient in the virtues, have an overplus of wealth and influence and authority, while some possessing superior virtues have scarcely the necessities of life) he cannot yearn for the better condition of things which the Scriptures declare can only be introduced by the establishment of Messiah's Millennial kingdom. It is a blessed indication then, if we find in our hearts a hungering and a thirsting for justice, for righteousness, for truth—an antipathy to untruth in every form, and to all injustice, in-equity—an antipathy, nevertheless, modified, influenced, controlled, by the third grace of this list, viz., by patient submission to the divine will. The control of this last quality is what the Apostle refers to when he says, "Let your moderation be known unto all men." It is this quality which stepping in hinders our hunger and thirst after righteousness, and our zeal for it, (both as respects truth and practice) from making us anarchistic or extremists in any sense of the word. This quality of hunger and thirst after righteousness, uncontrolled by the other of these graces of the spirit, has led many worldly people, as reformers, into wild excesses: whereas the child of God although having this same hunger and thirst in a larger degree than others, yet, under the control of the spirit of a sound mind, instructed from the Lord's Word, rests in his promises and waits for their fulfillment, patiently submissive, and assured of the victory of righteousness in God's due time, which he adopts as his time also.

Those who have and cultivate this blessed hunger and thirst shall be satisfied, abundantly satisfied, by and by, when God's kingdom shall be established, and when as a result of its reign all evil and all sin, all in-equities (iniquities) shall be suppressed, and God's holy will shall "be done on earth even as it is done in heaven." Our hunger and thirst after righteousness is not to be destroyed, but, as our Lord promised, it is to be satisfied. The appetite for truth and righteousness will still be there, but the prevalence of truth and righteousness shall be its satisfaction.

In this grace, as in the others, there is a sense in which by faith we already attain some measure of the fulfillment to come—although it is but a foretaste. Those who have the hunger and thirst for righteousness, in line with the other graces of the spirit, find in the gracious promises of the Lord that comfort and consolation which already, even in this present life, can be assimilated by faith, and which proves to be "meat in due season for the household of faith," sustaining, strengthening, resting and at least partially satisfying the hunger and the thirst, as they realize the divine provision for everlasting righteousness is exceeding and abundant, more than all that they could have thought or have requested.

HOW TO OBTAIN MERCY

The fifth blessed condition is that of mercifulness. Mercy is the outward expression that man can discern, resulting from an appreciation of righteousness and a hunger and thirst for it in the renewed heart. After we have taken the preceding steps, and have learned to appreciate the inequities of the present time, and our own imperfections (unrighteousness) and those of other men; and after we have learned that God alone is able to right these matters in the full and complete sense, and that he has made provision for the righting of every wrong, and for the restoration to his favor of all who will accept his grace in Christ, to be made known to all in due time—it is then we begin to feel merciful, benevolent, kind, toward others, to an extent and degree that we could not feel these sentiments previously. Worldly people, who have not traveled on the pathway marked by these blessings of character and growths in grace, cannot to the same degree sympathize with nor feel merciful toward others.

The Lord lays great stress upon this quality of mercy, declaring that whatever else may be our attainments of knowl-

edge or of grace, if we have not this one we can never be acceptable to him—if we do not have mercy upon others neither will our Heavenly Father have mercy upon us. And to insure that we do not consider this mercy to be merely an outward form, an expression of forgiveness and benevolence, our Lord expounds the matter, saying, "If ye do not from the heart forgive one another, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you." It must be a genuine mercy, and not a feigned one; it must cover from sight, and so far as possible blot from memory, the failings and weaknesses of others, else it cannot hope for forgiveness and blotting out of its own short-comings which its hunger and thirst for righteousness has clearly revealed to it. Only the merciful shall obtain mercy: and if we have not mercy at the hands of the Lord all is lost; for by nature we were children of wrath, even as others, and under just condemnation.

The exercise of mercy, benevolence, forgiveness, is a blessing, not merely because it is essential to our own forgiveness; and hence to our salvation, but also because this condition of heart which sympathizes with others in their failures and imperfections helps to rid our hearts of certain of the works of the flesh and of the devil, which incline to cling to the Lord's people long after they have been justified by faith, and even after they have made full consecration of themselves to the Lord and are seeking to "walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

The Apostle includes amongst the works of the flesh which require putting away, after we are fully the Lord's, the following—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. All of these qualities of selfishness are antagonized by mercy, and by it largely they are driven from their secret hidings and entrenched positions in our hearts. The blessed character of mercy is closely related to love, for it is in proportion as we obtain the Lord's spirit of love that we manifest toward others mercy, even as he has manifested his love toward us in the mercy extended to us in Christ. Love and mercy, consideration for others, has much to do with driving out envy. How can we envy those whom we love sincerely? How can we have malice toward those who are our enemies, if we love them and have mercy, compassion, upon them, and forgive them from our hearts? How can we have hatred toward them, if we have mercy upon them, and feel toward them only a forgiving spirit? And how can we be strifeful, if we have a merciful, a forgiving spirit ready to forgive trespasses against us, as we hope for forgiveness of our trespasses against the divine law?

"Mercy rejoiceth against justice," the Apostle explains. (Jas. 2:13) Divine mercy satisfied divine justice, and thus prepared the way for the rescue of our race from the sentence of justice and so those who have become partakers of the divine Spirit, and in whom it has reached a reasonable development, will permit their mercy to triumph over their conceptions of justice (for they have no law of justice over their fellows which needs to be satisfied).

While justice may not be blind in the Lord's people, while they may discern the faults of others most clearly, and while they may seek to let justice rule in respect to all of their own words, and thoughts, and actions, nevertheless they are to let mercy triumph in their hearts over justice as respects those who trespass against them, and they are not to hold resentments against those who have done them injury, nor to seek to avenge themselves and to inflict justice upon their opponents. Rather, they are to say, It is for God to be just; it is for me, who am a transgressor also against perfect justice, through the weaknesses which I have inherited, to have compassion upon my fellow-creature, who has inherited similar yet different weaknesses: it is for me to exercise accordingly the divine command, the blessed characteristic of mercy, compassion, forgiveness. And those who do so not only get rid of the evil works and sentiments of the world the flesh and the devil, but increasingly become filled more and more with the spirit of love and gentleness and patient submission to the divine will, and thus the merciful are blessed even in the present time.

"WITHOUT HOLINESS NO MAN SHALL SEE THE LORD"

The sixth step of blessedness is purity of heart—purity of motive, purity of intention, purity of effort, purity of will: purity, in the sense of sincerity, of transparency, of truthfulness. In other words, Blessed are the honest-hearted, those who have absolutely right intentions. True, there are worldly people who to some extent might claim honesty of heart, purpose, intention, but until they have come along the way of divine appointment in Christ, until they have become his followers through faith and consecration to him, and until they have taken the preceding steps of blessedness, we could not recognize them as being of the class here specified.

Many have misunderstood this statement, "pure in heart," and have thought of it as signifying absolute perfection—not only outward but inward; not only of words and of deeds, but also of thoughts. This view of the matter has tended to discourage some who honestly said to themselves, I am not perfect in deed nor in word nor in thought; how then can I claim to be blessed under this provision as one of the pure in heart? We answer that this is a misconception. The Lord knows as well and better than we do, that in our flesh dwells no perfection; that by reason of the fall all of Adam's children have their teeth set on edge by the sour grape of sin, so that sometimes we cannot do the things that we would do, and through ignorance we no doubt frequently leave undone the things which we ought to do.—Jer. 31:29, 30; Rom. 7:16-18.

The Lord taught a great lesson during the Jewish age by the giving of the law to that people, with a promise of life attached to it, but the Apostle assures us that God foreknew, even when he gave that law to the Israelites, that "by the deeds of the law should no flesh be justified in his sight"—that on the contrary the clearer the law would be discerned the more clear would be the knowledge of sin—of imperfection. God's provision in Christ is that he will forgive those imperfections which are due, not to personal wilfulness, but to the original sin, and the weaknesses and imperfections which have resulted from it—he will extend his mercy toward us as respects those deflections which are not wilful. That our Lord Jesus was not ignoring human imperfection is evident from the statement he makes in reference to the fifth of these blessed characteristics, viz., that the merciful "shall obtain mercy"—an implication of our need of mercy. Having assured us that we may obtain mercy, he is not in this sixth beatitude declaring that we must be absolutely perfect in thought, word and deed; for if were so, or could attain to such a condition, it would be wholly unnecessary for God to provide us mercy and forgiveness of sins through Christ's sacrifice.

The thought of "pure in heart" is not perfection of conduct nor of word, nor of thought, but perfection of intention as respects all of these. Our desire and effort must be for perfection—in thought, word and deed. The standard before us, to which our hearts, our wills, must give assent, is the divine standard, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48) God has set no lower standard than this absolute perfection, but he has provided for us grace, mercy and peace through Christ, if we will walk in his footsteps,—this purity of heart being one of the essential steps in the narrow way.

Only the pure in heart have the promise of seeing God. They continue faithfully to the end of the pilgrimage, not only attaining the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ in the present life (Rom. 8:29) in their purity of heart, purity of intention, sincerity of their efforts toward God and men, but eventually according to the Lord's promise, they shall, by the power of the first resurrection, be changed from earthly to heavenly, spiritual conditions. Then, as the Apostle declares, "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." And when we have thus become changed to be like the glorious Son of God, who is "the express image of the Father's person," we shall be able also unquestionably to see the Heavenly Father himself, and shall be introduced to him by our dear Redeemer—"complete in him," "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."—1 John 3:2; Heb. 1:3; Eph. 5:27; Col. 2:10.

In this, as in the other blessings, a portion, a foretaste, comes in the present life. There is such a thing as having the eyes of our understanding opened, that we may be enabled to "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ" (Eph. 3:18) But not all have this opening of the mental eye; not all are privileged to see the glories of Jehovah's character in symmetrical harmony, divine justice, wisdom, love and power co-ordinated and co-operating in unison for the blessing of every creature, according to the purpose which God purposed in himself before the world was.

But who may enjoy this blessing, this clearer vision, and who may, by seeing it, be enabled more and more to grow in likeness of that glorious perfection? Only "the pure in heart," only the sincere, the honest-hearted. Those who have a double mind, a double will, are Scripturally said to have a double vision, a double eye. They see spiritual things cross-eyed, see things double, and proportionately indistinctly. Many of God's people have failed thus far to grow up into Christ in all things, see thus doubly and confusedly—they see something of the heavenly things, and something of the earthly, they see but dimly and indistinctly the lines of the divine character, and proportionately they lack ability to copy it. Let all who have named the name of Christ seek more and more to have

but the one Master, and an eye single to his glory and service —a pure, a sincere, a faithful heart.

THE SONS OF GOD ALL PEACEMAKERS

The seventh beatitude is an outward manifestation of the sixth. The purity of heart toward God, which others cannot discern, will manifest itself in this seventh characteristic of blessedness and growth—namely, in peaceable desires and efforts to promote peace in others. For beyond question no one will be a peacemaker from this divine standpoint unless he have already become sincere, pure in heart toward God; and unless he have also the preceding developments of grace in his heart: (1) humility, (2) sympathy, (3) patient submission, (4) hunger and thirst for righteousness (which includes trust) (5) a love or mercifulness toward others, (6) sincerity of heart. And one who has developed these characteristics to any particular degree can surely be nothing else than peaceably disposed himself, and a peacemaker with others.

Very evidently but a small number of the Lord's people have progressed so far as to have this grace markedly developed and exemplified in their lives. The great majority, even of those who have named the name of Christ, seem to pursue a reverse course, which indicates that even if their hearts are pure and their sympathies large, they have still much to learn in the school of Christ; for instead of being peace promoters they are strife promoters. Yet this is not of evil intent, but rather of habit, and of ignorance and of failure to discern the wide difference between the divine course of love, and the opposite course of selfishness which prevails in the world. Strife-making is chiefly stirred up with the tongue though it may be aroused by a gesture or by a glance. Likewise, peacemaking is chiefly done with the tongue though it also may operate through the eye. How many Christian people we all know who have tongues which are continually stirring up strife! The adversary controls many in this manner long after they have escaped from his control in many other respects, and this is largely because they do not detect that in this they are doing Satan service—do not even detect that they are stirrers up of strife, hatred, envy, malice, and planters of roots of bitterness by which many are defiled.

When will Christians learn the length and breadth and depth of the injunctions "Speak evil of no man," and "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying?" (Titus 3:2; Eph. 4:29) How long will it take some of God's true children to learn that in uttering an evil thing (even if they were positive of its truth), they may be doing a world of evil? How long will it take them to learn that it is not always necessary to speak the truth, nor even proper to do so except when it would be for the edifying of others? How many lessons, line upon line, must they have to convince them that they are not only to avoid gossip about other people's business, and fault-finding, and cynicism, but that all these are evidences of their deficiency in love—of their deficiency in the likeness of Christ, and their lack of the qualities of the peacemaker; and that these lacks need to be striven against earnestly, if they would make their calling and election sure to a place in the heavenly kingdom?

Oh, that all would learn by heart, and continually seek to exemplify in life, the words of the Apostle, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Those who are thinking on the true and lovely and good and beautiful things will speak to each other of the same; hence the importance of having our hearts filled with good things, in order that out of the abundance of the good things of our hearts our mouths may speak continually good things, that the Lord would approve, and that would minister blessing to those who hear.—Phil. 4:8; Luke 6.45.

Such have a very precious promise, well worthy of their efforts—"They shall be called the children of God"—they have God's spirit, the likeness of his dear Son has been traced in their hearts, they have been sanctified with the truth, they shall ultimately be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." Only such at heart will the Lord ever recognize as his sons and joint-heirs with his great Son, our Lord, in the kingdom. Moreover, this is a test which we may well recognize for ourselves particularly, and to some extent for each other, as evidencing the degree of our growth as children of God—our peaceable dispositions and our carefulness to pursue such a course in life as will tend toward peace.

Some of the Lord's people find in themselves naturally considerable of a spirit of combativeness, unfavorable to peace. Indeed, it requires something of the spirit of combativeness to fight a good fight against the world, the flesh and the adversary, and to "contend earnestly for the faith;" so that those who have combativeness naturally find themselves in antagonism with others along some line continually. However, they should not be discouraged by this, but should remember that combativeness is a valuable servant and soldier, if turned and exercised in the right direction. Its exercise toward fellow creatures must be modified by mercy, by a realization of our own imperfections and the imperfections of all. Combativeness must be trained to fight along the lines of love and mercy—to fight for the truth and for all the servants and agencies of the truth, and against the error,—but not against the blinded and ignorant servants of the error. Combativeness must be given plenty to do in fighting against the imperfections and weaknesses of our own natures, and being thus busily engaged in this good work, it will find comparatively little time for assaulting others; and realizing the difficulties connected with the conquering of self it will have the greater compassion for the weaknesses of others.

ATTAINING GREAT REWARD IN HEAVEN

The blessing that comes through persecution is the eighth beatitude. It is not until the Lord's people have experienced some of these preceding blessings of his grace that they reach the point where they can "glory in tribulations also," as did the Apostle Paul. But our Lord carefully distinguishes as between different kinds of persecution, marking out the blessed kind as distinct from all other sorts. We are not to invite persecution by fault-finding and general cantankerousness and combative opposition to everybody and everything; nor are we to invite persecution by fanaticism. Rather, we are to cultivate the "spirit of a sound mind," and to learn gradually what the sound mind of the Lord is, as revealed in the Scriptures. Even then, no doubt we will be falsely accused by the world of "fanaticism," because the wisdom of God is oft esteemed foolishness with men, as often the wisdom of men is foolishness from the divine standpoint.

Whenever a course of action would appear to be fanatical and unreasonable, we are to hesitate to do it until we have first made sure that we find the same spirit, teaching and example in our Lord and in the apostles: then we may safely follow, regardless of what the world may say or think respecting our course. For instance, from the divine standpoint it is insanity for a man to labor day and night to amass millions, for his children to fight over at his death, but from the human standpoint this is the reasonable course. From the divine standpoint it was wise for the apostles to spend their lives in the service of the truth, sacrificing earthly interests and prospects, name and fame, to obtain eventually a better resurrection, and eternal glory, honor and immortality; but this, from the world's standpoint was foolishness, fanaticism.

If persecution comes to us as a result of our following the Lord, and the apostles,—their teachings and example, and if it is because of our faithfulness to the vows of consecration to his service that all manner of evil is said against us, falsely then indeed we may rejoice; for so were the prophets persecuted, so was our Lord persecuted, so were the apostles and all the faithful ones since persecuted. Being thus in good company in our experiences, it becomes a witness or testimony to us that we shall be in like good company in that day when the Lord shall make up his jewels.

All who have such experiences may well rejoice, and if as the Lord's words intimate, the more of such experiences we have the more will be our reward in heaven, then the more we may rejoice in these experiences. And if we be without any such experiences it behooves us to look well to ourselves, lest peradventure it mean that we are not faithfully walking in the "narrow way" of self-sacrifice,—or are not doing with our might what our hands find to do, but are holding back our sacrifice. Should such be the reflection of any let him not be discouraged, but, in the language of the Prophet, let him "bind the sacrifice to the altar," with fresh cords of love and of zeal, praying the Lord to accept the sacrifice, and to furnish opportunities for being and doing and suffering for His cause, and for the Lord's and the truth's sake.—Psa. 118.27.

The prismatic sum of all these graces is—love; and those who have them are lovable and shall by and by be made gloriously lovely, with and like him who is "altogether lovely." Our call is to attain these blessed conditions in the kingdom.

Lead us in holiness, the road
Which we must keep to dwell with God,
Lead us in Christ, the living way,
Nor let us from his pastures stray.

Teach us in watchfulness and prayer
To wait for thine appointed hour;
And fit us by thy grace to share
The triumphs of thy conq'ring power.

THE ROYAL LAW—THE GOLDEN RULE

MATT. 7:1-14.—APRIL 8.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

In this lesson we have another leaf from our Lord's great Sermon on the Mount. This is not a sermon to sinners but to the Lord's consecrated people; and although there were multitudes within the hearing of our Lord's voice, all of whom belonged to the typically consecrated nation, yet our Lord addressed himself specially to his twelve chosen disciples, who were being particularly and fully instructed, that they, under the spirit dispensation soon to be inaugurated, might become the twelve foundations of the heavenly kingdom, represented symbolically in the New Jerusalem of Revelation.—Rev. 21:14.

True, many of the features of this royal law were then and still are sound advice for all who can receive them; but the fact remains that comparatively few are blessed with the opening of eyes and unstopping of ears to permit their appreciation of these holy pearls of truth; and assuredly they were addressed to and intended for only those who could receive them. Thank God for the good hope that ere long, the kingdom being established, all the blind eyes shall be opened, all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and that in God's "due time" these precepts of the Golden Rule of love will be appreciated by all and be applicable to all—whether they respond to them or reject them.

Following our Lord's example and injunction, we are endeavoring to set meat in due season, "things new and old," before the household of faith, the children of the kingdom, and not before "dogs"—those who are still outside of divine favor, who have not yet received the grace of God and been adopted into his family and constituted sons. These precious truths are pearls of great price—of great value—to those who have the hearing ear and the understanding and appreciative heart—those who have been begotten of the spirit and are "new creatures in Christ Jesus," and seeking to live the new life. We do not attempt to present these matters to the brutish, the swinish, knowing that they would not appreciate them; but would merely feel a disappointment and resent our good intentions to our injury. Our Lord points this out later on in the discourse (verse 6), and his words are in full accord with those of Solomon, "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee."—Prov. 9:7, 8.

It is to the household of faith, then, that the Lord says, "Judge not that ye be not judged." It is useless that we give this advice to others than the pupils in the school of Christ, for not having put themselves under the instruction of the great Teacher it gives evidence that his instructions are not appreciated by them. But all true disciples (learners, pupils) should give earnest heed to this injunction, and should understand that it contains a very important lesson, which unlearned will render them unready for the great examination, unready for graduation, unready for the kingdom; because in their examination this will be one of the tests. If they have been fault-finding, cynical, hypercritical, etc., judging others harshly and uncharitably, it will be a clear token that they have not developed the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love,—which is full of kindness and consideration: hence such would be judged or condemned as unfit for the kingdom, for according to our way of judging others we will be judged—since nothing else will better demonstrate our true spiritual condition,—the presence or absence of love.

Whatever measure of mercy and generosity we mete out to others will be the measure of divine mercy that will be extended to us. If all the Lord's people could have well impressed upon their hearts this lesson from the great Teacher's lips, how wonderfully it would affect their attitude toward others, in thought as well as in deed; how generous, how forgiving, how sympathetic for the weaknesses of others they would become; how the spirit of love would grow in their hearts and manifest itself in their words and deeds!

RAFTERS IN THEIR EYES

Emphasizing this lesson, our Lord suggests that those who are always finding fault with the "brethren" who, like themselves are seeking to walk in the narrow way—who can never see the noble efforts of the "brethren" to copy the Master, but are continually picking at them, are the very ones who have the greatest of faults in themselves,—lovelessness. The exaggeration of our Lord's words of reproof to this class seems to imply a vein of sarcasm, for literally he says, Why do you stare so at your fellow who is troubled with a grain of sawdust in his eye, while you have a whole rafter in your own eye? All the "brethren" are more or less troubled with difficulties of one kind or another, weaknesses of the flesh,—because all have the treasure of the new nature in imperfect earthen vessels—marred by original sin. "There is none righteous, no, not one" absolutely perfect. Yet the brethren whose hearts are full of love, even though they have sawdust in their eye of faith, or intellectual discernment or spiritual discernment, and perhaps also splinters in their hands, which affect all the deeds of life, and render their work imperfect, and though many of them have splinters in their feet also, so that their walk is by no means perfect, as they would desire it to be—yet if they have the spirit of faith and of love and of sympathy, the spirit of Christ, they are his, and far more acceptable to him than any could possibly be who are devoid of the spirit of love and sympathy, and who therefore in this parable are represented as wholly perverted in their judgment of others, because possessing so little of the Lord's spirit and so much of the spirit of the adversary—the great "accuser of the brethren."

This loveless, fault-finding, brethren-accusing class the Lord denominates hypocrites. Why? Because in finding fault with others they are evidently wishing to give the inference that they are not afflicted with the same malady of sin themselves; they evidently wish to give the impression that they are holy, and since they know in their own hearts that this is untrue, and that they have many failings, many imperfections—therefore their course is hypocritical, false, deceptive, displeasing to God. Their claim that their fault-finding is prompted by love for the erring and a hatred of sin is deceptive and hypocritical as our Lord's words clearly show. Otherwise they would find plenty to do in hating and condemning and battling with their own sins and weaknesses;—casting out their own rafter of self-conceit and hypocrisy. The experiences thus gained would make them very tender and merciful and loving in their assistance of others.

All of the "brethren" should carefully view this picture which our Lord portrayed, and should note well to see whether or not they have any of the evil disposition of heart—fault-finding, nagging, harsh criticism and denunciation—different degrees of the same fault. If they find any trace of such a "beam" of lovelessness and self-conceit in their spiritual eye, they should go at once to the great Physician and have it thoroughly eradicated, that they thus may speedily become gentle, sympathetic assistants to the "brethren," and be prepared as successful surgeons and physicians for the great work of the Millennial age—the kindly and sympathetic opening of the blind eyes of humanity and the healing of all the wounds of sin.

TYING GRAPE CLUSTERS TO THORN BUSHES

But while we are not to judge our "brother," who with us professes to be endeavoring to walk in the footsteps of our Master, and who gives any evidences at all of sincerity in the matter, we nevertheless are to do a certain kind of judging as respects mankind in general. Elsewhere the Lord intimates that "by their fruits" we are to "know" gravevines from thorn-bushes, and figs from thistles. And in this sermon he intimates that we are to judge or discern as between the brethren and "dogs" and "swine"—the selfish, the sensual, who mind earthly things and who have never been begotten of the spirit of God. We may know these by outward evidences, for "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his;" and if he is none of his, not a branch of the Vine, we are not to waste our time in trying to tie onto him bunches of the fruits of the vine. We are not to attempt to deceive others or ourselves by helping to counterfeit the true holy spirit in the selfish, unregenerate world. We are not to expect that this class, whose appreciation is only for earthly things, to appreciate holy, heavenly things, any more than we would expect that dogs would appreciate the difference between meat from the butchershop and the holy, consecrated meat eaten only by the priesthood. We are not to expect that the swinish and groveling, who think only of money and the things of this life, would appreciate the pearls of truth which are so precious in the sight of the brethren, begotten of the spirit.

This does not mean that we should never bring holy things to the attention of those who are not the Lord's consecrated people; but it does mean that a mere presentation of the first principles of righteousness and truth should quickly manifest to us those who have an ear for the truth, and those who have not,—that finding the hearing ear we might give diligence to serve it, and finding the ear closed we might cease to waste our time, knowing that the effort would be fruitless as respects the calling of this Gospel age—to saintship, to the divine nature, to joint-heirship in the kingdom. The Millennial age will soon be ushered in, and that will be God's time for breaking the hard hearts, for opening the blind eyes, and unstopping the deaf ears.

Indeed, in some respects the efforts which have been expended upon the "dogs" and the "swine"—the thorn-bushes and the thistles, endeavoring to tie to these various imitations of the fruits of the spirit of Christ, and to make the meat of the household palatable to them, have been positively injurious to the Lord's cause. The "brethren" have been neglected in the endeavor to feed the "dog" class; the making ready of the bride for the bridegroom, and adorning her with the pearls of truth, has been neglected in the endeavor to interest the "swine" in the pearls. The real value of the true vine, in producing good fruit, and the wide difference of nature between it and a bramble bush, has been greatly obscured by the appropriation of the vine's natural fruitage to the bramble. Let us not be wise above what is written; let us attend in the present time to the work which God has appointed for this age, and leave to his appointed time the general work for the world of mankind.

HOW TO OVERCOME LOVELESS SELF-CONCEIT

Returning to the lessons which the "brethren" must learn, and possibly having specially in mind the correction of the tendency to judge one another, our Lord gives instructions how these wrong qualities may be eradicated. We are to ask of the Lord the needed measure of love and sympathy which will hinder us from judging others, and which will help us in correcting our own defects. If we ask sincerely, truly, we will receive his grace and help in this direction. And while asking, it is our duty to be seeking the things which we lack, the holy spirit of love to fill our hearts; and if we seek it we shall find it. We are to knock upon the Lord's store-house of grace and blessing by continued efforts, as well as prayer without ceasing, and as a result it will surely be opened to us. The asking, the seeking, the knocking, will all imply faith in the Lord, which will be pleasing in his sight, and it will also imply faithfulness on our part and a desire to be conformed fully to the Lord's will. And these good desires of our hearts shall be gratified, because, as an earthly parent would respond to his child's request for earthly food, so will the Lord respond and supply grace in every time of need to his children. He will not deceive us nor give us evil things, when we desire the good, but will do for us exceedingly abundantly more than we could ask or think, for is not our heavenly Father much better than any imperfect human father could possibly be?

Luke's reference to this discourse (11:13) declares that the good thing that God will be pleased to give these asking, seeking, knocking ones, is his holy spirit. And this is exactly what is needed, as an offset to the unholy, unloving, selfish, judging and fault-finding spirit of the flesh, which must be cast out. The antidote for the poison is that we should be filled with the holy spirit, the spirit of love, for "love worketh no ill to his neighbor;" love "suffereth long and is kind;" love "is not puffed up" to see the faults of others and to be blind to its own; it "vaunteth not itself" to be a general critic, fault-finder and "accuser of the brethren." Love is sympathetic, helpful, the spirit of God—1 Cor. 13:4; Rom. 13:10.

"WORKING IN YOU THAT WHICH IS WELLPLEASING IN HIS SIGHT"—Heb. 13:21

"Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." The word "therefore" shows the connection between this and the preceding features of the lesson. It signifies that this will be a test or rule by which we may discern when and to what extent we are misjudging the motives of others, and officially endeavoring to perform the very delicate operation of removing their splinters. This verse is therefore known as the 'Golden Rule,"—the rule which God would have his people use in respect to all the affairs of life—especially in their relationship and dealings with the "brethren." When disposed to find a fault, or pick a flaw, when disposed to condemn another or to criticize another's faults, or to hold him up to odium, we can generally know of the propriety or impropriety of so doing or thinking by asking ourselves the question: Would I wish the brother to do, to say or to think thus respecting me, if I were he and he were I?

This rule, closely followed, will very generally be a guide, and yet we have known instances in which the Lord's people seemed so anxious for an excuse for slander, for evil speaking, for gossip, that they found some kind of a way of excusing themselves for the violation of the Golden Rule, even when they remembered it and at heart wished to obey it. Let us be very careful, dear brethren, how we handle the Lord's rule—that we do not handle the Word of God deceitfully—that we do not blind and deceive ourselves respecting its true importance—that we do not thus vitiate and impair our consciences—that we do not thus thwart our prayers for the holy Spirit. For the holy Spirit can flow into our hearts only as the channel is open; and the channel can be kept open only by keeping this Golden Rule continually at work at its full gauge. This Golden Rule and all these lessons, that seem so new because presented by the great Teacher in a clearer and sharper light than ever before, were nevertheless the gist, or essence of the Mosaic Law, and of the Lord's teachings through the prophets.

NARROW IS THE WAY

Our Lord intimates that such a life of carefulness respecting not only our actions but also our words and even our very thoughts (which are the springs from whence proceed our words and actions) will be a very "narrow way"—a difficult way. And yet it is the only way by which we can hope to enter into the life and kingdom of joys which are now set before us in the Gospel call. The broad way, the easy way, the selfish way, the worldly way, does not lead to the kingdom; on the contrary, it leads to death—to the second death, to utter destruction. The many are going in that way now, and only the few find and enter into the strait gate and narrow way to the kingdom and its glory, honor and immortality.

This does not, however, either say or imply that the present age is the only one in which any opportunity will be given to escape the destruction toward which the broad way and the world tend; though it is the only way now open. The Word of the Lord elsewhere points out to us that after the select little flock, the elect church, the bride, the body of Christ shall have been selected from amongst mankind—composed of those who seek and walk in the narrow way—after these shall have been glorified with the Redeemer, will come a time when, in the Lord's providence, a grand highway of holiness shall be opened to the world of mankind, during the Millennial age. While it will be an upward way and not a downward one, so that it will require effort to walk thereon and to attain to the full restitution, the prize at its further end, nevertheless it will be very different from the narrow, the difficult way now open before the elect church, God's peculiar people. It will be a way of righteousness, but not a way of sacrifice, as is the present narrow way, which thus selects the "royal priesthood," each one of whom must present his body a living sacrifice, in order to make his calling and election sure.

No lions shall be in that grand Millennial highway; nothing to hurt or destroy or intimidate from well-doing; nothing to seduce or to devour as a prey those who seek to walk righteously and to come back into harmony with the Lord; whereas all these besetments are now about us, because Satan, the prince of this world, is still unbound. (Isa. 35:8, 9; Rev. 20:2.) All who now enter the "narrow way" are compelled to fight a good fight, to contend earnestly for the faith, to resist the devil, if they would secure the greater "prize" of our high calling. We must not only contend with the weakness of the flesh, which we have inherited, but we must also wrestle with wicked spirits in exalted places (Eph. 6:12), but the Lord giveth us the more grace, that thereby we may come off conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood.—1 Tim. 6:12; Jude 3; Jas. 4:7; Rom. 8:37.

JESUS SAID UNTO HIM, FOLLOW ME

MARK 2:13-22.—MARCH 18.

Capernaum, where our Lord had been teaching and healing, was situated on the sea of Galilee or, as we today should say, the Lake of Galilee. It was a city of considerable commercial importance, especially for the fish business, and undoubtedly the lake-shore in that vicinity was quite populous. The tense of the Greek would seem to indicate that our Lord kept going by the sea-shore, stopping here and there to discourse to the people, multitudes of whom flocked to hear him. It was during this journey that he passed Matthew, formerly known as Levi, a custom-house agent of the Roman government—a revenue collector, who was attending to his business, and whom our Lord addressed, saying, "Follow me," and who obeyed the call to discipleship.

Many get a false thought from the brevity of the narrative, and infer that Levi (Matthew) had never heard of Jesus before, and that our Lord, as he passed him, cast upon him some kind of a spell which led him to instantly drop his business, as though bereft of his senses. On the contrary,

we are to remember that the Lord and his disciples were well known in that vicinity for years, and that probably Matthew had not only knowledge of our Lord, but also faith in him, as the Messiah. Not until now, however, had Jesus invited him to become one of His immediate disciples; not until now, therefore, could Matthew essay to become such. There evidently were many who heard the Lord discourse time and again, and who were to be reckoned as amongst his friends, but who were by no means invited to become special followers, companions and associates in the ministry of the Gospel, as were the twelve.

Nor are we to suppose that Matthew left his money-drawer open, and his accounts with the Roman government unsettled, to immediately follow the Master. Rather, we may assume that it may have taken days, or possibly weeks, to straighten his affairs and to enable him to respond to the Lord's call to apostleship. We should remember that the history of several years, and many discourses, conversations and incidents, are crowded in the Gospel narrative into very brief space.

It would seem probable that as Simon's name was changed by the Lord to Peter, so Levi's name was changed to Matthew, which signifies "the gift of God." He was a publican—a person who farmed the taxes and the public revenue. The name "publican" and the profession were both extremely odious to the Jews, who very reluctantly submitted themselves to the tax regulations of the Romans. Publicans were counted unpatriotic disloyal to their own nation, in that they accepted the service of an alien government, and made use of their knowledge of their country and people in assisting to collect revenues deemed unjust The office, as will be readily seen, offered many opportunities for dishonesty and extortion, bribery etc., but we cannot for a moment suppose that Levi was one of these dishonest publicans, for had he been so we may be sure he would not have been called to the apostleship and would not have responded to the call, for we are not to forget that it is written, "No man can come to me except the Father which sent me draw him"—John 6:44.

THE CONSECRATED HOME HONORED

Matthew was a man of influence, and as soon as he accepted the Lord's call, and responded by consecrating himself and his all, he set about to use his influence in drawing others to the Saviour. He would announce his own devotion to the cause in such a manner and under such favorable circumstances as if possible would win some. To these ends he arranged a banquet for the Lord and his disciples at his house, and invited many of his friends and business associates. These in our lesson are called "Many publicans and sinners."

We have seen why the publicans were ostracised by the scribes and Pharisees—not because they were wicked, but because their business was disesteemed: and being thus cut off socially from the ultra-religious, the publicans were forced to have most of their social intercourse with the non-religious, by way of contrast called "sinners." By the term sinners we are not necessarily to understand vile persons and evildoers, but rather persons who did not profess nor attempt the holiness claimed by the Pharisees—persons who did not claim to be absolute keepers of the divine law—who did not profess to make the outside of the cup or platter absolutely clean, tho perhaps in many instances the inside was as clean or more clean than were the hearts of the Pharisees, who professed perfect holiness. This our Lord intimated on several occasions. When, therefore, we read that our Lord was the friend of publicans and sinners we are not to understand that he made companions of the rowdies or moral lepers of his time. We are rather to understand that in the usage of that time one class of Jews was designated the holy people (Pharisees), and another class designated as not professing absolute holiness (sinners).

Matthew's endeavor to bring his friends and associates into contact with the Master and his teachings is certainly commendable, and is a good illustration of what each one who enters the Lord's flock should do. Each should seek to exert his influence where it is greatest, amongst those with whom he is acquainted and who are acquainted with him, and upon whom either his past honesty and good character should have an influence, or else those to whom his radical change of life would be the most manifest. Another lesson for us is the propriety of using hospitality as a channel for the advancement of the truth—the homes of those who have consecrated themselves to the Lord should be consecrated homes, in which the first consideration should be the service of the Master; and its influence should be to draw out friends to the Lord, that they might be taught of him. Too frequently the consecration of the home is overlooked and antagonistic influences are permitted to dominate, with the result that neither the Lord nor the Lord's people are entertained, nor his cause served in them. Such a house and home loses a great blessing, and the head of such a house has serious reason to question whether or not he is overcoming, and therefore an "overcomer," to whom only the prize is promised,—or whether he is being overcome by adverse influences.

The Lord desires a courageous people, a people so full of faith, and love to him and his, that they will conquer adverse influences in the interest of righteousness. What would we think of Matthew if he had said to the Lord: Master, I would much like to have a banquet at my home, and to invite there some of my friends, that I might introduce you to them, and that thus a favorable influence might be exerted on behalf of the truth; but I have no liberty in my own home—my wife would not hear of it for a moment,—or, my children are unruly, have no respect for me as a parent, and would create a great disturbance if I were to mention such a thing as a banquet in your honor, so greatly are they offended that I am giving up my lucrative business, and so fearful are they that they will not have the same social standing as before, or the same privileges of extravagance?

We would consider him a most unfit man to be an apostle, or to occupy even the position of elder or deacon in the church, according to the terms laid down by the Apostle Paul. (1 Tim. 3:4, 5) We would esteem such an one unworthy of any responsible position in the church, and so deficient in the qualities of an "overcomer" that he would be in great danger of losing the prize, unless he promptly instituted a reform of his character. It is only what we should expect, to find Matthew's case very different from this—to find that he had a strong character. Nor can we expect that the Master would have said to him, "Follow me," unless he had such character that would permit him to follow in the Master's footsteps, for surely our Lord Jesus, while gentle, kind and loving, was never weak or characterless.

And what would we have thought of Matthew's wife and family, had they objected to the banquet? We would have considered them rather hopeless as respects saintship, and that his wife had not learned even the first element of wifehood:—that she was a hinderer instead of a helping mate. As it was we may be assured that with the Lord came a special blessing to that home.

SPIRITUAL FOOD AT THE BANQUET

It would seem from other narratives of this same banquet (which was probably several weeks after Matthew's call) that a large number of people were gathered at Matthew's house, aside from those who partook of the banquet (Luke 5:29), and from the connection of the narrative it is supposed that it was on one of the regular fast days of the Pharisees. These facts led to the two questions:

(1) Why does your Teacher associate with these people, who do not profess sanctification? The objection was not that our Lord should not teach the publicans and sinners, but that he should not eat with them, which implied a social equality, and the Pharisees evidently recognized that our Lord and his apostles were professing and living lives of entire consecration to God.

In answer to this query our Lord said, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;" the implication being that the physician had a right to go to and mingle with those whom he sought to relieve, and might mingle with them in whatever manner he saw to be expedient for their cure. This language does not imply that the Pharisees were not sick, and that they did not need our Lord's ministry, tho the fact was that not admitting that they were sin-sick they were not disposed to receive his good medicine of doctrine The same thought is otherwise expressed by our Lord in the same connection, saying, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Anyone who considered himself to be righteous would be beyond the call of repentance His first lesson would be to learn that he was not righteous, not perfect, hence our Lord went chiefly to those who admitted that they were not righteous, and whose hearts therefore were better soil for the truth than others. Our Lord intimated this in his parable of the publican's and the Pharisee's prayers, assuring us that in God's sight the publican had the better standing, because of his acknowledgment of imperfections and his petition for mercy.

Another of the Evangelists adds others of our Lord's words—"Go ye and learn what that meaneth: I will have mercy and not sacrifice" (Matt. 9:13) Our Lord here evidently quoted from Hosea 6:6. The lesson the Pharisees should have learned from this was that in their particularity respecting sacrifices, self-denials, tithing of mint, anise, cummin, etc., the very things in which they boasted as evidences of their holiness were things which God did not appreciate

nearly so much as he would have appreciated mercy. They should have had compassionate feelings toward their fellow Jews, the yearning compassion which would have delighted to have lifted them out of sin and brought them nearer to the Lord and nearer to righteous influences. Instead of having this spirit of mercy, which would have been very pleasing in God's sight, and would have prepared them to be recipients of his mercy, they had instead a loveless sentiment which despised others and boasted of self—a self-satisfied and complacent condition of mind and heart, very reprehensible to the Lord—a condition of heart unready to be blessed with divine mercy.

FASTING AND FEASTING—TYPICAL AND ANTITYPICAL

(2) The next question was: "Why is it that your Master and all of his children with him are banqueting and feasting and rejoicing while we Pharisees fast twice in the week, and the followers of John's teachings also fast? Is not this a sign that you and your Master are not so devout as we?"—Luke 18:12.

The Lord's answer is very comprehensive and far-reaching, and requires considerable study to be appreciated. He explained—

(a) That it would be inappropriate for his followers to be in sadness and mourning at a time when they were receiving such wonderful blessings—at a time when the Bridegroom himself was present, cheering their hearts, refreshing and strengthening them, opening the eyes of their understanding, and giving them hearing ears to appreciate the divine favor that was coming unto them. Such would not be an appropriate time for fasting and mourning. By and by, when the Bridegroom would be away, there would be an abundance of perplexity and sorrow and then fasting would be in order. And so surely it has been: the Lord's people throughout the Gospel age have frequently felt called upon in times of darkness and adversity to seek a very close approach to the Lord by the humbling of the flesh, and have found fasting a valuable means to this end.

But fasting has a typical significance—it means self-denial. So long as the Master was with his people, and especially so long as he was honored by the multitudes, it required comparatively little self-denial to be one of his followers—it was in many respects an honor to be called to follow him, and an honor to sacrifice something of earthly interests to be a follower; and this made his kind of self-denial or fasting really a feast of pleasure. But later on trials came, when the Master got into the toils of his enemies, when his cause was unpopular, and the multitudes clamored for his death—then it required self-denial (antitypical fasting) to confess him and follow him; and so it has been all through the Gospel age—none can be a follower of the Lamb without self-denial, fasting, refusing the desires and appetites of the flesh—sacrificing some and mortifying others in the interest of the new creature and its spiritual development.

Now, in the Lord's second Presence, we might say that the feast has begun again—that from a spiritual standpoint there are so many and so great blessings, so much and so dainty spiritual food, that to those who are invited into the Lord's banqueting house and whom he causes to sit down to meat, and to whom he brings forth things new and old, newly and refreshingly served, it almost appears as tho the fasting time has passed, and that the feasting and "joys of the Lord" have begun. Not that there are no trials and difficulties according to the flesh, but that as new creatures his people are so refreshed and exhilarated with the meat in due season that the trials and difficulties and self-denials (fastings) incidental to the way may now be esteemed so lightly as not to be worthy to be compared with the spiritual refreshments enjoyed tho these be but foretastes of the great marriage feast soon to be enjoyed.

(b) In addition to the fact that our Lord's presence with his disciples would antidote sorrow, was another fact which the Pharisees did not comprehend, viz., that our Lord's work was not like that of John the Baptist—was not a work of reformation seeking to patch up the Jewish system and arrangement. John had been commissioned to do that if he could, and had failed and been beheaded; and the work which Jesus was doing was a new work altogether: he was not attempting to patch and reform Judaism with his doctrines but was making an entirely new institution, gathering out a church, which would not be a Jewish church nor a Reformed Jewish church, but a wholly different institution a Christian church. This was the reason he was not attempting to discuss with the Pharisees the proprieties and improprieties of their methods, and to straighten them out. He would let alone the old garment, already worn out and ready to be laid aside, he would provide as a new garment, not the impossible righteousness required by the law, but an imputed righteousness according to faith, based upon the merits of his own sacrifice for sins.

Had he attempted to combine Christianity with Judaism the result would have been disastrous to both, for they are opposites—the one demanding absoluteness of righteousness, which was impossible to sinners; the other demanding that the impossibility of personal righteousness should be acknowledged, and that faith should be the only condition of forgiveness and mercy.

(c) The same lesson was illustrated by the custom of that time in the use of skins of animals as instead of the barrels and bottles of today—indeed, such skins are used to the present time in various parts of the world, and called bottles. New wine put into such skins in fermenting would stretch them to almost bursting point, and such skins could never be used again for new wine, because the elasticity having gone out of them the new wine in fermenting would surely burst them. The lesson which our Lord taught here is that Judaism having had its day, had accomplished its purpose, and that it was not the divine intention that it should be reformed, as his hearers expected. The system had become effete, and to have attempted to put into Judaism the new doctrines, the new wine of the Gospel, would have meant that not only the Jewish nation would have been convulsed and wrecked by the spirit of the new teachings, but also that the doctrines themselves would have gone down with the wreck of the nation. Consequently it was the divine plan that a new Israel should be started, "a holy nation, a peculiar people," and that it should be the receptacle of the new grace and truth then due.

Similarly now in the end of the Gospel age we perceive the impossibility of putting the new wine which the Master is now providing into the old wine skins of sectarianism, and all sectarians realize this too—they realize that to receive what is now being presented as present truth into their denominations would unquestionably mean the utter wreck of the denominations. God is therefore now, as in the end of the Jewish age, calling out of the whole system such as are Israelites indeed, that they may receive at his hands the wine (doctrine) of the new dispensation just at hand. As for the old institutions, they have served a purpose, partly good and partly bad. Their work, so far as the divine plan is concerned, is at an end. "The voice of the Bridegroom and of the bride shall no more be heard" in Babylon at all. (Rev. 18:23) Babylon will not permit them to be heard. The voice, the teaching of present truth is consequently outside her walls; and whoever has an ear for the truth, whoever desires to be filled with present truth, must come outside of sectarianism before he can thus be filled and blessed and used as a vessel in bearing the blessing to others.—Rev. 18:4, 23.

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

Our usual custom of celebrating our dear Redeemer's death on its anniversary will be followed this year by a larger number we believe, than ever before. The date will be the evening of April 12th after 6 P. M.—that date corresponding to "the fourteenth day of the first month" Jewish time.

Our Lord, as the antitype of the Passover lamb (1 Cor. 5:7), was crucified the day before the "*Feast* of Passover" began; and "on the same night in which he was betrayed" he took bread, representing his flesh, and "fruit of the vine," representing his blood, and with these instituted a new memorial by which the spiritual Israelites were to celebrate their greater antitypical Passover, secured by his "blood of sprinkling" applied by faith, and his flesh, eaten by faith, "meat indeed."—John 6:55.

Our celebration has nothing in common with that of the Jews: indeed what they celebrate is the "Feast" week; while we celebrate on the day preceding their Feast the death of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. The day we celebrate represents the entire Gospel age, in which the entire church—the body of Christ Jesus, the Head—must suffer with him as voluntary sacrifices. The Feast week to us typifies the glory and joy soon to be introduced,—in the Millennium.

"Our Lord's words respecting this Memorial are, "*This* do ye in remembrance of me." And the Apostle adds, "As oft as ye do *this* ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come"—till he in his kingdom shall have come in power and shall have gathered you unto himself. Many Christian people

have assumed the liberty to celebrate this Memorial at various times—weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc., but in harmony with the early church we understand our Lord to mean that we should celebrate this as we celebrate any other event—on its anniversary; just as we now might say, As oft as the Fourth of July is celebrated it shows forth the Independence of this nation.

Those who celebrate our Lord's *death* in the "Last Supper" at noon every Sunday, mistake it for the weekly "Love Feast" or "Breaking of Bread" practiced every Lord's Day by the early church in memory of our Lord's *resurrection* and his opening of the eyes of their understanding in the breaking of bread. Rightly understood, nothing in these weekly feasts of *joy* resembled the annual commemoration of our Master's sorrow and death—nor is the "cup" ever mentioned in connection with them.

The church at Allegheny will celebrate the Memorial Supper commemorative of our Redeemer's *death* for us, and of our *Pass-over* from death unto life through the merit of his sacrifice, and of our consecration to "be dead with him"—to drink his "cup"—on the evening of April 12th at 7:30 o'clock at Bible House chapel, Allegheny, Pa. Friends of the truth who can make it convenient to meet with us will be welcomed cordially: but we advise that wherever there are home-meetings or wherever such gatherings seem possible they be not deserted. No other season seems so favorable for the drawing of the hearts of the Lord's people closely together;—even as it seems also to be specially an hour of temptation to all professing to be the Lord's followers, who like Peter of old seem to be specially sifted at this season of the year.

The advice of our Lord to the early disciples, at this time of the year, seems still specially appropriate, 'Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation?" And recognizing this the older systems Roman Catholic and Episcopalian still precede the Memorial with a fast or Lenten season—which entered into not formally but in the spirit we believe is a very helpful custom to many—not only physically but spiritually.

"Good Friday" was substituted for the Memorial Supper as originally observed by the Lord's people—the system of counting being slightly changed. The more frequent celebrations of the Lord's Supper by Protestants are based upon Papacy's celebration of the "Mass," an institution which both in fact and theory is an abomination to our Lord—denying as it does the fullness of the efficacy of the original sacrifice at Calvary

We trust that the Lord's people everywhere will "do *this*" in remembrance of the great sin-sacrifice—not merely as an outward memorial but also and specially at the same time feeding on the Lord by faith in their hearts, and afresh pledging their consecration unto death with him while partaking of the "cup" For further particulars see our issue of March 1, 1898.

We will be glad to have prompt postal card reports from the appointed secretary or scribe of each little group—wherever "two or three" meet in his dear name to do *this*. Make all your arrangements beforehand that the precious season of heart "communion" be not disturbed by business affairs. Let us not only unite in prayer and communion, but also so far as practicable in our songs of praise—using numbers 23, 122 and 1 of *Hymns of Dawn*.

AVOID FLATTERY

In a recent letter one of the "Pilgrims," after giving particulars respecting his efforts to feed the Lord's sheep and lambs concludes thus:—

"Pray for me, dear brother, that I may be kept a 'servant.' Could you not in some way through the TOWER suggest to the friends not to praise a 'pilgrim' to his face: they do not know what 'offences' they sometimes cause, what feelings of latent pride they arouse."

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WHICH IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?

"I am not Ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."—Rom. 1:16.

A Discourse by Pastor C. T. Russell of Allegheny, Pa., delivered at The Florida Chautauqua Assembly, Defuniak Springs, Fla., March 4, 1900, as reported by the Associated Press.

No apology seems necessary for our subject—"Which is the true Gospel of which the Apostle was not ashamed?" If time and thought may be profitably expended in the study of the earthly sciences—sociology, finance, etc., etc., built largely upon human inferences and conjectures—surely none could dispute the propriety of studying the science of divine revelation. If it be profitable to investigate the physical diseases of mankind and their causes, and the laws of medicine and of sanitation for the offset of these, it surely cannot be disputed that the Gospel which God has presented as the antidote for soul-sickness and soul-death, and as the science pertaining to life eternal, is worthy of still greater and more profound consideration.

The greatest minds, the noblest specimens of our race, have admitted our topic to be the one above all others in importance, and have weighed it carefully—whether as a result they accepted or rejected it. We are not now discussing the weight of mental acumen enlisted for and against the Gospel: we are merely noting the fact that all men of ability have recognized that the subject is worthy of their careful consideration, and as having claims upon their attention paramount to any and all others. Indeed, it may be set down as a fact that whoever has given the subject of religion no consideration is one of three things,—a novice in mental exercise, or a near relative to "the fool who hath said in his heart, There is no God," or a coward, preyed upon by fears, instigated by Satan to hinder honest investigation of the divine message of love and mercy.

Even a hasty glance into the intelligent faces of this large audience assures me that you all have given some thought to our theme;—though experience assures me that comparatively few of you have ever reached conclusions on this subject fully satisfactory to yourselves. Hence your faith and love and zeal toward God and your zeal for the Gospel are less strong than you could desire. Let us hope that as we reason together on this great subject to-day, we may, by God's grace, see more clearly than ever before which is the true Gospel—the one of which the Apostle was not ashamed, and of which, therefore, none of us need feel ashamed,—the Gospel, therefore, which should more and more move and energize, us as the power of God unto salvation.

No one of intelligence will dispute the meaning of the word "Gospel;" it signifies "good tidings," good news,—a good message. Nevertheless, in some unaccountable manner, by common consent, "a real Gospel sermon" is almost universally understood to signify bad tidings—tidings of eternal misery to the great mass of our race—to all except the little flock of God's faithful people. As a consequence the preacher of a "Gospel sermon" is expected to figuratively shake the congregation over an abyss of everlasting torture, making as strong an effort as possible to intimidate them thereby to a thorough reformation of life, in hope of thus escaping an awful eternity.

True, this that we might term "the Gospel (?) of damnation" is not so generally preached as it once was, because more enlightened minds of cultured people repudiate it as a fetich of the past. Yet this perversion of the Gospel is still to be heard in country places, at camp meetings, occasionally in the city pulpit, and universally in Salvation Army meetings. Nothing is further from our intention than a criticism of the consciences and honesty of intention of those who thus preach. It is no part of our mission to criticise persons and motives, but "With malice toward none and with charity toward all" we consider it not only our privilege but our duty to criticise doctrines, that thereby the truth may be more freely established, and error brought into disrepute.

Before we proceed to the consideration of the Gospel of which the Apostle was not ashamed—the Gospel set forth in the Scriptures—it will be expedient for us to take a glance at the different gospels set forth by the various denominations of Christendom. It is not our thought that each denomination represents a different gospel, for the differences in many instances are chiefly respecting ceremonies, forms, methods of government, name, etc., and not in respect to the

message or gospel held forth. Nevertheless, there are three distinct lines of faith, or doctrine—three distinct gospels set forth in Christendom, all recognized as "orthodox," because they all contain as their fundamental the doctrine of the eternal torment of all mankind, except the comparatively few "saved." Each of these three gospels has millions of supporters, divided into numerous denominations. These in point of numbers are

(1) The Roman Catholic faith, or gospel, in which concur the Greek Catholics and Armenian Catholics, and some of the high-church Episcopalians.

(2) The Calvinistic gospel, which is held by the various Presbyterian denominations, the Congregationalists, Baptists, and many Lutherans and Episcopalians.

(3) The Arminian gospel, held and chiefly represented by the Methodists of various names and connections, and by the Free-Will Baptists however, many of the denominations at heart accept the Arminian gospel, while their church connections identify them with the Calvinistic gospel. Hence we may say, so far as Protestantism is concerned, that the Arminian and the Calvinist gospels are about equally supported.

It may not be possible for us to handle our subject properly and thoroughly without offering some criticism of these three gospels which for centuries have entrenched themselves in Christian minds, each fortified by the decisions of its own Councils, backed by voluminous opinions from their several theological seminaries, but we can and assuredly will strenuously avoid saying one solitary word in criticism of those who we believe conscientiously uphold these several conflicting Gospels. We call you to witness that we are all Scripturally enjoined to "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints" (the true Gospel), at the same time that we are enjoined by the same authority to "Speak evil of no man." We shall endeavor to keep strictly within these admittedly proper lines, and, additionally, as the Apostle admonishes, "Speak the truth in love."

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ROMAN CATHOLICISM

The gospel according to Roman Catholicism is that all men fell into sin and under sentence of eternal torment: that Christ accomplished a redemptive work which, supplemented by the sacrifices of the mass, and by prayers and penances, permits all believers (Roman Catholics) to escape that eternal torment, which will be the sure portion of all heretics, regardless of their good works or morals. As for its own people, it holds that even its highest officials, including Bishops and Popes, go to Purgatory for refinement, purification from sin and to be prepared for heaven. It claims that some will spend only a short time in Purgatory, assisted out of it by the merit of prayers, masses, etc., on their behalf by their friends after death But their expectation is that ultimately Purgatory will be no more, its thousands of millions being prepared for a better and happier condition. But according to all the great theologians of Papacy, and according to all the Papal bulls, all Protestants, all rejecters of Papacy's teachings, will suffer endless torment. This is the Roman Catholic gospel fairly presented, as we understand it. It does not seem to us to be very good news—not very good tidings, even to those who get the very best it has to offer, and it certainly would be very bad tidings to all out of harmony with Papacy

Let us next look at the great Protestant doctrine represented in the word Calvinism—the doctrine of the election of the church and the reprobation of all others.

THE GOSPEL PRESENTED BY CALVINISM

Calvinism claims that faith in Christ is essential to salvation and it admits that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Calvinism requires more than a mere knowledge of Christ and belief in him as a good and exemplary man, who died a martyr to his extreme convictions. It requires faith in Christ's death as a sacrifice for man's sin, and at least some manifestation towards righteousness of life before any could be recognized as being of the elect church. Consequently, according to Calvinism, the elect church could not include the heathen of the present time and all the way back through the past, who have never heard of the only name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved. Stretched to its very broadest, Calvinism could not include more than one in twenty of earth's fifty thousand millions that are estimated to have lived from Adam's day until the present time. In other words, according to the broadest possible estimate of this view, more than forty-seven thousand millions of humanity were, in the language of the Westminster Confession of Faith, "passed by" as non-elect in the divine plan.

And what does this mean—"passed by" or "non-elect?" It means, according to Calvinism, that God, who knew the end from the beginning, before creating this world and mankind upon it, determined that he would "pass by" and not elect those forty-seven thousand millions of his creatures to life and happiness, but would predestine them to an eternity of torture, and that carrying out this diabolical plan, he prepared a great place large enough to hold forty-seven thousand millions, and fuel sufficient to produce the necessary combustion there to all eternity—did all this with a full appreciation of all the awful facts and circumstances of the case.

Moreover, we remember the statement of Calvinism which many of us learned in our youth, to the effect that God's favor toward the elect is not because of any worthiness on their part, nor because of any works which they had done, but "of his own sovereign grace" he saves them from all the horrible conditions which he has predestined shall be upon the others. Now if the salvation of the elect is not because of their works or worthiness, but because of God's sovereign grace only, the simplest mind can see that God might without any violation of principle have extended that sovereign grace to others—to all, since it was not because of worthiness nor because of works, but merely of his own volition that any are saved,—according to Calvinism.

The celebrated Jonathan Edwards, when preaching upon this subject in New England years ago, after picturing the awful torment of the non-elect, was asked the question, Would not the thought of the anguish of the lost mar the bliss of God's people in glory? His answer in substance was, No: you will be so changed that such matters will not affect you; you will look over the battlements of heaven and see in torment your neighbors and friends, yea, your own parents and children, brothers and sisters, and turning round will praise God the louder because his justice is made manifest.

Now, my dear friends, I do not charge any who are here present with having so false a view of the divine character and plan as this. Indeed, I am glad to note that our Calvinistic friends in general are repudiating this doctrine, realizing that there is in it a serious lack, not only as respects divine love, but also as respects divine justice. I was glad some years ago to note that some of our Presbyterian friends were so moved by higher and nobler conceptions of the Almighty that they wished to rid themselves of any part in so blasphemous a statement respecting his character and his plan. I was sorry, however, that when the matter of "the revision of the Presbyterian standards" was taken up it was found that only a minority was in favor of revision, and I was still more sorry to note that that minority of intelligent, godly people was willing to continue to confess to such a horrible mis-statement of their true views—willing, shall I say, to continue to "blaspheme that holy name" because a majority of their brethren were unwilling that such blasphemous misrepresentations should be discontinued.

I am glad to believe that if this matter were brought to the intelligent attention of Presbyterians in general, a large majority would be found willing, nay, anxious, to undo the wrong and to make such reparation as would be within their power, by way of honoring the great Jehovah and attesting their appreciation of his love and his justice, as well as of his wisdom and of his power. This is just the point: Calvinism, in its anxiety to establish the wisdom and power of God, his foreknowledge and his ability to carry out his plan, has conceived of a plan which is far from the correct one, lacking both in justice and in love.

It may be argued that love is a grace and that its exercise is not incumbent upon Jehovah: that all that could be asked or expected of him would be simple justice, and some might be ready to claim that for God to eternally torment these forty-seven thousand millions "passed by" would be in strict accord with justice. This we deny! We claim that having the power to create mankind would not justify their creation if the Creator saw that the result would be the everlasting torture of a single creature. Justice would say that power is not to be exercised to the injury of another, and that to exercise the creative power under such foreknown conditions would be injustice. And wisdom attuned to justice would say, Better a thousand times never to have created anybody than to have created one being to suffer unjustly eternally.

This statement, dear friends, is a fair, impartial statement of the gospel according to our beloved brother, John Calvin, and those who subscribe to the Westminster Confession, and their allies. This surely is not the gospel of which the Apostle Paul, in our text, declared, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Paul would assuredly have been

ashamed of such a Gospel, and so are all true Christians, who have the true spirit of love and justice,—none more so, perhaps, than those who unfortunately, through circumstances of birth, etc., and hitherto without realizing what it meant, have been lending their name and influence to this great blasphemy against the divine character.

THE ARMINIAN VIEW OF THE GOSPEL

Let us now examine the Arminian view. This view is growing popular. Its message or gospel is, God is love—he loves you; he loves everybody; he is doing all that he can to save everybody; if you are lost it will not be God's fault, but your own. On the surface, at least, this theory seems much more loving and much more just than the one already examined, but before we go far we will also find it very defective, very far from being either a reasonable or a Scriptural Gospel. We will find it inconsistent with its own statement—illogical.

For instance, while it sounds nice theoretically to say that God is doing all that he can do to save the whole world at the present time, everybody knows that this is not true; that on the contrary you or I or any other intelligent human being if possessed of the one-thousandth part of the divine power and wisdom could speedily accomplish the evangelization of the whole world. Nor will it do to say that God has committed himself to a certain mode of procedure through his church, and that if the church fails to contribute with sufficient liberality both money and evangelists the heathen will not hear of "the only name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved," but will go to eternal torment, etc. Neither will it do to say that God is doing all that he can do and is hampered by the lack of interest in the church; because his wisdom and foreknowledge foresaw all these conditions as they are, and he could not justly be excused from the real responsibility of the matter, since he is the Creator, and in him is vested the all-power as well as the all-wisdom. Such a claim as this would be tantamount to saying that God has erred in wisdom when he thought to leave the conversion of the world to the church, seeing that the church has not accomplished this. Such a claim would be merely excusing God from doing all that he can do, instead of showing that he is doing all that he can do.

But let us look more critically into this matter. If this view we are criticising is correct, if God is doing all that he can to save the world, and if he has been doing this during all the past ages, then without question the world's conversion is a hopeless thing, and we can never expect to see better results than at present. This theory presupposes a race or battle between the Almighty and Satan, each seeking to capture the human family, and to the discredit of the theory it shows Satan the victor thus far. Starting out with one pair, both on the Lord's side, the first 1656 years ended with a flood in which the whole world of mankind was blotted out because of wickedness, and only eight persons reckoned sufficiently righteous to be preserved. Starting again with those eight persons counted sufficiently righteous for preservation, we find that there are in the world today sixteen hundred millions, and that out of that whole number there are about one hundred millions nominal Roman Catholics and one hundred millions nominal Protestants and a very much smaller number of true "saints of God."

What would be the lesson from this if the Arminian theory be correct, that God is doing all that he can do to save the world? The lesson would be that with all his good intentions of love and mercy our God is thoroughly incapable of the work he undertook to do. And if these are the results in six thousand years, what could we hope for in the future? How many hundreds of millions of years would it be before the whole world would be converted? We answer that according to statistics it would never be, for statistics show that the natural increase of population throughout the world is far, far beyond the proportion of even nominal conversions from heathendom. Indeed, according to some good reckonings, the percentage of Christians every year is decreasing, the births of heathen lands so far outnumbering the births of Christian lands—even counting all the children born in Christendom as Christians.

Is any Christian, in view of these facts, prepared to claim that our God has been doing all that he could do for the conversion of the world? If so, that Christian may as well write upon his hopes at once the word "Ichabod." If we saw that the Calvinistic view magnifies the wisdom and power of God at the expense of his justice and love, we find on the other hand that the Arminian view magnifies the love of God at the expense of his wisdom and power. The true Gospel must show divine wisdom and power in full accord with divine justice and love: of any other we must needs be ashamed.

DISTINCTIONS WITHOUT PRACTICAL DIFFERENCE

But, my dear friends, we may as well now as at any time concede that there is comparatively little difference in the outcome of these two popular Protestant Gospels—the difference is merely a theoretical one respecting how the results are to be reached. The results themselves are the same in both cases—the eternal doom and torment of over forty-seven thousand millions of human creatures. For our Arminian friends no less than Calvinists agree that there is no salvation aside from faith in Christ, the only name given; and they admit also that of those who believe in Christ only the sanctified are of the real church: and their Gospel is also that only the real church is to be saved and that all others are to be eternally and most horribly tormented;—some claim in literal flames, others say by the torments, and gnawing of conscience and remorse, which they proceed to say will be worse than the literal flame,—and we respond, If worse, so much worse for the argument.

All surely agree as respects these two theories or Gospels held out to the world by Protestant Christendom that it would make no difference to the forty-seven thousand millions, whether they go into that awful state of hopeless woe by divine predestination and lack of love and justice, or by divine incapacity and lack of foreknowledge and proper arrangements. We believe that no true Christian will be ready after examining the subject thus far to say that he fully approves either of these theories, and that he is not ashamed of both of them.

CONSIDER NOW THE TRUE GOSPEL

Let us now proceed to examine what is the true Gospel, presented to us in the Word of God—the Gospel of which the Apostle was not ashamed.

The word "gospel" itself should be the clue—should save the intelligent Christian from being misled by the various theories of bad tidings of great misery for nearly all people, miscalled "gospel." He who thinks it good news that one out of a thousand of the human family is to be saved and the remaining 999 to be eternally tormented, is either not a Christian at all, or he is decidedly undeveloped in Christian character, in mercy, in love, in justice. In our opinion he is at most only a "babe in Christ" who has need first of the milk of the Word and subsequently of the "strong meat" thereof, that he may grow up into Christ in all things, and be able to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God which passeth all understanding—Eph. 3:18, 19.

When occasionally we come across some one who gives evidence of being a Christian, and who still entertains such horribly blasphemous views respecting the Heavenly Father's character, we feel like quoting to him the Lord's words through the Prophet, "My ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts, for as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans higher than your plans." (Isa 55 8, 9) And part of our object in this discourse, dear friends, is to have these, whose eyes are anointed of the Lord, that they may see spiritual things, discern some of the Lord's higher ways and higher plans which he presents to us in his Word under the name "Gospel"—good tidings.

NOT UNIVERSAL SALVATION BUT A UNIVERSAL OPPORTUNITY FOR SALVATION

The Apostle tells us that God preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, "beforehand" signifying before it was due to begin; for the Gospel did not begin with Abraham, but with our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Apostle again declares, this salvation "began to be declared by our Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." (Heb 2:3) All that ever went before our Lord's preaching was not the Gospel, but merely types and promises which foreshadowed it. Let us notice next what, according to the Apostle, constituted this foreshadowment of the Gospel to Abraham; he says that it was couched in the words, "In thee and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed" (Gal 3:16, 29) Note this carefully: it does not say, In thy seed shall one out of a thousand out of the families of the earth be blessed, and the remainder be doomed to an indescribably horrible eternity, but that the whole Gospel is a Gospel of blessing, applicable to all the families of the earth—through Christ, the true seed of Abraham.

When our Lord Jesus was born into the world, the Heavenly Father sent a message respecting him, and the angels who bore that message declared that it was a Gospel message. Let us hearken to what the angels said about the eternal

torment of the vast majority of our race. They said to the shepherds, "Behold we bring you good tidings [gospel] of great joy, which shall be unto all people." (Luke 2:10) Let it be distinctly noted that the Gospel of the angels, like the Gospel communicated to Abraham, contains no reference to the damnation and eternal misery of any of the Lord's creatures, and that consequently our friends of the Salvation Army and others who in ignorance preach damnation and call it the Gospel, are doing so in utter violation of the meaning of the word and of the uses of that word throughout the Scriptures. However well they may mean, they are in this certainly committing a wrong, a grievous wrong, and we long to see the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God shine into their hearts and relieve them of this blindness which comes not from God nor from his Word, but from the prince of darkness.—2 Cor. 4:4.

It will require all the Millennial age (which is to follow this Gospel age in which we live) to bless all the families of the earth with the joyful knowledge of divine grace in Christ. Just so surely as the forty-seven thousand millions went down into death without hearing of the Saviour, without coming to a clear knowledge of the truth, without the good tidings of great joy reaching their ears,—just so surely must they all come forth from the grave that this very Gospel message of "good tidings" may be declared to them, and that they may be tested thereby and either be accepted to eternal life or destroyed as unworthy of life, in the second death. We say just so surely, for three reasons:

(1) The announcement of the Gospel to Abraham says, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," and all of these forty-seven thousand millions belong to this class specified, the families of the earth—and they have not yet been blessed with this knowledge of the only name wherein is the blessing.

(2) The same is true of the message by the angels,—the good tidings of great joy is for all people, and these forty-seven thousand millions of humanity are surely the great bulk of all people

(3) We are sure that this testimony must be given to them in the future because the Scriptural declaration is that "Christ died for the ungodly;" "he tasted death for every man," and as a consequence every man must have an opportunity granted him for benefiting by that death, and of availing himself of the privilege of eternal life which was secured by our Lord's ransom sacrifice.

DID CHRIST DIE FOR THE CHURCH ONLY?

But some one would perhaps say, Christ died only for the sins of the church and not for the sins of the world, and consequently the sins of the world cannot be forgiven them. We answer, No; the Scriptural declaration most positively is that "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man," "to be testified in due time." And, additionally, the Apostle says, "He is a propitiation [satisfaction] for our [the church's] sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John 2:2.

What could be plainer than this? If the price for the sins of the whole world has been paid to Justice, we may rest well assured that Justice will furnish opportunity through the Redeemer whereby all these whose sins were atoned for may come to a knowledge of Christ, and to an opportunity of accepting divine grace through him.

But some one will say, Why should God adopt a plan which would necessitate a resurrection of the dead, and a post-resurrection trial for eternal life except for all the elect church of this Gospel age?

We answer,—(1) It is not for us to inquire why the Lord adopts certain plans which differ from those which our poor finite minds might arrange for him: rather it is for us to acknowledge that our wisdom is insufficient on such a subject and that we should come humbly to the Lord to hear from his Word whatever he may be pleased to inform us respecting his purposes. (2) As a matter of fact only those who approach the question from this standpoint need expect to see the truth or to "comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God."—Eph. 3:18; 1 Cor. 2:12

God has been pleased, however, to reveal to us some of his reasons for arranging his plan as we see it. He assures us of his full wisdom and power to manage every feature of his own work according to his own good pleasure, assuring us that he knows the end from the beginning, and that the end will fully justify every step that he has taken. His Word, no less than observation, shows us that during all these six thousand years the world has been getting a lesson respecting the exceeding sinfulness of sin and its wages of sorrow and death. His Word assures us also that during the next age, the Millennium, the whole world will be brought to a knowledge of the way of righteousness and love and peace, and will see the divine law in practical operation, and witness its beneficent results in all those who will come into harmony with the great Mediator.

Thus mankind learns the lesson of evil and its consequences first in the present life, and the lesson of righteousness and its blessed results under divine providence, in the Millennium; and when thus fully equipped with knowledge on both sides of the question and instructed by the Royal Priesthood, (the completed and glorified elect Gospel church), mankind will be ready for the tests, that will be applied by the Lord Jesus, under which the obedient and faithful will be granted full perfection and eternal life, and the disobedient and incorrigible will "be destroyed from amongst the people."—Acts 3:22, 23.

"IF YE BE CHRIST'S, THEN ARE YE ABRAHAM'S SEED AND HEIRS"

Another matter, really the key to the whole question which we are discussing, is revealed in God's Word, viz., that in the divine purpose the promised "Seed of Abraham" that should perform the great work of blessing all the families of the earth, is to be one, in the sense of one kind, but not in the sense of one person—that is to say, that the seed of Abraham consists of Jesus Christ the Head, and of the church which is the body. Not the nominal or professing church, but the true church, "whose names are written in heaven," and who walk in the footsteps of their Lord, and are found faithful unto death, and shall be granted with their Lord the crown of life.

This Gospel age intervening between the time of the great sin offering and the time when the blessing of earth's billions will commence, God has set apart for the work of selecting or electing the body of Christ, the church, the bride, the "little flock," the "royal priesthood," the joint heirs with Christ in his kingdom. These, like their Head, are called with a "high calling," a "heavenly calling," and the salvation provided for them is higher than that which God purposes for the world in general. He is selecting this "little flock" and trying them and proving them, fitting them and polishing them for the heavenly kingdom, and it is to these, as the Apostle Peter declares, God has given "exceeding great and precious promises [far beyond any promises given to any other of his creatures] that by these [promises] we might become partakers of the divine nature," and joint-heirs with his Son. This is denominated a "heavenly calling" in contrast with the earthly salvation intended for whosoever will "in due time."

This true view of the calling and election of the church is another feature of the Gospel. If it is splendid, good news to know that ultimately all families of the earth are to be blessed with opportunities for salvation through the Christ, it is still an additional feature to the good news to know that God has invited us to become members of the Christ company, "members in particular of the body of Christ." No wonder the Apostle calls this our "high calling," our "heavenly calling": it is to the attainment of this great prize that the Apostle exhorts all the faithful to lay aside every weight and every besetment and to run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel, looking unto Jesus, the author, until he shall have become the finisher of our faith.

This is the true Gospel, dear friends, the one we find set forth in the Scriptures, set forth by Paul himself, and of which he was not ashamed. This Gospel shows the character of our Creator in a most wonderful light,—his wisdom, able to discern the end from the beginning; his power, able to accomplish that which he pleases; his justice, squaring every feature of the plan from first to last, according to the most absolute features of righteousness; his love, whose lengths and breadths and heights and depths we have not yet been able to explore; a love which sympathizes with his creatures in their fallen estate; a love which provided a Saviour, and a great one; a love which prompted that Saviour to give his life as our ransom price; a love which met all the requirements of divine justice for us; a love which still pursues mankind, and in this Gospel age calls us to joint heirship with his Son in a nature and kingdom far above angels, principalities and powers, of which the Apostle says:

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." This divine love, still pursuing its original plan for man's salvation, will use the "elect" glorified house of sons, of which Christ Jesus is the Head (Eph. 1:22), in blessing all families of the earth with full opportunity of knowledge and full assistance up the highway of holiness (Isa. 35:8) that so many as will may attain to restitution to all that was lost in

Adam by coming back into harmony with God through the great Mediator.—Acts 3:19-23.

NONE NEED BE ASHAMED OF THE TRUE GOSPEL

Verily, dear friends, of this Gospel we are not ashamed, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." It has in our hearts a transforming and renewing power, a sanctifying power which no error could possibly have, and which all the theories of eternal torment have never equaled and never will. Let us more and more "show forth the praises of our God, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," by renouncing all God-dishonoring creeds and theories, and instead hold forth the Word of life, and witness the good confession—the "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

All who will declare the true Gospel will need to be well shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace (gentleness, patience, meekness) for, strange to say, they will find bitter opposition from professed servants of the Lord who have been blinded and prejudiced by Satan's misrepresentations of the Gospel,—by which he seeks to drive from the Lord all who have a remnant of reason in their religious thinking. All who have ears to hear, and who do hear the true Gospel, will quickly distinguish it from the miserable counterfeits which for so long have passed current among God's people. Let all such remember that ability to hear is an evidence of divine favor, and let them not be ashamed, but glorify God on this behalf. Let such remember, also, that their acceptance of truth as due, in the face of unpopularity, is a part of their testing. The Lord puts his plan, his Word, as his representative saying—He that is ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with his holy angels.—Mark 8:38

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES CONCERNING HELL?

"To the Law and to the Testimony! If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them." —Isa. 8:20.

A correct understanding of this subject has become almost a necessity to Christian steadfastness. For centuries it has been the teaching of "orthodoxy," of all shades, that God, before creating man, had created a great abyss of fire and terrors, capable of containing all the billions of the human family which he purposed to bring into being; that this abyss he had named "hell;" and that all of the promises and threatenings of the Bible were designed to deter as many as possible (a "little flock") from such wrong-doing as would make this awful place their perpetual home.

As knowledge increases and superstitions fade, this monstrous view of the divine arrangement and character is losing its force; and thinking people cannot but disbelieve the legend, which used to be illustrated on the church walls in the highest degree of art and realism, samples of which are still to be seen in Europe. Some now claim that the place is literal, but the fire symbolic, etc., etc., while others repudiate the doctrine of "hell" in every sense and degree. While glad to see superstitions fall, and truer ideas of the great, and wise, and just, and loving Creator prevail, we are alarmed to notice that the tendency with all who abandon this long revered doctrine is toward doubt, skepticism, infidelity.

Why should this be the case, when the mind is merely being delivered from an error,—do you ask? Because Christian people have so long been taught that the foundation for this awful blasphemy against God's character and government is deep-laid, and firmly fixed, in the Word of God—the Bible—and, consequently, to whatever degree that belief in "hell" is shaken, to that extent their faith in the Bible, as the revelation of the true God, is shaken also;—so that those who have dropped their belief in a "hell," of some kind of endless torment, are often open infidels, and scoffers at God's Word.

Guided by the Lord's providence to a realization that the Bible has been slandered, as well as its divine Author, and that, rightly understood, it teaches nothing on this subject derogatory to God's character nor to an intelligent reason, we will attempt to lay bare the Scripture teaching on this subject, that thereby faith in God and his Word may be reestablished, in the hearts of his people, on a better, a reasonable foundation. Indeed, it is our opinion that whoever shall hereby find that his false view rested upon human misconceptions and misinterpretations, will, at the same time, learn to trust hereafter less to his own and other men's imaginings, and, by faith, to grasp more firmly the Word of God, which is able to make wise unto salvation.

That the advocates of the doctrine of eternal torment have little or no faith in it is very manifest from the fact that it has no power over their course of action. While all the denominations of Christendom sustain the doctrine that eternal torment and endless, hopeless despair will constitute the punishment of the wicked, they are mostly quite at ease in allowing the wicked to take their course, while they pursue the even tenor of their way. Chiming bells and pealing organs, artistic choirs, and costly edifices, and upholstered pews, and polished oratory which more and more avoids any reference to this alarming theme, afford rest and entertainment to fashionable congregations that gather on the Lord's day and are known to the world as churches of Christ and representatives of his doctrines. But they seem little concerned about the eternal welfare of the multitudes, or even of themselves and their own families, though one would naturally presume that with such awful *possibilities* in view they would be almost frantic in their efforts to rescue the perishing.

The plain inference is that they do not believe it. The only class of people that to any degree show their faith in it by their works is the Salvation Army; and these are the subjects of ridicule from almost all other Christians, because they are somewhat consistent with their belief. Yet their peculiar, and often absurd, methods, so strikingly in contrast with those of the Lord of whom it was written, "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street" (Isa. 42:2), are very mild compared with what might be expected if they were fully convinced of the doctrine. We cannot imagine how sincere believers of this terrible doctrine go from day to day about the ordinary affairs of life, or meet quietly in elegance every Sunday to hear an essay from the pulpit on the peculiar subjects often advertised. Could they do so while really believing all the time that fellow mortals are dying at the rate of one hundred a minute, and entering

"That lone land of deep despair," where
"No God regards their bitter prayer"?

If they really *believed* this few saints could compacently sit there and think of those hurrying every moment into that awful state described by that good, well-meaning, but greatly deluded man, Isaac Watts (whose own heart was immeasurably warmer and larger than that he ascribed to the great Jehovah), when he wrote the hymn—

"Tempests of angry fire shall roll
To blast the rebel worm.
And beat upon the naked soul
In one eternal storm."

People often become frantic with grief when friends have been caught in some terrible catastrophe, as a fire, or a wreck, though they know they will soon be relieved by death; yet they pretend to believe that God is less loving than themselves, and that he can look with indifference, if not with delight, at billions of his creatures enduring an eternity of torture far more terrible, which he prepares for them and prevents any escape from forever. Not only so, but they expect that they will get literally into Abraham's bosom, and will then look across the gulf and see and hear the agonies of the multitudes (some of whom they now love and weep over); and they imagine that they will be so changed, and become so like their present idea of God, so hardened against all pity, and so barren of love and sympathy, that they will delight in such a God and in such a plan.

It is wonderful that otherwise sensible men and women, who love their fellows, and who establish hospitals, orphanages, asylums, and societies for the prevention of cruelty even to the brute creation, are so unbalanced mentally that they can believe and subscribe to such a doctrine, and yet be so indifferent about investigating its authority!

Only one exception can we think of—those who hold the ultra-Calvinistic doctrine; who believe that God has *decreed it thus*, that all the efforts they could put forth could not alter the result with a single person; and that all the prayers they could offer would not change one iota of the awful plan they believe God has marked out for his and their eternal pleasure. These indeed could sit still, so far as effort for their fellows is concerned: but why sing the praises of such a scheme for the damnation of their neighbors whom God has told them to love as themselves?

Why not rather begin to doubt this "doctrine of devils," this blasphemy against the great God, hatched in the "dark ages," when a crafty priesthood taught that it is right to do evil that good may result?

The doctrine of eternal torment was undoubtedly introduced by Papacy to induce pagans to join her and support her system. It flourished at the same time that "bull fights" and gladiatorial contests were the public amusements most enjoyed; when the Crusades were called "holy wars," and when men and women were called "heretics" and were often slaughtered for thinking or speaking contrary to the teachings of the Papacy; at a time when the sun of gospel truth was obscure; when the Word of God had fallen into disuse and was prohibited to be read by any but the clergy, whose love of their neighbors was often shown in torturing "heretics" to induce them to recant and deny their faith and their Bibles —to save them, if possible, they explained, from the more awful future of "heretics,"—eternal torture. They did not borrow this doctrine from the heathen, for no heathen people in the world have a doctrine so cruel, so fiendish and so unjust. Find it, whoever can, and show it up in all its blackness, that, if possible, it may be shown that the essence of barbarism, malice, hate and ungodliness has not been exclusively appreciated by those whom God has most highly favored with light from every quarter, and to whom he has committed the only oracle—his Word. Oh! the shame and confusion that will cover the faces of many, even good men, who verily thought that they did God service while propagating this blasphemous doctrine, when they awake in the resurrection, to learn of the love and justice of God, and when they come to know that the Bible does not teach this God-dishonoring, love-extinguishing, truth-beclouding, saint-hindering, sinner-hardening, "damnable heresy" of eternal torment.—2 Pet. 2:1.

But we repeat that, in the light and moral development of this day, sensible people do not believe this doctrine. However, since they think that the Bible teaches it, every step they progress in real intelligence and brotherly kindness, which hinders belief in eternal torment, is in most cases a step away from God's word, which is falsely accused of being the authority for this teaching. Hence the second crop of evil fruit, which the devil's engraftment of this error is producing, is skepticism. The intelligent, honest thinkers are thus driven from the Bible into vain philosophies and sciences, falsely so-called, and into infidelity. Nor do the "worldly" really believe this doctrine, nor is it a restraint to crime, for convicts and the lower classes are the firmest believers in it.

But, says one, Has not the error done some good? Have not many been brought into the churches by the preaching of this doctrine in the past?

No error, we answer, ever did real good, but always harm. Those whom error brings into a church, and whom the truth would not move, are an injury to the church. The thousands terrorized, but not at heart converted, which this doctrine forced into Papacy, and which swelled her numbers and her wealth, diluted what little truth was held before, and mingled it with their unholy sentiments, and errors so that, to meet the changed condition of things, the "clergy" found it needful to add error to error, and resorted to methods, forms, etc., not taught in the Scriptures and useless to the truly converted whom the truth controls. Among these were pictures, images, beads, vestments, candles, grand cathedrals, altars, etc., to help the unconverted heathen to a form of godliness more nearly corresponding to their former heathen worship, but lacking all the power of vital godliness.

The heathen were not benefited, for they were still heathen in God's sight, but deluded into aping what they did not understand or do from the heart. They were added "tares" to choke the "wheat," without being profited themselves. The Lord tells who sowed the seed of this enormous crop. (Matt. 13:39). The same is true of those who assume the name "Christian" today, who are not really at heart converted by the truth, but merely frightened by the error, or allured by promised earthly advantages of a social or business kind. Such add nothing to the true church: by their ideas and manners they become stumbling blocks to the truly consecrated, and by their inability to digest the truth, the real food of the saints, they lead even the few true pastors to defraud the true "sheep" in order to satisfy the demands of these "goats" for something pleasing to their unconverted tastes. No: in no way has this error accomplished good except in the sense that God is able to make even the wrath of man to praise him. So also he will overrule this evil thing eventually to serve his purposes. When by and by all men (during the Millennium) shall come to see through this great deception by which Satan has blinded the world to God's true character, it will perhaps awaken in them a warmer, stronger love for God.

Seeing, then, the unreasonableness of man's view, let us lay aside human opinions and theories and come to the Word of God, the only authority on the subject, remembering that "God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain."

"HELL," AS AN ENGLISH WORD

In the first place bear in mind that the Old Testament Scriptures were written in the Hebrew language, and the New Testament in the Greek. The word "hell" is an English word sometimes selected by the translators of the English Bible to express the sense of the Hebrew word *sheol* and the Greek words, *hades*, *tartaroo* and *gehenna*,—sometimes rendered "grave" and "pit."

The word "hell" in old English usage, before Papal theologians picked it up and gave it a new and special significance to suit their own purposes, simply meant to *conceal*, to *hide*, to *cover:* hence the *concealed*, *hidden* or *covered place*. In old English literature records may be found of the *helling* of potatoes—putting potatoes into pits; and of the *helling* of a house—covering or thatching it. The word *hell* was therefore properly used synonymously with the words "grave" and "pit," to translate the words *sheol* and *hades* as signifying the secret or hidden condition of death. However, the same spirit which was willing to twist the word to terrorize the ignorant is willing still to perpetuate the error;—presumably saying—"Let us do evil that good may follow."

If the translators of the Revised Version Bible had been thoroughly disentangled from the Papal error, and thoroughly honest, they would have done more to help the English student than merely to substitute the Hebrew word *sheol* and the Greek word *hades* as they have done. They should have translated the words. But they were evidently afraid to tell the truth, and ashamed to tell the lie; and so gave us *sheol* and *hades* untranslated, and permitted the inference that these words mean the same as the word "hell" has become perverted to mean. Their course, while it for a time shields themselves, dishonors God and the Bible, which the common people still suppose teaches a "hell" of torment in the words *sheol* and *hades*. Yet anyone can see that if it was proper to translate the word *sheol* thirty-one times "grave" and three times "pit," it could not have been improper to have so translated it in every other instance.

A peculiarity to be observed in comparing these cases, as we will do shortly, is that in those texts where the torment idea would be an absurdity the translators of the King James version have used the words "grave" or "pit"; while in all other cases they have used the word "hell;" and the reader, long schooled in the Papal idea of torment, reads the word "hell" and thinks of it as signifying a place of torment, instead of the grave, the hidden or covered place or condition. For example, compare Job 14:13 with Psa. 86:13. The former reads,—"Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the grave [sheol], etc.," while the latter reads,—"Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest *hell* [sheol]." The Hebrew word being the same in both cases, there is no reason why the same word "grave" should not be used in both. But how absurd it would have been for Job to have prayed to God to hide him in a hell of eternal torture! The English reader would have asked questions and the secret would have gotten out speedily.

While the translators of the Reformation times are somewhat excusable for their mental bias in this matter, as they were just breaking away from the old Papal system, our modern translators, specially those of the recent Revised Version, are not entitled to any such consideration. Theological professors and pastors of congregations consider that they are justified in following the course of the revisers in not explaining the meaning of either the Hebrew or Greek words *sheol* or *hades* and by their use of the words they also give their confiding flocks to understand that a place of torture, a lake of fire, is meant. While attributing to the ignorant only the best of motives, it is manifestly only duplicity and cowardice which induces educated men, who know the truth on this subject, to prefer to continue to teach the error inferentially.

But not all ministers know of the errors of the translators and deliberately cover and hide those errors from the people. Many, indeed, do not know of them, having merely accepted, without investigation, the theories of their seminary professors. It is the professors and learned ones who are most blameworthy. These have kept back the truth about "hell" for several reasons. First, there is evidently a sort of understanding or etiquette among them, that if they wish to maintain their standing in the "profession" they "must not tell tales out of school;" *i. e.*, they must not divulge professional secrets to the "common people," the "laity." Second, they all fear that to let it be known that they have been teaching an unscriptural doctrine for years would break down the popular respect and reverence for the "clergy," the denominations and

the theological schools, and unsettle confidence in their wisdom. And, oh, how much depends upon confidence and reverence for men, when God's Word is so generally ignored! Third, they know that many of the members of their sects are not constrained by "the love of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:14), but merely by the fear of hell, and they see clearly, therefore, that to let the truth be known now would soon cut loose the names and the dollars of many in their flocks; and this, to those who "desire to make a fair show in the flesh" (Gal. 6:12) would seem to be a great calamity.

But what will be the judgment of God, whose character and plan are traduced by the blasphemous doctrine which these untranslated words help to support? Will he commend these unfaithful servants? Will he justify their course? Will the Chief Shepherd call these his beloved friends, and make known to them his further plans (John 15:15) that they may misrepresent them also to preserve their own dignity and reverence? Will he continue to send forth "things new and old," "meat in due season," to the household of faith, by the hand of the unfaithful servants? No, such shall not continue to be his mouthpiece or to shepherd his flock. (Ezek. 34:9, 10) He will choose instead, as at the first advent, from among the laity—"the common people"—mouthpieces, and will give them words which none of the chief priests shall be able to gainsay or resist. (Luke 21:15) And, as foretold, "the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid."—Isa. 29:9-19.

"HELL" IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The word "hell" occurs thirty-one times in the Old Testament, and in every instance it is *sheol* in the Hebrew. It does not mean a lake of fire and brimstone, nor anything at all resembling that thought: *not in the slightest degree!* Quite the reverse: instead of a place of blazing fire it is described in the context as a state of "darkness" (Job. 10:21); instead of a place where shrieks and groans are heard, it is described in the context as a place of "silence" (Psa. 115:17); instead of representing in any sense pain and suffering, or remorse, the context describes it as a place or condition of forgetfulness. (Psa. 88:11, 12) "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, in the *grave* [*sheol*] whither thou goest."—Eccles. 9:10.

The meaning of *sheol* is "*the hidden state*," as applied to man's condition in death, in and beyond which all is hidden, except to the eye of faith; hence, by proper and close association, the word was often used in the sense of *grave*—the *tomb*, the hidden place, or place beyond which only those who have the enlightened eye of the understanding can see resurrection, *restitution of being*. And be it particularly noted that this identical word *sheol* is translated "grave" thirty-one times and "pit" three times in our common version by the *same translators*—more times than it is translated "hell"; and twice, where it is translated "hell," it seemed so absurd, according to the present accepted meaning of the English word "hell," that scholars have felt it necessary to explain in the margin of modern Bibles, that it means *grave*. (Isa. 14:9) and Jonah 2:2.) In the latter case, the hidden state, or grave, was the belly of the fish in which Jonah was buried alive, and from which he cried to God.

ALL TEXTS IN WHICH "SHEOL" IS TRANSLATED "HELL"

(1) Amos 9:2—"Though they dig into *hell*, thence shall mine hand take them." [A figurative expression; but certainly pits of the earth are the only hells men can *dig* into.]

(2) Psa. 16:10—"Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hell*; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." [This refers to our Lord's three days in the tomb.—Acts. 2:31; 3:15.]

(3, 4) Psa. 18:5 and 2 Sam. 22:6—margin.—"The cords of *hell* compassed me about." [A figure in which trouble is represented as hastening one to the tomb.]

(5) Psa. 55:15.—"Let them go down quick into *hell*"—margin, "the grave."

(6) Psa. 9:17.—"The wicked shall be turned into *hell*, and all the nations that forget God." This text will be treated later, under a separate heading.

(7) Psa. 86:13.—"Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest *hell*"—margin, "the grave."

(8) Psa. 116:3.—"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of *hell* gat hold upon me." [Sickness and trouble are the figurative hands of the grave to grasp us.]

(9) Psa. 139:8.—"If I make my bed in *hell*, behold, thou art there." [God's power is unlimited: even over those in the tomb he can and will exert it and bring forth all that are in the graves.—John 5:28.]

(10) Deut. 32:22.—"For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn into the lowest *hell*." [A figurative representation of the destruction, the utter ruin, of Israel as a nation—"wrath to the uttermost," as the Apostle called it, God's anger burning that nation to the "lowest *deep*," as Leeser here translates the word *sheol*.—1 Thes. 2:16.]

(11) Job 11:8.—"It [God's wisdom] is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than *hell* [than any pit]; what canst thou know?"

(12) Job 26:6.—"*Hell* [the tomb] is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering."

(13) Prov. 5:5.—"Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on *hell* [*i. e.*, lead to the grave]."

(14) Prov. 7:27.—"Her house is the way to *hell* [the grave], going down to the chambers of death."

(15) Prov. 9:18.—"He knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of *hell*." [Here the harlot's guests are represented as dead, diseased or dying, and many of the victims of sensuality in premature graves from diseases which also hurry off their posterity to the tomb.]

(16) Prov. 15:11.—"*Hell* and destruction are before the Lord." [Here the *grave* is associated with *destruction* and not with a life of torment.]

(17) Prov. 15:24.—"The path of life (leadeth) upward for the wise, that he may depart from *hell* beneath." [This illustrates the hope of resurrection from the tomb.]

(18) Prov. 23:14.—"Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from *hell*" [*i. e.*, wise correction will save a child from vicious ways which lead to premature death, and may also possibly prepare him to escape the "*second death*"].

(19) Prov. 27:20.—"*Hell* [the grave] and destruction are never full: so the eyes of man are never satisfied."

(20) Isa. 5:14.—"Therefore *hell* hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure." [Here the *grave* is a symbol of *destruction*.]

(21, 22) Isa. 14:9, 15.—"*Hell* [margin, grave] from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming." . . . "Thou shalt be brought down to *hell*" [the grave—so rendered in verse 11].

(23) Isa. 57:9.—"And didst debase thyself even unto *hell*." [Here figuratively of *deep* degradation.]

(24, 25) Ezek. 31:15-17.—"In the day when he went down to the grave, . . . I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to *hell* with them that descend into the pit. . . . They also went down into *hell* with him, unto them that be slain with the sword." [Figurative and prophetic description of the fall of Babylon into destruction, silence, the grave.]

(26) Ezek. 32:21.—"The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of *hell* with them that help him." [A continuation of the same figure representing Egypt's overthrow as a nation to join Babylon in *destruction*—buried.]

(27) Ezek. 32:27.—"And they shall not lie with the mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are gone down to *hell* with their weapons of war: and they have laid their swords under their heads; but their iniquities shall be upon their bones, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living." [The grave is the only "hell" where fallen ones are buried and lie with their weapons of war under their heads.]

(28) Hab. 2:5.—"Who enlargeth his desire as *hell* [the grave] and as death, and cannot be satisfied."

(29) Jonah 2:1, 2.—"Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God, out of the fish's belly, and said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of *hell* cried I, and thou heardest my voice." [The belly of the fish was for a time his *grave*—see margin.]

(30, 31) Isa. 28:15-18.—"Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell [the grave] are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: Therefore, saith the Lord, ... Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with *hell* [the grave] shall not stand." [God thus declares that the present prevalent idea, by which death and the grave are represented as friends, rather than enemies, shall cease; and men shall learn that death is the *wages of sin*, now and that is in Satan's power (Rom. 6:23; Heb. 2:14) and not an angel sent by God.]

ALL OTHER TEXTS WHERE "SHEOL" OCCURS—RENDERED "GRAVE" AND "PIT"

Gen. 37:35.—"I will go down into the *grave* unto my son."

Gen. 42:38.—"Then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the *grave*." [See also the same expression in

44 29, 31. The translators did not like to send God's servant, Jacob, to *hell* simply because his sons were evil.]

1 Sam. 2:6.—"The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the *grave*, and bringeth up."

1 Kings 2:6, 9.—"Let not his hoar head go down to the *grave* with peace . . His hoar head bring thou down to the *grave* with blood."

Job 7:9.—"He that goeth down to the *grave*."

Job 14:13.—"Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the *grave*, that thou wouldst keep me secret until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me [resurrect me]!"

Job 17:13.—"If I wait, the *grave* is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness." [Job sure for resurrection—in the morning.]

Job 17:16.—"They shall go down to the bars of the *pit* [grave], when our rest together is in the dust."

Job 21:13.—"They spend their days in mirth, and in a moment go down to the *grave*."

Job 24:19, 20.—"Drought and heat consume the snow waters: so doth the *grave* those which have sinned." [All have sinned, hence "Death passed upon all men," and all go down to the *grave*. But all have been redeemed by "the precious blood of Christ"; hence all shall be awakened and come forth again in God's due time—"in the morning." Rom. 5:12, 18, 19.]

Psa. 6:5.—"In death there is no remembrance of thee; in the *grave* who shall give thee thanks?"

Psa. 30:3.—"O Lord thou hast brought up my soul from the *grave:* thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit." [This passage expresses gratitude for recovery from danger of death.]

Psa. 31:17.—"Let the wicked be ashamed: let them be silent in the *grave*."

Psa. 49:14, 15, margin.—"Like sheep they are laid in the *grave:* death shall feed on them; and the upright [the saints—Dan. 7:27] shall have *dominion* over them in the morning [the Millennial morning]; and their beauty shall consume, the *grave* being an habitation to every one of them. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the *grave*."

Psa. 88:3.—"My life draweth nigh unto the *grave*."

Psa. 89:48.—"Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the *grave?*"

Psa. 141:7.—"Our bones are scattered at the *grave's* mouth."

Prov. 1:12.—"Let us swallow them up alive as the *grave:* and whole, as those that go down into the pit" [*i. e.*, as of an earthquake, as in Num. 16:30-33].

Prov. 30:15, 16.—"Four things say not, It is enough: the *grave*," etc.

Eccl. 9:10.—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the *grave*, whither thou goest."

Song of Solomon 8:6.—"Jealousy is cruel as the *grave*."

Isa. 14:11.—"Thy pomp is brought down to the *grave*."

Isa. 38:10.—"I shall go to the gates of the *grave*: I am deprived of the residue of my years."

Isa. 38:18.—"The *grave* cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth."

Num. 16:30-33.—"If . . . they go down quick into the *pit*, then shall ye understand. . . . The ground clave asunder that was under them, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They and all that appertained to them went down alive into the *pit*, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation."

Ezek. 31:15.—"In the day when he went down to the *grave*."

Hosea 13:14.—"I will ransom them from the power of the *grave;* I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O *grave*, I will be thy destruction. Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." (The Lord did not ransom any from a place of fire and torment, for there is no such place; but he did ransom all mankind from the *grave*, from *death*, the penalty brought upon all by Adam's sin, as this verse declares.]

The above list includes every instance of the use of the English word "hell" and the Hebrew word *sheol* in the Old Testament. From this examination it must be evident to all readers that God's revelations for four thousand years contain not a single hint of a "hell," such as the word is now understood to signify.

"HELL" IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament the Greek word *hades* corresponds exactly to the Hebrew word *sheol*. As proof see the quotations of the Apostles from the Old Testament, in which they render it *hades*. For instance, Acts 2:27, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hades*," is a quotation from Psa. 16:10, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *sheol*." And in 1 Cor. 15:54, 55, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave [*hades*], where is thy victory?" is an allusion to Isa. 25:8, "He will swallow up death in victory," and to Hos. 13:14, "O death I will be thy plagues; O *sheol* I will be thy destruction."

"HELL" FROM THE GREEK WORD "HADES"

Matt. 11:23.—"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to *hell:*" Luke 10:15 "Shalt be thrust down to *hell*." [In privileges of knowledge and opportunity the city was highly favored, or, figuratively "exalted unto heaven;" but because of misuse of God's favors, it would be debased, or, figuratively, cast down to *hades*, overthrown, destroyed. It is now so thoroughly *buried* in oblivion, that even the site where it stood is a matter of dispute. Capernaum is certainly *destroyed*, thrust down to *hades*.]

Luke 16:23.—"In *hell* he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." [A parabolic figure explained further along, under a separate heading.]

Rev. 6:8.—"And behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and *Hell* followed with him." [Symbol of destruction or the *grave*.]

Matt. 16:18.—"Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of *hell* shall not prevail against it." [Although bitter and relentless persecution, even unto death, should afflict the church during the Gospel age, it should never prevail to her utter extermination; and eventually, by her resurrection accomplished by her Lord, the church will prevail over *hades*—the *tomb*.]

CHRIST IN "HELL" (HADES) AND RESURRECTED FROM "HELL" (HADES")—Acts 2:1, 14, 22-31

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, ... Peter . . . . lifted up his voice and said, ... Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, ... being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God ['He was delivered for our offenses'], ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains [or bands] of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it [for the Word of Jehovah had previously declared his resurrection]; for David speaketh concerning him [personating or speaking for him], 'I [Christ] foresaw the Lord [Jehovah] always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope, because thou wilt not leave my soul in *hell* [*hades*, the tomb, the state of death], neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou [Jehovah] hast made known to me [Christ] the ways of life.'" Here our Lord, as personified by the prophet David, expresses his faith in Jehovah's promise of a resurrection and in the full and glorious accomplishment of Jehovah's plan through him, and rejoices in the prospect.

Peter then proceeds, saying—"Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day [so that this prophecy could not have referred to himself personally; for David's soul was left in "hell"—*hades*, the tomb, the state of death—and his flesh did see corruption]: Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne, he, seeing this before [prophetically], spake of the resurrection of Christ [out of "hell"—*hades*, the tomb—to which he must go for our offenses], that his soul was *not left in hell* [*hades*—the death state], neither his flesh did see corruption." Thus Peter presents a strong, logical argument, based on the words of the prophet David—showing first, that Christ, who was delivered by God for our offenses, went to "hell," the grave, the condition of death, destruction (Psa. 16:10) and, second, that according to promise he had been delivered from *hell*, the grave, death, destruction, by a *resurrection*—a raising up to life; being created again, the same identical being, yet more glorious, and exalted even to "the express image of the Father's person." (Heb. 1:3) And now "this same Jesus" (Acts 2:36), in his subsequent revelation to the Church, declares—

Rev. 1:18.—"I am he that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of *hell* [*hades*, the grave] and of death."

Amen! Amen! our hearts respond; for in his resurrection we see the glorious outcome of the whole plan of Jehovah

to be accomplished through the power of the Resurrected One who now holds the keys of the tomb and of death and in due time will release all the prisoners who are, therefore, called the "prisoners of hope." (Zech. 9:12; Luke 4:18) No craft or cunning can by any possible device wrest these Scriptures *entire* and pervert them to the support of that monstrous and blasphemous Papal tradition of eternal torment. Had that been our penalty, Christ, to be our vicarious sacrifice, must still, and to all eternity, endure such torment, which no one will claim. But death was our penalty, and "Christ died for our sins," and "also for the sins of the whole world."—1 Cor. 15:3; 1 John 2:2.

Rev. 20:13, 14.—"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell [the grave] delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged, every man, according to their works. And death and *hell* [the grave] were cast into the lake of fire: this is the second death." [The lake of fire is the *symbol* of final and everlasting destruction. Death and *hell* [the grave] both go into it. There shall be no more death; "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 21:4.]

OTHER OCCURRENCES OF THE WORD "HELL"

Having examined the word *sheol*, the only word in the Old Testament rendered "hell," and the word *hades*, most frequently in the New Testament rendered "hell" we now notice every remaining instance in Scripture of the English word "hell." In the New Testament two other words are rendered "hell;" namely, *gehenna* and *tartaroo*, which we will consider in the order named.

"GEHENNA" RENDERED "HELL"

This word occurs in the following passages—in all twelve times:—Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43-47; Luke 12:5; Jas 3:6. It is the Grecian mode of spelling the Hebrew words which are translated "Valley of Hinnom." This valley lay just outside the city of Jerusalem, and served the purpose of sewer and garbage burner to that city. The offal, garbage, etc., were emptied there, and fires were kept continually burning to *consume* utterly all things deposited therein, brimstone being added to assist combustion and insure complete destruction. But no living thing was ever permitted to be cast into *Gehenna*. The Jews were not allowed to *torture* any creature.

When we consider that in the people of Israel God was giving us object lessons illustrating his dealings and plans, present and future, we should expect that this Valley of Hinnom, or *Gehenna*, would also play its part in illustrating things future. We know that Israel's priesthood and temple illustrated the royal priesthood, the Christian church as it will be, the true temple of God; and we know that their chief city was a figure of the New Jerusalem, the seat of kingdom power and center of authority—the city (government) of the Great King, Immanuel. We remember, too, that Christ's government is represented in the book of Revelation (Rev. 21:10-27) under the figure of a city—the New Jerusalem. There, after describing the class permitted to enter the privileges and blessings of that kingdom—the honorable and glorious, and all who have right to the trees of life—we find it also declared that there shall *not enter into it* anything that defileth, or that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but only such as the Lamb shall write as worthy of life. This city, which thus will represent the entire saved world in the end of the Millennium, was typified in the earthly city, Jerusalem; and the defiling, the abominable, etc., the class unworthy of life everlasting, who do not enter in, were represented by the refuse and the filthy, lifeless carcasses cast into *Gehenna* outside the city,—whose utter destruction was thus symbolized—the second death. Accordingly, we find it stated that those not found worthy of life are to be cast into the "lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15)—fire here, as everywhere, being used as a symbol of *destruction*, and the symbol, lake of fire, being drawn from this same *Gehenna*, or Valley of Hinnom.

Therefore, while *Gehenna* served a useful purpose to the city of Jerusalem as a place for garbage burning, it, like the city itself, was typical, and illustrated the future dealings of God in refusing and committing to destruction all the impure elements, thus preventing them from defiling the holy city, the New Jerusalem, after the trial of the Millennial age of judgment shall have fully proved them and separated with unerring accuracy the "sheep" from the "goats."

So, then, *Gehenna* was a type or illustration of the second death—final and complete destruction, from which there can be no recovery; for after that, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins," but only "fiery indignation which shall *devour* the adversaries."—Heb. 10:26.

Let us remember that Israel, for the purpose of being used as types of God's future dealing with the race, was typically treated as though the ransom had been given before they left Egypt, though only a typical lamb had been slain. When Jerusalem was built, and the Temple—representative of the true temple, the church, and the true kingdom as it will be established by Christ in the Millennium—that people typified the world in the Millennial age. Their priests represented the glorified royal priesthood, and their law and its demands of perfect obedience represented the law and conditions under the New Covenant, to be brought into operation for the blessing of all the obedient, and for the condemnation of all who when granted fullest opportunity, will not heartily submit to the righteous ruling and laws of the Great King.

Seeing then, that Israel's polity, condition, etc., prefigured those of the world in the coming age, how appropriate that we should find the valley or abyss, *Gehenna*, a figure of the second death, the utter destruction in the coming age of all that is unworthy of preservation; and how aptly, too, is the symbol, "lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. 19:20) drawn from this same *Gehenna*, or Valley of Hinnom, burning continually with brimstone. The expression, "burning with brimstone," adds force to the symbol, "fire," to express the utter and irrevocable destructiveness of the second death: for burning brimstone is the most deadly agent known. How reasonable, too, to expect that Israel would have courts and judges resembling or prefiguring the judgments of the next age; and that the sentence of those (figurative) courts of that (figurative) people under those (figurative) laws to that (figurative) abyss, outside that (figurative) city, would largely correspond to the (real) sentences of the (real) court and judges in the next age. If these points are kept in mind, they will greatly assist us in understanding the words of our Lord in reference to *Gehenna:* for though the literal valley just at hand was named and referred to, yet his words carry with them lessons concerning the future age and the antitypical *Gehenna*—the second death.

SHALL BE IN DANGER OF GEHENNA—Matthew 5:21, 22

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, 'Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be amenable to the judges:' but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause *shall* [future—under the regulations of the real kingdom] be amenable to the judges; and whosoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca' [villain], shall be in danger of the high council; but whosoever shall say, 'Thou fool,' shall be in danger of *hell* [*Gehenna*] *fire.*"

To understand these references to council and judges and *Gehenna*, all should know something of Jewish regulations. The "Court of Judges" consisted of seven men (or twenty-three,—the number is in dispute), and had power to judge some classes of crimes. The High Council, or Sanhedrin, consisted of seventy-one men of recognized learning and ability. This constituted the highest court of the Jews, and its supervision was over the gravest offenses. The most serious sentence was *death:* but certain very obnoxious criminals were subjected to an indignity after death, being refused burial and cast with the carcasses of dogs, the city refuse, etc., into *Gehenna*, there to be consumed. The object of this burning in *Gehenna* was to make the crime and the criminal detestable in the eyes of the people, and signified that the culprit was a hopeless case. It must be remembered that Israel hoped for a resurrection from the tomb, and hence they were particular in caring for the corpses of their dead. Not realizing fully God's power, they apparently thought he needed their assistance to that extent. (Exod. 13:19; Heb. 11:22; Acts 7:15, 16) Hence the destruction of the body in *Gehenna* after death (figuratively) implied the loss of hope of future life by a resurrection. Thus to such *Gehenna* represented the second death in the same figurative way that they as a people represented or illustrated a future order of things under the New Covenant.

Notice that our Lord, in the above words, pointed out to them that their construction of the Law, severe though it was was far below the real import of that Law, as it shall be interpreted under the real kingdom and judges, which theirs only typified. He shows that the command of their law, "Thou shalt not kill," reached much farther than they supposed; that *malicious anger* and vituperation "shall be" considered a violation of God's law, under the New Covenant, and that such as, under the favorable conditions of that new age, will not reform so thoroughly as to fully observe God's law will be counted worthy of that which the *Gehenna* near them typified—the second death. However, the strict severity of that law will be enforced only in proportion as the discipline, advantages and assistance of that age, enabling each to comply with its laws, shall be disregarded.

The same thought is continued in

Matthew 5:22-30

"Ye have heard," etc., "but I say unto you . . . . it is better for thee to lose one of thy members, than that thy whole body should be cast into *Gehenna*."

Here again the operation of God's law under the New Covenant is contrasted with its operation under the Old or Jewish Covenant, and the lesson of self-control is urged by the statement that it is far more profitable that men should refuse to gratify depraved desires (though they be dear to them as a right eye, and apparently indispensable as a right hand) than that they should gratify these, and lose, in the second death, the future life provided through the atonement for all who will return to perfection, holiness and God.

These expressions of our Lord not only serve to show us the *perfection* (Rom. 7:12) of God's law, and how fully it will be defined and enforced in the Millennium, but they served as a lesson to the Jews also, who previously saw through Moses' commands only the crude exterior of the law of God. Since they found it difficult in their fallen state to keep inviolate even the surface significance of the law, they must now see the impossibility of their keeping the finer meaning of the law revealed by Christ. Had they understood and received his teaching fully, they would have cried out, Alas! if God judges us thus, by the very thoughts and intents of the heart we are all unclean, all undone, and can hope for naught but condemnation to *Gehenna* (to *utter destruction*, as brute beasts). They would have cried, "Show us a greater priesthood than that of Aaron, a High Priest and Teacher able fully to appreciate the law, and able fully to appreciate and sympathize with our fallen state and inherited weaknesses, and let him offer us 'better sacrifices,' and apply to us the needed greater forgiveness of sin, and let him as a great physician heal us and restore us, so that we *can* obey the perfect Law of God from our hearts." Then they would have found Christ.

But this lesson they did not learn, for the ears of their understanding were "dull of hearing;" hence they knew not that God had already prepared the very priest and sacrifice and teacher and physician they needed, who in due time redeemed those under the typical law, as well as all not under it, and who also "in due time," shortly, will begin his restoring work—restoring sight to the blind eyes of their understanding, and hearing to their deaf ears. Then the "vail shall be taken away"—the vail of ignorance, pride and human wisdom which Satan now uses to blind the world to God's true law and true plan of salvation in Christ.

And not only did our Lord's teaching here show the Law of the New Covenant, and teach the Jew a lesson, but it is of benefit to the Gospel church also. In proportion as we learn the exactness of God's Law, and what would constitute perfection under its requirements, we see that our Redeemer was perfect, and that we, totally unable to commend ourselves to God as keepers of that law, can find acceptance with the Father only in the merit of our Redeemer, while none can be of that "body," covered by the robe of his righteousness, except the consecrated who endeavor to do only those things well pleasing to God, which includes the avoidance of sin to the extent of ability. Yet their acceptability with God rests not in their perfection, but upon the perfection of Christ, so long as they abide in him. These, nevertheless, are benefited by a clear insight into the perfect law of God, even though they are not dependent on the perfect keeping of it. They delight to do God's will to the extent of their ability, and the better they know his perfect law, the better they are able to rule themselves and to conform to it. So, then, to us also the Lord's words have a lesson of value.

The point, however, to be specially noticed here is that *Gehenna* which the Jews knew, and of which our Lord spoke to them, was not a lake of fire to be kept burning to all eternity, into which all would be cast who get "angry with a brother" and call him a "fool." No; the Jews gathered no such extreme idea from the Lord's words. The eternal torment theory was unknown to them. It had no place in their theology, as will be shown. It is a comparatively modern invention, coming down, as we have shown, from Papacy—the great apostasy. The point is that *Gehenna* symbolizes the second death—utter, complete and everlasting destruction. This is clearly shown by its being contrasted with *life* as its opposite. "It is better for thee to enter into *life* halt, or maimed, than otherwise to be cast into *Gehenna*." It is better that you should deny yourselves sinful gratifications than that you should lose all future life, and perish in the second death.

ABLE TO DESTROY BOTH SOUL AND BODY IN GEHENNA
Matthew 10:28; Luke 12.5

"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to *destroy* both soul and body in *hell* [*Gehenna*]." See also another account of the same discourse by Luke—12:4, 5.

Here our Lord pointed out to his followers the great cause they had for courage and bravery under the most trying circumstances. They were to expect persecution, and to have all manner of evil spoken against them falsely, for his sake, and for the sake of the "good tidings" of which he made them the ministers and heralds: yea, the time would come, that whosoever would kill them would think that he did God a service. Their consolation or reward for this was to be received, not in the present life, but in the life to come. They were assured, and they believed, that he had come to give his life a ransom for many, and that all in their graves must in consequence, in due time, hear the Deliverer's voice and come forth, either to reward (if their trial had been passed in this life successfully), future trial, or judgment, as must be the case with the great majority who do not, in this present life, come to the necessary knowledge and opportunity essential to a complete trial.

Under present conditions men are able to kill our bodies, but nothing that they can do will affect our future being (soul),* which God has promised shall be revived or restored by his power in the resurrection day—the Millennial age. Our revived souls will have new bodies (spiritual or natural—"to each 'seed' his own [kind of] body"), and these none will have liberty to kill. God alone has power to destroy *utterly*—soul and body. He alone, therefore, should be feared, and the opposition of men even to the death is not to be feared, if thereby we gain divine approval. Our Lord's bidding then is, Fear not them which can terminate the present (dying) life in these poor dying bodies. Care little for it, its food, its clothing, its pleasures, in comparison with that future existence or being which God has provided for you, and which, if secured, may be your portion forever. Fear not the threats, or looks, or acts of men, whose power can extend no farther than the present existence; who can harm and kill these bodies, but can do no more. Rather have respect and deference to God, with whom are the issues of *life everlasting*—fear him who is able to *destroy* in *Gehenna*, the second death, both the present dying existence and all hope of future existence.

UNDYING WORMS AND QUENCHLESS FIRES—Matthew 18:8, 9; Mark 9:43-48

Here it is conclusively shown that *Gehenna* as a figure represented the second death—the utter destruction which must ensue in the case of all who, after having fully received the opportunities of a future being or existence through our Lord's sacrifice, prove themselves unworthy of God's gift, and refuse to accept it, by refusing obedience to his just requirements. For it does not say that God will preserve soul or body in *Gehenna*, but that in it he can and will "destroy" both. Thus we are taught that any who are condemned to the second death are hopelessly and forever blotted out of existence.

[Since these two passages refer to the same discourse, we quote from Mark—remarking that verses 44 and 46, and part of 45, are not found in the oldest Greek MSS., though verse 48, which reads the same, is in all manuscripts. We quote the text as found in these ancient and reliable MSS.] "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into *Gehenna*, into the fire that never shall be quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into *Gehenna*. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into *Gehenna*, where the worm dies not and the fire is not quenched."

After reading the above, all must agree with the prophet that our Lord opened his mouth in figures and obscure sayings. (Psa. 78:2; Matt. 13:35) No one for a moment supposes that our Lord advised the people to mutilate their bodies by cutting off their limbs, or gouging out their eyes. Nor does he mean us to understand that the injuries and disfigurements of the present life will continue beyond the grave, when we shall "enter into life." The Jews, whom the Lord addressed, having no conception of a place of everlasting torment, and who knew the word *Gehenna* to refer to the valley outside their city, which was not a place of torment, nor a place where any living thing was cast, but a place for the utter destruction of whatever might be cast into it, recognizing the Lord's expression regarding limbs and eyes to be figurative, knew that Gehenna also was used in the same figurative sense, to symbolize utter destruction.

* We will supply free on application a tract on *"What is the Soul?"*

The Lord meant simply this: The future life, which God has provided for redeemed man, is of inestimable value, and it will richly pay you to make any sacrifice to receive and enjoy that life. Should it even cost an eye, a hand or a foot, so that to all eternity you would be obliged to endure the loss of these, yet life would be cheap at even such a cost. That would be better far than to retain your members and lose all in *Gehenna*. Doubtless, too, the hearers drew the lesson as applicable to all the affairs of life, and understood the Master to mean that it would richly repay them to deny themselves many comforts, pleasures and tastes, dear to them as a right hand, precious as an eye, and serviceable as a foot, rather than by gratification to forfeit the life to come and be utterly destroyed in *Gehenna*—the second death.

But what about the undying worms and the unquenchable fire?

We answer, In the literal *Gehenna*, which is the basis of our Lord's illustration, the bodies of animals, etc., frequently fell upon ledges of rocks and not into the fire kept burning below. Thus exposed, these would breed worms and be destroyed by them, as completely and as surely as those which burned. No one was allowed to disturb the contents of this valley; hence the worm and the fire together completed the work of *destruction*—the fire was not quenched and the worms died not. This would not imply a neverending fire, nor everlasting worms. The thought is that the worms did not die off and leave the carcasses there, but continued and completed the work of destruction. So with the fire: it was not quenched, it burned on until all was consumed. Just so if a house were ablaze and the fire could not be controlled or quenched, but burned until the building was destroyed, we might properly call such an "unquenchable fire."

Our Lord wished to impress the thought of the completeness and finality of the second death, symbolized in *Gehenna*. All who go into the second death will be thoroughly and completely and forever destroyed; no ransom will ever again be given for any (Rom. 6:9); for none worthy of life will be cast into the second death, or lake of fire, but only those who *love* unrighteousness after coming to the knowledge of the truth.

Not only in the above instances is the second death pointedly illustrated by *Gehenna*, but it is evident that the same Teacher used the same figure to represent the same thing in the symbols of Revelation,—though there it is not called *Gehenna*, but a "lake of fire."

The same valley was once before used as the basis of a discourse by the Prophet Isaiah. (Isa. 66:24) Though he gives it no name, he describes it; and all should notice that he speaks, not as some with false ideas might expect, of billions alive in flames and torture, but of the *carcasses* of those who transgressed against the Lord, who are thus represented as utterly destroyed in the second death.

The two preceding verses show the time when this prophecy will be fulfilled, and it is in perfect harmony with the symbols of Revelation: it appertains to the new dispensation, the Millennium, the "new heavens and new earth" condition of things. Then all the righteous will see the justice as well as the wisdom of the utter destruction of the incorrigible, wilful enemies of righteousness, as it is written: "They shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

Matthew 23:15, 33

The class here addressed was not the heathen who had no knowledge of the truth, nor the lowest and most ignorant of the Jewish nation, but the Scribes and Pharisees, outwardly the most religious, and the leaders and teachers of the people. To these our Lord said, "How can ye escape the judgment of *Gehenna?*" These men were hypocritical: they were not true to their convictions. Abundant testimony of the truth had been borne to them, but they refused to accept it, and endeavored to counteract its influence and to discourage the people from accepting it. And in thus resisting the holy spirit of light and truth, they were hardening their hearts against the very agency which God designed for their blessing. Hence they were wickedly resisting his grace, and such a course, if pursued, must eventually end in condemnation to the second death, *Gehenna*. Every step in the direction of wilful blindness and opposition to the truth makes return more difficult, and makes the wrongdoer more and more of the character which God abhors, and which the second death is intended to utterly destroy. The Scribes and Pharisees were progressing rapidly in that course: hence the warning inquiry of our Lord, "How can ye escape?" etc. The sense is this,—Although you boast of your piety, you will surely be destroyed in *Gehenna*, unless you change your course.

SET ON FIRE OF GEHENNA—James 3:6

"So [important] is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and [or when] it is set on fire of *Gehenna*."

Here, in strong, symbolic language, the Apostle points out the great and bad influence of an evil tongue—a tongue set on fire (figuratively) by *Gehenna* (figuratively). For a tongue to be set on fire of *Gehenna* signifies that it is set going in evil by a perverse disposition, self-willed, selfish, hateful, malicious, the sort of disposition which, in spite of knowledge and opportunity, unless controlled and reformed, will be counted worthy to be *destroyed*—the class for whom the "second death," the real "lake of fire," the real *Gehenna*, is intended. One in that attitude may by his tongue kindle a great fire, a destructive disturbance, which, wherever it has contact, will work evil in the entire course of nature. A few malicious words often arouse all the evil passions of the speaker, engender the same in others and react upon the first. And continuance in such an evil course finally corrupts the entire man, and brings him under sentence as utterly unworthy of life.

"TARTAROO" RENDERED "HELL"

The Greek word *tartaroo* occurs but once in the Scriptures, and is translated *hell*. It is found in 2 Pet. 2:4, which reads thus:

"God spared not the angels who sinned, but *cast* [*them*] *down to hell* [*tartaroo*], *and* delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."

Having examined all other words rendered "hell," in the Bible, and all the texts in which they occur, we conclude the examination with this text, which is the only one in which the word *tartaroo* occurs. In the above quotation, all the words shown in *Italic* type are translated from the one Greek word *tartaroo*. Evidently the translators were at a loss to know how to translate the word, but concluded they knew where the evil angels ought to be, and so they made bold to put them into "hell," though it took six words to twist the idea into the shape they had pre-determined it must take.

The word *tartaroo*, used by Peter, very closely resembles *tartarus*, a word used in Grecian mythology as the name for *a dark abyss or prison*. But *tartaroo* seems to refer more to an act than to a place. The fall of the angels who sinned was from honor and dignity, into dishonor and condemnation, and the thought seems to be—"God spared not the angels who sinned, but *degraded* them, and delivered them into chains of darkness."

This certainly agrees with the facts known to us through other Scriptures; for these fallen spirits frequented the earth in the days of our Lord and the apostles. Hence they were not down in some place, but "down" in the sense of being degraded from former honor and liberty, and restrained under darkness, as by a chain. Whenever these fallen spirits, in spiritualistic seances, manifest their powers through mediums, pretending to be certain dead human beings, they must always do their work in the dark, because darkness is the chain by which they are bound until the great Millennial day of judgment. Whether this implies that in the immediate future they will be able to materialize in daylight is difficult to determine. If so, it would greatly increase Satan's power to blind and deceive for a short season—until the Sun of Righteousness has fully risen and Satan is fully bound.

Thus we close our investigation of the Bible use of the word "hell." Thank God, we find no such place of everlasting torture as the creeds and hymn-books, and many pulpits, erroneously teach. Yet we have found a "hell," *sheol*, *hades*, to which all our race were condemned on account of Adam's sin, and from which all are redeemed by our Lord's death; and that "hell" is the tomb—the death condition. And we find another "hell" (*Gehenna*—the second *death*—utter destruction) brought to our attention as the final penalty upon all who, after being redeemed and brought to the full knowledge of the truth, and to *full* ability to obey it, shall yet choose death by choosing a course of opposition to God and righteousness. And our hearts say, Amen! True and righteous are thy ways, thou King of nations! Who shall not venerate thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou art entirely holy. And all nations shall come and worship before thee, because thy righteous dealings are made manifest.—Rev. 15:3, 4.

PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS—Luke 16:19-31

The great difficulty with many in reading this scripture is that, though they regard it as a parable, they reason on it and draw conclusions from it as though it were a literal statement. To regard it as a literal statement involves several absurdities; for instance, that the rich man went to "hell" because he had enjoyed many earthly blessings and gave nothing but crumbs to Lazarus. Not a word is said about his wickedness. Again, Lazarus was blessed, not because he was

a sincere child of God, full of faith and trust, not because he was good, but simply because he was poor and sick. If this be interpreted literally, the only logical lesson to be drawn from it is, that unless we are poor beggars full of sores, we will never enter into future bliss; and that if now we wear any fine linen and purple, and have plenty to eat every day, we are sure of future torment. Again, the coveted place of favor is "Abraham's bosom;" and if the whole statement be literal, the bosom must also be literal, and it surely would not hold very many of earth's millions of sick and poor.

But why consider absurdities? As a parable, it is easy of interpretation. In a parable the thing said is never the thing meant. We know this from our Lord's own explanations of his parables. When he said "wheat," he meant "children of the kingdom;" when he said "tares," he meant "the children of the devil," when he said "reapers" his servants were to be understood, etc. (Matt. 13) The same classes were represented by different symbols in different parables. Thus the "wheat" of one parable correspond to the "faithful servants," and the "wise virgins" of others. So, in this parable, the "rich man" represents a *class* and "Lazarus" represents another *class*.

In attempting to expound a parable such as this, an explanation of which the Lord does not furnish us, modesty in expressing our opinion regarding it is certainly appropriate. We therefore offer the following explanation without any attempt to force our views upon the reader, except so far as his own truth-enlightened judgment may commend them as in accord with God's Word and plan. To our understanding, Abraham represented God, and the "rich man" represented the Jewish nation. At the time of the utterance of the parable, and for a long time previous, the Jews had "fared sumptuously every day"—being the especial recipients of God's favors. As Paul says: "What advantage, then, hath the Jew? Much every way: chiefly, because to them were committed the oracles of God [Law and Prophecy]." The promises to Abraham and David and their organization as a typical kingdom of God invested that people with royalty, as represented by the rich man's "purple." The typical sacrifices of the law constituted them, in a typical sense, a holy (righteous) nation, represented by the rich man's "fine linen,"—symbolic of righteousness.—Rev. 19:8.

Lazarus represented the outcasts from divine favor under the law, who, sin-sick, hungered and thirsted after righteousness. "Publicans and sinners" of Israel, seeking a better life, and truth-hungry Gentiles who were "feeling after God" constituted the Lazarus class. These, at the time of the utterance of this parable, were entirely destitute of those special divine blessings which Israel enjoyed. They lay at the gate of the rich man. No rich promises of royalty were theirs; not even typically were they cleansed; but, in moral sickness, pollution and sin, they were companions of "dogs." Dogs were regarded as detestable creatures in those days, and the typically clean Jew called the outsiders "heathen" and "dogs," and would never eat with them, nor marry, nor have any dealings with them.—John 4:9.

As to how these ate of the "crumbs" of divine favor which fell from Israel's table of bounties, the Lord's words to the Syro-Phœnician woman give us a key. He said to this Gentile woman—"It is not meet [proper] to take the children's [Israelites'] bread and to cast it to dogs [Gentiles];" and she answered, "Truth, Lord, but the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." (Matt. 15:26, 27) Jesus healed her daughter, thus giving the desired crumb of favor.

But there came a great dispensational change in Israel's history when as a nation they rejected and crucified the Son of God. Then their typical righteousness ceased—then the promise of royalty ceased to be theirs, and the kingdom was taken from them to be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof—the Gospel Church, "a holy nation, a peculiar people." (Titus 2 14; 1 Pet. 2:7, 9; Matt. 21:43) Thus the "rich man" *died* to all these special advantages, and soon he (the Jewish nation) found himself in a cast-off condition,—in tribulation and affliction. In such condition that nation has suffered from that day to this.

Lazarus also died—the condition of the humble Gentiles and the God-seeking "outcasts" of Israel underwent a great change, being carried by the angels (messengers—apostles, etc.) to Abraham's bosom. Abraham is represented as the father of the faithful, and receives all the children of faith, who are thus recognized as the heirs of all the promises made to Abraham, for the children of the flesh are not the children of God, "but the children of the promise are counted for the *seed*" (children of Abraham), "which seed is Christ;"—and "If ye be Christ's, then are ye [believers] Abraham's seed [children], and heirs according to the [Abrahamic] promise." —Gal 3:29.

Yes, the termination of the condition of things then existing was well illustrated by the figure, death—the dissolution of the Jewish polity and the withdrawal of the favors which Israel had so long enjoyed. There they were cast off and have since been shown "no favor," while the poor Gentiles, who before had been "aliens from the commonwealth [the polity] of Israel and strangers from the covenant of promise [up to this time given to Israel only] having no hope and without God in the world," were then "made nigh by the blood of Christ" and reconciled to God.—Eph. 2:12, 13.

To the symbolisms of death and burial used to illustrate the dissolution of Israel and their burial or hiding among the other nations, our Lord added a further figure—"In hell [*hades*, the grave] he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off," etc. The dead cannot lift up their eyes, nor see either near or far, nor converse; for it is distinctly stated, "There is no work, nor device, nor *knowledge*, nor wisdom, in the grave;" and the dead are described as those who "go down into *silence*." (Eccl. 9:10; Psa. 115:17) But the Lord wished to show that great sufferings or "torments" would be added to the Jews as a nation *after* their national dissolution and burial amongst the other peoples dead in trespasses and sins; and that they would plead in vain for release and comfort at the hand of the formerly despised Lazarus class.

And history has borne out this parabolic prophecy. For eighteen hundred years the Jews have not only been in distress of mind over their casting out from the favor of God and the loss of their temple and other necessaries to the offering of their sacrifices, but they have been relentlessly persecuted by all classes, including professed Christians. It was from the latter that the Jews have expected mercy, as expressed in the parable—"Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue;" but the great gulf fixed between them hinders that. Nevertheless, God still recognize the relationship established in his covenant with them, and addresses them as children of the covenant. (Verse 25) These "torments" have been the penalties attached to the violation of their covenant, and were as certain to be visited upon them as the blessings promised for obedience.—See Lev. 26.

The "great gulf fixed" represents the wide difference between the Gospel church and the Jew—the former enjoying free grace, joy, comfort, and peace, as true sons of God, and the latter holding to the law, which condemns and torments. Prejudice, pride and error, from the Jewish side, form the bulwarks of this gulf which hinder the Jew from coming into the condition of true sons of God by accepting Christ and the gospel of his grace. The bulwark of this gulf which hinders true sons of God from going to the Jew—under the bondage of the law—is their knowledge that by the deeds of the law none can be justified before God, and that if any man keep the law (put himself under it to try to commend himself to God by reason of obedience to it), Christ shall profit him nothing. (Gal. 5:2-4) So, then, we who are of the Lazarus class should not attempt to mix the Law and the Gospel, knowing that they cannot be mixed, and that we can do no good to those who still cling to the law and reject the sacrifice for sins given by our Lord. And they, not seeing the change of dispensation which took place, argue that to deny the Law as the power to save would be to deny all the past history of their race, and to deny all of God's special dealings with the "fathers," (promises and dealings which through pride and selfishness they failed rightly to apprehend and use); hence they cannot come over to the bosom of Abraham, into the true rest and peace—the portion of all the true children of faith,—John 8:39; Rom. 4:16; Gal. 3:29.

True, a few Jews probably came into the Christian faith all the way down the Gospel age, but so few as to be ignored in a parable which represented the Jewish people as a whole. As at the first, Dives represented the orthodox Jews, and not the "outcasts of Israel," so down to the close of the parable he continues to represent a similar class, and hence does not represent such Jews as have renounced the Law Covenant and embraced the *New Covenant, or such as have become infidels.

The plea of the "rich man" for the sending of "Lazarus" to his five brethren we interpret as follows:

The people of Judea, at the time of our Lord's utterance of this parable, were repeatedly referred to as "Israel," "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," "cities of Israel," etc.

*See June 15, 1919, issue, for critical examination of Covenants.

because all of the tribes were represented there: but actually the majority of the people were of the tribes, Judah and Benjamin, but few of the ten tribes having returned from Babylon under Cyrus' general permission. If the nation of the Jews (chiefly *two* tribes) were represented in the *one* "rich man," it would be a harmony of numbers to understand the "five brethren" to represent the *ten* tribes chiefly scattered abroad. The request relative to them was doubtless introduced to show that all *special* favor of God ceased to all Israel (the ten tribes, as well as to the two more directly addressed). It seems to us evident that Israel only was meant for no other nation than Israel had "Moses and the prophets" as instructors. (Verse 29) The majority of the ten tribes had so far disregarded Moses and the prophets that they did not return to the land of promise, but preferred to dwell among idolators: and hence it would be useless to attempt further communication with them, even by one from the dead—the figuratively dead, but now figuratively risen Lazarus class.—Eph. 2:5.

Though the parable mentions no bridging of this "great gulf," other portions of Scripture indicate that it was to be "fixed" only throughout the Gospel age, and that at its close the "rich man," having received the measurement of punishment for his sins,* will walk out of his fiery troubles over the bridge of God's promises yet unfulfilled to that nation.

Though for centuries the Jews have been bitterly persecuted by pagans, Mohammedans and professed Christians, they are now gradually rising to political freedom and influence; and although much of "Jacob's trouble" is just at hand, yet as a people they will be very prominent among the nations in the beginning of the Millennium. The "vail" (2 Cor. 3:13-16) of prejudice still exists, but it will be gradually taken away as the light of the Millennial morning dawns; nor should we be surprised to hear of great awakenings among the Jews, and many coming to acknowledge Christ. They will thus leave their *hadean* state (nations death) and torment, and come, the first of the nations, to be blessed by the true seed of Abraham, which is Christ, Head and body. Their bulwark of race prejudice and pride is falling in some places and the humble, the poor in spirit, are beginning already to look upon him whom they have pierced, and to inquire, Is not this the Christ? And as they look the Lord pours upon them the spirit of favor and supplication. (Zech. 12:10) Therefore, "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her appointed time is accomplished."—Isa. 40:1, 2, margin.

In a word, this parable seems to teach precisely what Paul explained in Rom. 11:19-32. Because of unbelief the natural branches were broken off and the wild branches grafted into the Abrahamic root-promise. The parable leaves the Jews in their trouble and does not refer to their final restoration to favor—doubtless because it was not pertinent to the feature of the subject treated; but Paul assures us that when the fulness of the Gentiles—the full number from among the Gentiles necessary to make up the bride of Christ—is come in, "they [natural Israel] shall obtain mercy through your [the Church's] mercy." He assures us that this is God's covenant with fleshly Israel (who lost his higher, spiritual promises, but are still the possessers of certain earthly promises, to become the chief nation of earth, etc. In proof of this statement, he quotes from the prophet, saying: "The deliverer shall come out of Zion [the glorified church], and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob [the fleshly seed]." "As concerning the Gospel [high calling], they are enemies [cast off] for your sakes, but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes." "For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"—Rom. 11:26-33.

* See Isa 40 1, 2, margin; Rom. 11:27-31, and MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, page 227.

FAITHFUL CO-LABORERS HEARD FROM

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I have just been reading again in the TOWER of March 1st the article entitled "Mark the Perfect Man," etc., and want you to know how much I have enjoyed it and profited by it. After thanking the Giver of every good and perfect gift I thank you, and continually pray that the favor of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you in all your work, and that you may ever be defended from the assaults of the adversary. Putting myself for a moment in your place, I was able to see that you would rejoice to know that the household were appreciating the things "new and old," and I wanted by this little note to help "hold up" your hands. Please do not trouble to acknowledge this, but believe me,

Yours in the Lord, ELLIOTT H. THOMPSON,—*Wash.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I wish I could tell the two dear sisters who arranged the Index how much I appreciate it. It is exactly what I have needed. It certainly required a good deal of patient work to produce it and I hope all of the TOWER readers will appreciate it.

How much I would like to be at Allegheny at the great Memorial and enjoy the sacred season with you all. Not that I would be willing to be absent from Scranton at that time, but the remembrance of five years ago when I was there and the rich blessings I received at that time makes me long for one more such precious season. O what a blessed five years it has been! Every day has been full of a consciousness of the dear Lord's favor, and tho I cannot say that I have always done the very best I might have done, still it has been one continual effort to follow our blessed Leader and Guide on the narrow way. All of the time I have been conscious of his tender love, and his favors have been more numerous than the hairs of my head. And you, Brother Russell, you have been a true and faithful under-shepherd and kind and loving pastor to us all and I hope that all have had a keen appreciation of this. Some I know have, for many time have I heard prayers go up from consecrated hearts for you.

Brothers Woodworth and Hodges are both growing young men, and are indeed getting to be "able ministers of the Word." They are capable of standing for its defence anywhere. Hoping this may find you all well and happy at Allegheny, I send greetings to the Church there in the name of the little company at Scranton. Lovingly your brother in Christ, HAYDEN SAMSON,—*Pennsylvania.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I have the pleasure at this time of writing to you, and I assure you that it is a pleasure indeed. You are burdened no doubt with letters from the friends of the faith, but your kind patience seems so prominent in your writings that I am quite sure you will appreciate a letter, even from me.

The faith in the coming Kingdom has grown at this place under my care until we have a few—a little band of followers of the Lord—who, I trust, are presenting living sacrifices unto him who bought them. The work is necessarily slow, and the path not very smooth so far as this world is concerned. We meet with a good many obstacles, as so many have been prejudiced by the blind that are leading them; still we are in hopes that some will see the light even in such darkness as here prevails.

I thought it might be proper to mention that we have great desires for another "Pilgrim" visit. We hope that one is headed this way, and can stop with us for a few days. All profited so much by the visit of Brother Draper in November, and our love and prayers have followed him all these days. As the clouds grow dark upon this benighted world may God's dear ones—for he knows who are his—be faithful to their calling and "show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light" is the prayer of one who is the least to be called a son. Yours in His service, E. L. BROWN,—*Ind. Ter.*

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY,

KIND SIRS:—Coming out of our little chapel last Lord's Day night I was handed a little book, "*The Bible vs the Evolution Theory.*" After careful reading I was wonderfully blessed and thank God it was thrown in my way as I was hungry for such truths. I am an old lady in a home of faith and prayer and cannot buy such things. I was so happy after careful reading to find on the back of the little book that you would contribute a paper to any of the Lord's aged who could not buy the same. I am anxious to read something edited by the author of MILLENNIAL DAWN, for I scarcely expect to be able to get hold of the three volumes of that wonderful message and will be so thankful for anything you can send me free. Perhaps through me it will reach some one and do great good. God will bless the beautiful truths sent out from your house. Anything that one of his aged saints can do, to assist will be done by MRS. CARRIE MCBRIDE,—*St. Louis.*

PARABLE OF THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

"These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."—Matt. 25:31-46.

While the Scriptures, as we have shown, do not teach the blasphemous doctrines of everlasting *torment*, they do most emphatically teach the everlasting *punishment* of the wicked, the class represented in the parable as "goats." Let us examine the parable, and then the sentence pronounced at its close

It has been truly said that "Order is Heaven's first law;" yet few, we think, have realized how emphatically this is true. In glancing back over the plan of the ages, there is nothing which gives such conclusive evidence of a Divine Director as the order observed in all its parts.

God has had definite and stated times and seasons for every part of his work; and in the end of each of these seasons there has been a finishing up of its work and a clearing off of the rubbish, preparatory to the beginning of the new work of the dispensation to follow Thus in the end of the Jewish age order is observed—a harvesting and complete separation of the "wheat" class from the "chaff," and an entire rejection of the latter class from God's favor. With the few judged worthy in the end of that age, a new age—the Gospel age—began And now we find ourselves amid the closing scenes, the "harvest," of this age· the "wheat" and the "tares" which have grown together during this age are being separated. With the former class, of which our Lord Jesus is the Head, a new age is about to be inaugurated, and these "wheat" are to reign as kings and priests in that new dispensation, while the "tare" element is judged as utterly unworthy of that favor.

While observing this order with reference to the Jewish age and the one just closing, our Lord informs us through the parable under consideration that the same order will be observed with reference to the age to follow this Gospel age.

The harvest of the Jewish age was likened to the separation of wheat from chaff; the harvest of this age to the separation of wheat from tares; and the harvest of the Millennial age to the separation of sheep from goats.

That the parable of the sheep and the goats refers to the Millennial age is clearly indicated in verses 31 and 32—"*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 one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." As in the present age every act of those on trial (the church) goes to make a part of that character which, in due time, will determine the final decision of the Judge in our case, so will it be with the world (the "nations") in the age to come. As in the present age the trial of the majority of the individual members of the church ends, and the decision of their case is reached, long before the end of the age (2 Tim. 4:7-8), so under the Millennial reign the decision of some individual cases will be reached long before the end of the age (Isa. 65:20); but in each age there is a "harvest" or general separating time in the end of the age.

In the dawn of the Millennial age, after the "time of trouble," there will be a gathering of the living nations before Christ, and, in their appointed time and order, the dead of all nations shall be called to appear before the judgment seat of Christ—not to receive an immediate sentence, but to receive a fair and impartial, individual trial (Ezek. 18 2-4, 19, 20) under the most favorable circumstances, the result of which trial will be a final sentence, as worthy or unworthy of everlasting life.*

The scene of this parable therefore, is laid after the time of trouble, when the nations shall have been subdued, Satan bound (Rev. 20 1, 2) and the authority of Christ's kingdom established. Ere this, the bride of Christ (the overcoming church) will have been seated with him in his throne of spiritual power and will have taken part in executing the judgments of the great day of wrath. Then the Son of man and his bride, the glorified church, will be revealed and be seen by men, with the eyes of their understanding and shall "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—Matt. 13 43.

Here is the New Jerusalem as John saw it (Rev. 21), "that holy city [*symbol of government*] . . . coming down from God out of heaven." During the time of trouble it will be coming down, and before the end of it, it will have touched the earth. This is the stone cut out of the mountains without hands (but by the power of God), and it will then have become a great mountain (kingdom), filling the whole earth (Dan. 2:35), its *coming* having broken to pieces the evil kingdoms of the prince of darkness.—Dan. 2:34, 35.

Here is that glorious city (government), prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:2), and early in the dawn of the Millennium the nations will begin to walk in the light of it. (Verse 24) These may bring their glory and honor into it, but "there shall in no wise enter into it [or become a part of it] anything that defileth," etc. (Verse 27) Here, from the midst of the throne, proceeds a pure river of water of life (truth unmixed with error), and the Spirit and the bride say, Come, and take it freely. (Rev. 22:17) Here begins the world's probation, the world's great judgment day—a thousand years.*

But even in this favored time of blessing and healing of the nations, when Satan is bound, evil restrained, mankind in process of release from the grasp of death, and when the knowledge of the Lord fills the earth, two classes will be developed, which our Lord here likens to sheep and goats. These, he tells us, he will separate. The sheep class—those who are meek, teachable and willing to be led, shall, during the Millennial age, be gathered at the Judge's right hand—symbol of his approval and favor; but the goat class, self-willed and stubborn, always climbing on the rocks—seeking prominence and approval among men—and feeding on miserable refuse, while the sheep graze in the rich pastures of the truth furnished by the Good Shepherd—these are gathered to the Judge's left hand, the opposite of the position of favor—as subjects of his disfavor and condemnation.

This work of separating sheep and goats will require all of the Millennial age for its accomplishment. During that age, each individual, as he comes gradually to a knowledge of God and his will, takes his place at the right hand of favor or the left hand of disfavor, according as he improves or misimproves the opportunities of that golden age By the end of that age, all *the world* of mankind will have arranged themselves, as shown in the parable, into two classes

The end of that age will be the end of the world's trial or judgment, and then final disposition will be made of the two classes. The reward of this "sheep" class will be granted them because, during the age of trial and discipline, they cultivated and manifested the beautiful character of love, which Paul describes as the fulfilling of the law of God. (Rom. 13:10) They will have manifested it to each other in their time of sorest need; and what they will have done for one another the Lord will count as done unto him, counting them all his brethren—children of God, though they will be of the human nature, while he is of the divine.

The condemnation of the "goat" class is shown to be for the lack of this spirit of love. Under the same favorable circumstances as the "sheep," they wilfully resist the moulding influence of the Lord's discipline, and harden their hearts. The goodness of God does not lead them to true repentance; but, like Pharaoh, they take advantage of his goodness and do evil. The "goats," who will not have developed the element of *love*, the law of God's being and kingdom, will be counted unworthy of everlasting life, and will be destroyed; while the "sheep," who will have developed God-likeness (love), and who will have exhibited it in their characters, are to be installed as the subordinate rulers of earth for future ages.

In the end of the Millennial age, in the final adjustment of human affairs, Christ thus addresses his sheep: "Come, ye blessed, ... inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

It is manifest the "sheep" here addressed, at the close of the Millennium, are not the sheep of the Gospel age, the Gospel church, but those "other sheep" to whom the Lord referred in John 10:16. And the kingdom prepared for them in the divine plan, from the foundation of the world, is not the kingdom prepared for the Gospel church. The church will receive her kingdom at the beginning of the Millennium; but this is the kingdom prepared for the "sheep" of the Millennial age. Their kingdom will be the dominion of earth which was originally given to Adam, but which was lost through sin, and which is again to be restored when man is brought to perfection, and so made fit to receive and enjoy it. That dominion will not be a dominion of some of the race over others, but a joint dominion, in which every man will be a king, and all will have equal rights and privileges in appropriating and enjoying every earthly good. It will be a sovereign people—a great and grand republic on a basis of perfect righteousness, wherein the rights of every man will be conserved; because the golden rule will be inscribed on every heart, and every man will love his neighbor as himself. The dominion of all will be over the whole earth, and all its rich and bountiful stores of blessing. (Gen. 1:28; Psa. 8:5-8) The

* See THE PLAN OF THE AGES, Chapter 8

* See THE PLAN OF THE AGES, Chap. 8, The Day of Judgment.

kingdom of the world, to be given to the perfected and worthy ones of the redeemed race at the close of the Millennium, is clearly distinguished from all others by being called the kingdom prepared for them "from the foundation of the world," the earth having been made to be the everlasting home and kingdom of perfect men. But the kingdom bestowed upon Christ, of which the church, his "bride," becomes joint-heir, is a spiritual kingdom, "far above angels, principalities and powers," and it also shall "have no end"—Christ's Millennial kingdom, which *will end* being merely a beginning of Christ's power and rule. (1 Cor. 15:25-28) This endless heavenly, spiritual kingdom was prepared long before the earth was founded—its inception being recognized in Christ, "the beginning of the creation of God." It was intended for Christ Jesus, the First Begotten; but even the church, his bride and joint-heir, was chosen or designed also, in him, *before* the foundation of the world.—Eph. 1:4.

The kingdom or rule of earth, is the kingdom that has been in preparation for *mankind* from the *foundation of the world.* It was expedient that man should suffer six thousand years under the dominion of evil, to learn its inevitable results of misery and death, in order by contrast to prove the justice, wisdom and goodness of God's law of love. Then it will require the seventh thousand-years, under the reign of Christ, to restore him from ruin and death, to the perfect condition, thereby fitting him to "inherit the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world."

That kingdom, in which all will be kings, will be one grand, universal republic, whose stability, and blessed influence will be assured by the perfection of its every citizen, a result now much desired, but an impossibility because of sin. The kingdom of Christ during the Millennium will be, on the contrary, a theocracy, which will rule the world (during the period of its imperfection and restoration) without regard to its consent or approval.

The brethren of the Gospel church are not the only "brethren" of Christ. All who at that time will have been restored to perfection will be recognized as sons of God—sons in the same sense that Adam was a son of God (Luke 3:38) —*human sons.* And all of God's sons, whether on the human, the angelic or the divine plan, are *brethren.* Our Lord's love for these, his human brethren, is here expressed. As the world now has the opportunity to minister to those who are shortly to be the divine sons of God, and brethren of Christ, so they will have abundant opportunity during the age to come to minister to (each other) the human brethren.

The dead nations when again brought into existence will need food, raiment and shelter. However great may have been their possessions in this life, death will have brought all to a common level: the infant and the man of mature years, the millionaire and the pauper, the learned and the unlearned, the cultured and the ignorant and degraded: all will have an abundant opportunity for the exercise of benevolence, and thus they will be privileged to be co-workers with God. We are here reminded of the illustration given in the case of Lazarus: Jesus only awakened him from death, and then were the rejoicing friends permitted to loose him from his grave clothes and to clothe and feed him.

Further, these are said to be "sick and in prison" (more properly, under ward or watch). The grave is the great prison where the millions of humanity have been held in unconscious captivity; but when released from the grave, the restoration to perfection is not to be an instantaneous work. Being not yet perfect, they may properly be termed *sick,* and *under ward:* not dead, neither are they yet perfected in life: and any condition between those two may be properly symbolized by sickness. And they will continue to be under watch or ward until made well—physically, mentally and morally perfect. During that time there will be abundant opportunity for mutual helpfulness, sympathy, instruction and encouragement, and any failure to assist will mark a lack of the Lord's spirit of love.

Since all mankind will not be raised at once, but gradually, during the thousand years, each new group will find an army of helpers in those who will have preceded it. The love and benevolence which men will then show to each other (the brethren of Christ) the King will count as shown to him. No great deeds are assigned as the ground for the honors and favors conferred upon the righteous: they will have simply come into harmony with God's law of love and proved it by their works. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13:10), and "God is love." So, when man is restored again to *the image of God*—"very good"—man also will be a living expression of love.

"Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," does not signify a rule independent of the divine law and supremacy: for although God gave earth's dominion to man at first, and designs restoring it to him when he has prepared him for the great trust, we are not to suppose that God intends man to rule it, otherwise than as under, or in harmony with, his supreme law. "Thy will be done in earth as in heaven," must forever be the principle of government. Man thenceforth will rule his dominion in harmony with the law of heaven—delighting continually to do his will in whose favor is life, and at whose "right hand [condition of favor] there are pleasures forevermore." (Psa. 16:11) Oh! who would not say, "Haste ye along, ages of glory!" and give glory and honor to him whose loving plans are blossoming into such fulness of blessing?

Let us now examine the message to those on the left—"Depart from me, ye cursed" (condemned)—condemned as unfit vessels for the glory and honor of life, who would not yield to the moulding and shaping influences of divine love. When these, "brethren," were hungry and thirsty, or naked, sick, and in prison, ye ministered not to their necessities, thus continually proving yourselves out of harmony with the heavenly city (kingdom); for "there shall in no case enter into it anything that defileth." The decision or sentence regarding this class is—"Depart from me into everlasting *fire* [symbol of *destruction*], prepared for the devil and his angels." Elsewhere (Heb. 2:14) we read without symbol that Christ "will *destroy* . . . . him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

"And these [the "goats"] shall go away into everlasting [Greek, *aionios*—lasting] punishment, but the righteous into life eternal [Greek, *aionios*—lasting.]" The punishment will be as lasting as the reward. Both will be everlasting.

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

The everlastingness of the punishment being thus established, only one point is left open for discussion; namely, the nature of the punishment. Take your Concordance and search out what saith the great Judge regarding the punishment of wilful sinners who despise and reject all his blessed provisions for them through Christ. What do you find? Does God there say—All sinners shall live in torture forever? No: we find not a single text where life in any condition is promised to that class.

God's declarations assure us that ultimately he will have a clean universe, free from the blight of sin and sinners,—because "All the wicked will he destroy."—Psa. 145:20.

But while we do not find one verse of the Bible saying that this class can have *life* in torment, or in any other condition, we do find numerous passages teaching the reverse. Of these we give a few merely as samples—"The wages of sin is *death*" (Rom. 6:23) "The soul that sinneth, *it shall die.*" (Ezek. 18:4, 20) "The wicked shall perish." (Psa. 37:20) "Yet a little while and the wicked shall not be." (Psa. 37:10) Thus God has told us plainly the nature of the everlasting punishment of the wicked—that it will be death, destruction.

The false ideas of God's plan of dealing with the incorrigible, taught ever since the great "falling away," which culminated in Papacy, and instilled into our minds from childhood, are alone responsible for the view generally held, that the everlasting *punishment* provided for wilful sinners is a life of torment. This view is held, notwithstanding the many clear statements of God's Word that their punishment is to be *death.* Hear Paul state very explicitly what the punishment is to be. Speaking of the same Millennial Day, and of the same class, who, despite all the favorable opportunities and the fulness of knowledge then, will not come into harmony with Christ, and hence will "know not God," in the true sense and "obey not," he says—"who *shall be punished.*" Ah, yes! but *how* punished? He tells us how: They "shall be punished with *everlasting destruction*" [a destruction from which there shall be no recovery, no redemption or resurrection—Heb. 10:26-29] from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." (2 Thes. 1:9) This destruction is represented in the parable as the everlasting "*fire*" prepared for the devil and his angels: it is "the lake of fire and brimstone," which is the second death (Rev. 20:14), into which the "goat" class of this parable are sent.—Matt. 25:41.

Thus the meaning and reasonableness of this statement concerning everlasting punishment are readily seen when

looked at from the correct standpoint. The fire of the parable, by which the punishment (destruction) is to be accomplished, will not be literal fire, for the "fire" is as much a symbol as the "sheep" and "goats" are symbols. Fire here, as elsewhere, symbolizes destruction, and not in any sense preservation

We might well leave this subject here, and consider that we have fully shown that the everlasting punishment of the "goat" class will be destruction; but we direct attention to one other point which clinches the truth upon this subject. We refer to the Greek word *kolasin*, translated "punishment," in verse 46. This word has not in it the remotest idea of torment. Its primary signification is *to cut off*, or prune, or lop off, as in the pruning of trees; and a secondary meaning is *to restrain*. The wicked will be everlastingly restrained, cut off from life in the second death. Illustration of the use of *kolasin* can easily be had from Greek classical writings The Greek word for "torment" is *basinos*, a word totally unrelated to the word *kolasin*.

Kolasin, the word used in Matt. 25:46, occurs in but one other place in the Bible, viz., 1 John 4:18, where it is improperly rendered "torment" in the common version, whereas it should read, "Fear hath restraint" Those who possess a copy of Young's Analytical Concordance will see from it (page 995) that the definition of the word *kolasis* is "*pruning, restraining*, restraint" And the author of the Emphatic Diaglott, after translating *kolasin* in Matt. 25:46 by the words "cutting off," says in a foot note:

"The common version and many modern ones render *kolasin aionion* 'everlasting punishment,' conveying the idea, as generally interpreted, of *basinos*, torment. *Kolasin* in its various forms occurs in only three other places in the New Testament· Acts 4:21; 2 Pet. 2:9; 1 John 4:18. It is derived from *kolazoo*, which signifies, 1. *To cut off*, as lopping off branches of trees, to prune 2. *To restrain, to repress.* The Greeks write—'The charioteer restrains [*kalazei*] his fiery steeds.' 3. *To chastize, to punish.* To cut off an individual from life, or from society, or even to restrain, is esteemed as a punishment: hence has arisen this third or metaphorical use of the word. The primary signification has been adopted [in the Diaglott] because it agrees better with the second member of the sentence, thus preserving the force and beauty of the antithesis. The righteous go to *life*, the wicked to the *cutting off* from life, *death*.—2 Thes. 1:9."

Now consider carefully the text, and note the antithesis, the contrast shown between the reward of the "sheep" and the reward of the "goats," which the correct idea of *kolasin* gives- the one class goes into everlasting *life*, while the other is everlasting *cut off* from life—forever *restrained* in death And this exactly agrees with what the Scriptures everywhere else declare concerning the wages or penalty of wilful sin.

Consider for a moment the words of verse 41: "Depart from me ye cursed [once redeemed by Christ from the Adamic curse or condemnation to death, but now condemned or cursed, as worthy of the second death, by the One who redeemed them from the first curse], into everlasting fire [symbol of *everlasting destruction*], prepared for the devil and his messengers [servants]."

Remember that this is the final sentence at the close of the final trial—at the close of the Millennium; and that none will then be *servants* of Satan ignorantly or unwillingly, as so many now are, for the great Deliverer, Christ, will remove outside temptations, and provide assistance toward self-improvement which will enable all who will to overcome inherent weaknesses and to attain perfection These "goats," who love evil and serve Satan, are the messengers ("angels") of Satan For these and Satan, and for no others, God has prepared second death—the everlasting destruction. Fire will come from God out of heaven and *consume them* Consuming fire and devouring fire all can appreciate, unless their eyes are holden by false doctrine and prejudice. No one ever knew of a *preserving fire*, and as fire never preserves, but always *consumes*, God uses it as a symbol of utter destruction—Rev 20:9

"THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE, WHICH IS THE SECOND DEATH"—Rev 19 20 20 10, 14, 15, 21 8

"The lake of fire and brimstone" is several times mentioned in the book of Revelation, which all Christians admit to be a book of symbols However, they generally think and speak of this particular symbol as a literal statement giving strong support to the torment doctrine, notwithstanding the fact that the symbol is clearly defined as meaning the Second death "And death and hell were cast into *the lake of fire This is the second death*," etc. (Rev. 20:14) It is sometimes spoken of as "a lake of fire burning with brimstone" (Rev. 19:20), the element brimstone being mentioned to intensify the symbol of destruction, the second death: burning brimstone being one of the most deadly elements known. It is destructive to all forms of life.

The symbolism of this lake of fire is further shown by the fact that the symbolic "beast" and the symbolic "false prophet," and death and hell [*hades*], as well as the devil and his followers, are destroyed in it.—Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15; 21:8.

This destruction or death is called the Second death in contradistinction to the First or Adamic death, and not to signify that everything which goes into it dies a second time For instance, death (the first or Adamic death), and *hades* the grave, are to be cast into it;—this work will require the entire Millennium to accomplish it, and in no sense will they ever have been destroyed before. So also "the devil," "the beast," and "the false prophet," will never have been destroyed before.

From the first, or Adamic death, a resurrection has been provided. All that are in their graves shall therefore come forth. The Revelator prophetically declares: "The sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell [*hades*, the grave] gave up the dead which were in them. . . . And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened." (Rev. 20:13, 12) It was in view of God's plan for redeeming the race from Adamic death that in both the Old and New Testaments it is called a "*sleep*." In Israel's history of the good and the wicked it is repeatedly stated that they "slept with their fathers" The Apostles used the same symbol, and our Lord also. But no such symbol is used in reference to the Second death. On the contrary, the strongest figures of total and utter *destruction* are used to symbolize it; viz., "fire and brimstone;" because that will be a destruction from which there will be no recovery

Blessed thought! the Adamic death (which claimed the whole race for the sin of their progenitor) shall be forever swallowed up, and shall cease in this Second death into which it is to be cast by the great Redeemer who bought the whole world with the sacrifice of himself. Thus God tells us through the Prophet, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave [*sheol*]. I will redeem them from death . . . O grave [*sheol*] I will be thy destruction." (Hos. 13:14) The first or Adamic death shall no longer have liberty or power over men, as it has had for the past six thousand years; no longer shall any die for Adam's sin. (Rom 5:12, Jer. 31.29, 30: Ezek. 18.2) Thenceforth the New Covenant, sealed with the precious blood, shall be in force, and only *wilful* transgressions will be counted as sin and punished with the wages of sin—death—the Second death Thus will the Adamic death be cast into and swallowed up by the second death

And *hades* and *sheol*—the dark, secret condition, the grave, which in the present time speaks to us of a *hope* of future life by God's resurrection power in Christ—shall be no more for the second death will devour no being fit for life—none for whom there remains a shadow of hope, but such only as, by the unerring Judge, have been fully, impartially and individually found worthy of *destruction* And Satan, that lying tempter who deceived and ruined the race, and who, with persistent energy and cunning, has sought continually to thwart the purpose of God for our salvation through Christ, and with him all who are of his spirit, "his angels," shall be *destroyed*, and shall never awake from death to trouble the world again. Here he is said to be cast into "the lake of fire."—the second death: and Paul in Heb. 2 14, referring to the same thing, calls it destruction—"that he might *destroy* death, and him that hath the power of death, that is the devil." And "the beast and the false prophet," the great false systems which have long oppressed and misled nominal Christendom, shall never escape from it. These systems are said to be cast "alive" (that is, while they are still organized and operative) into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.—Rev 19.20.

The great time of trouble, the Lord's judgment, which will utterly destroy these systems, will undoubtedly cause great social, financial and religious difficulty and pain to all those identified with these deceived and deceiving systems, before they are utterly destroyed. These systems will be cast in, destroyed, at the beginning of the Millennium, while Satan's destruction is reserved until its close, when all the "goats" shall have been separated from the "sheep," and they shall perish with Satan in the Second death, as "his angels," messengers or servants. None of these abominable characters among men, who, knowing the truth, yet love unrighteousness—none of "the fearful and unbelieving"—those who will not trust God after all the manifestations of his grace afforded during the Millennial reign of Christ; nor the abominable

who at heart are murderers and whoremongers and sorcerers and idolaters and liars: none of these shall escape from the second death, to defile the earth again. All such, after a full and abundant opportunity for reformation, will be judged unworthy of life, and will be forever cut off in the second death, symbolized by the lake of fire and brimstone.

Several prophetic pen pictures of the Millennial age and its work in chapters 20 and 21 of Revelation, clearly show the object and result of that age of trial, in harmony with the remainder of the Scriptures already noted.

Chapter 20, verses 2, 4, 11, with verses 1, 2, 10, 11 of chapter 21, show the beginning of that Age of Judgment, and the restraining of blinding errors and misleading systems. The "beast" and the "false prophet" are the chief symbols, and represent the organizations or systems of error which, together, constitute "Babylon." This judgment against the "thrones" of the present time, and against "the beast and the false prophet" *systems* follows speedily upon the introduction of this Millennial judgment reign. The thrones of the present dominion of earth will be "cast down," and the dominion transferred to the great Prophet, Priest, King and Judge, "whose right it is." (Compare Dan. 7:14, 22; Ezek. 21:27) Then the systems of error will be speedily judged worthy of *destruction*, "the lake of fire," "the second death."—Rev 19 20.

Thus the *second* destruction (or death) begins quite early in the new judgment: it begins with the false systems symbolized by the beast, false prophet, etc., but it will not reach the world of mankind, as individuals, until they have first had full trial, with full opportunity to choose life and live forever. Chapters 20:12, 13, and 21:3-7, indicate the blessed, favorable trial in which all, both dead and living (except the church, who, with Jesus Christ, are kings, priests, joint-heirs and judges), will be brought to a full knowledge of the truth, relieved from sorrow and pain, and freed from every blinding error and prejudice, and tried "according to their *works*."

The grand outcome of that trial will be a clean universe. As the Revelator expresses it, "*Every creature* which is in heaven and on the earth . . . . heard I saying, Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever." But this result will be accomplished in harmony with all God's dealings past and present, which have always recognized man's freedom of will to choose good or evil, life or death.

We cannot doubt then that in the close of the Millennial age God will again for a "little season" permit evil to triumph, in order thereby to test his creatures (who will by that time have become thoroughly acquainted with both good and evil, and the consequences of each, and will have had his justice and love fully demonstrated to them), that those who finally prefer and choose evil may be cut off—destroyed. Thus God will for all eternity remove all who do not love righteousness and hate iniquity.

We read, regarding that testing, that Satan will endeavor to lead astray all mankind, whose numbers will then be as the sand of the sea for multitude; but that many of them will follow Satan's evil example and choose evil and disobedience, with past experience before them, and unhampered by present weaknesses and blinding influences, we need not suppose. However, when God does not tell us either the number or the proportion of those to be found worthy of life, and those to be judged worthy of death (the second death), we may not dogmatize. Of one thing we may be confident, God willeth not the death of the wicked, but would that all should turn to him and live; and no one will be destroyed in that "lake of fire and brimstone" (figurative of utter destruction—*Gehenna*) who is worthy of life, whose living longer would be a blessing to himself or to others in harmony with righteousness.

That utter and hopeless destruction is intended only for *wilful* evil doers, who, like Satan, in pride of heart and rebellion against God, will love and do evil notwithstanding the manifestations of God's disapproval, and notwithstanding their experience with its penalties. Seemingly the goodness and love of God in the provision of a ransom, a restitution, and another opportunity of life for man, instead of leading all to an abhorrence of sin, will lead some to suppose that God is too loving to cut them off in the second death, or that if he did so he would give them other and yet other future opportunities. Building thus upon a supposed weakness in the divine character, these may be led to try to take advantage of the grace (favor) of God, as a license for wilful sin. But they shall go no further, for their folly shall be made manifest. Their utter destruction will prove to the righteous the harmony and perfect balance of justice, wisdom, love and power in the Divine Ruler.

Revelation 21:8

The true character of the goat class is portrayed. The fearful and unbelieving [who will not trust God], the abominable, murderers [brother-haters], whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters [such as misappropriate and misuse divine favors who give to self or any other creature or thing that service and honor which belong to God], and all liars"—"whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" [in a word, all who do not love the truth and seek it, and at any cost defend and hold it] "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone [*Gehenna*, symbol of utter destruction], which is the Second death." Such company would be repulsive to any honest, upright being. It is hard to tolerate them now, when we can sympathize with them, knowing that such dispositions are now in great measure the result of inherited weakness of the flesh. We are moved to a measure of sympathy by the remembrance that in our own cases often, when we would do good, evil is present with us. But in the close of the Millennial judgment, when the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall have given every advantage and opportunity of knowledge and ability, this class will be an abhorrence and detestation to all who are in harmony with the King of Glory. And the righteous will be glad when, the trial being ended, the *gift of life* of which these shall have proved themselves unworthy shall be taken from them, and when the corrupters of the earth and all their work and influence shall be destroyed.

THE DEVIL, THE BEAST AND THE FALSE PROPHET TORMENTED

Rev. 20:9 tells of the destruction of those individuals who join with Satan in the last rebellion, and verse 15 tells of that same destruction in other words, using the symbol "lake of fire." They are *devoured* or *consumed* in fire. This being the case, the torment of verse 10 cannot refer to these *human beings* who are consumed, destroyed. Hence the question narrows down to this, Will Satan and a false prophet and a beast be tortured forever? and does this verse so teach?

We answer in God's own words: "All the wicked will he destroy." Concerning Satan, the arch enemy of God and man, God expressly advises us that he will be destroyed, and not preserved in any sense or condition.—Heb 2:14.

The beast and false prophet *systems*, which during the Gospel age have deceived and led astray, will be cast into a great consuming trouble in the close of this Gospel age. The torment of those systems will be *aionion*, *i. e.*, lasting. It will continue as long as *they* last, until they are utterly consumed. So also the system of error, which will suddenly manifest itself at the end of the Millennial age and lead the "goats" to destruction, will be consumed. (Rev. 20:7-10) That deceiving system (not specified as to kind, but merely called Satan after its instigator) will be cast into the same sort of trouble and destruction in the end of the Millennial age, as the beast and false prophet systems are now being cast into, in the end of the Gospel age.

Rev. 19:3, speaking of one of these systems, says: "Her *smoke* rose up forever and ever." That is to say, the remembrance ("smoke") of the *destruction* of these systems of deception and error will be lasting, the lesson will never be forgotten—as smoke, which continues to ascend after a destructive fire, is testimony that the fire has done its work.—See also Isa. 34:8-10.

Of Rev. 14:9-11 we remark incidentally, that all will at once concede that if a *literal* worshipping of a beast and image were meant in verse 9, then few if any, in civilized lands are liable to the penalty of verse 11; and if the beast and his image and worship and wine and cup are symbols, so also are the *torments* and *smoke* and *fire* and *brimstone*.

The casting of death and the grave into utter destruction, the second death, during the Millennial age, is a part of the utter destruction which will include every improper, injurious and useless thing. (Isa. 11:9; Psa. 101:5-8.) The second death, the sentence of that individual trial, will be finally: it will never be destroyed. And let all the lovers of righteousness say, Amen; for to destroy the second death, to remove the sentence of that just and impartial trial, would be to let loose again not only Satan, but all who love and practice wrong and deception and who dishonor the Lord with their evil institutions—to oppose, offend and endeavor to overthrow those who love and desire to serve him and enjoy his favor. We rejoice that there is no danger of this, but that divine justice unites with divine wisdom, love and power, to bring in everlasting righteousness on a permanent basis.

TURNED INTO HELL

"The wicked shall be turned into *hell*, and the nations that forget God."—Psa. 9:17

This statement of the Lord recorded by the Psalmist we find without any qualification whatever, and we must accept it as a positive fact. If the claims of "Orthodoxy" respecting hell were true, this would be, indeed, a fearful message

But let us substitute the true meaning of the word *sheol*, and our text will read "The wicked shall be turned into *the condition of death*, and all the nations that forget God." This we believe, but next, who are the wicked? In one sense all men are wicked, in that all are violators of God's law; but in the fullest sense the wicked are those who, with full knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the remedy provided for their recovery from its baneful effects, *wilfully* persist in sin

As yet few—only consecrated believers—have come to a true knowledge of God. The world knows him not, and the nations cannot forget God until they are first brought to a knowledge of him. The consecrated have been enlightened, led of the Spirit through faith to understand the deep and hidden things of God, which reveal the glory of God's character but which, though expressed in his Word, appear only as foolishness to the world.

As we have hitherto seen, this will not be so in the age to come, for then "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11:9) Much that we now receive by faith will then be demonstrated to the world. When he who has ransomed man from the power of the grave (Hos. 13:14) begins to gather his purchased possessions back from the prison-house of death (Isa. 61:1), when the sleepers are awakened under the genial rays of the Sun of Righteousness, they will not be slow to realize the truth of the hitherto seemingly idle tale, that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man"

We have also seen that the gradual ascent of the King's Highway of Holiness in that age will be possible to all and comparatively easy, because all the stones—stumbling-blocks, errors, etc—will have been gathered out, and straight paths made for their feet It is in that age that this text applies. Those who ignore the favoring circumstances of that age, and will not be obedient to the righteous Judge or Ruler—Christ—will truly be the wicked. And every loyal subject of the kingdom of God will approve the righteous judgment which turns such an one *again* into *sheol*—the condition of death. Such an one would be unworthy of life: and, were he permitted to live, his life would be a curse to himself and to the rest of mankind, and a blemish on the work of God.

This will be the *second death*, from which there will be no resurrection Having been ransomed from the grave (*sheol*) by the sacrifice of Christ, if they die again on account of their own sin, "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin." (Heb. 10:26) "Christ dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom 6:9) The second death should be dreaded and shunned by all, since it is to be the end of existence to all those deemed unworthy of life But in it there can be no suffering. Like Adamic death, it is the extinction of life.

It is because through sin mankind had become subject to death (*sheol, hades*) that Christ Jesus came to deliver us and save us from death (1 John 3:8; Heb. 2:14) Death is a cessation of existence, the absence of life There is no difference between the *conditions* in the Adamic and second deaths, but there is hope of a release from the first, while from the second there will be no release no return to life The first death sentence passed upon all on account of Adam's sin, while the second death can be incurred only by wilful, individual sin

That the application of our text belongs to the coming age is evident for both saints and sinners go into *sheol* or *hades* now This scripture indicates that, in the time when it applies *only the wicked* shall go there And the nations that forget God must be nations that have known him else they could not forget him and never yet have the nations been brought to that knowledge, nor will they be until the coming time, when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and none shall need to say unto his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, for all shall know him from the least to the greatest of them.—Isa 11:9; Jer. 31:34

The Hebrew word *goi*, rendered "nations" in this verse, is elsewhere used by the same writer and rendered "heathen," "Gentiles" and "people" The thought seems to be.—any who do not become God's covenant people, even though they be not *openly wicked*. The nations (Gentiles, all who under that full knowledge do not become Israelites indeed) who are forgetful or negligent of God's favors enjoyed, and of their duties and obligations to him, shall share the fate of the *wilfully* "wicked," and be cast into the second death.

In further proof of this, we find that the Hebrew word *shub*, which in our text is translated "turned," signifies *turned back*, as to a previous place or condition. Those referred to in this text have been either in *sheol* or liable to enter it, but being redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, will be brought out of *sheol*. If then they are *wicked*, they, and all who forget God, shall be *turned back* or *returned* to *sheol*.

DID THE JEWS BELIEVE IN EVERLASTING TORMENT?

Noting that we teach that the doctrine of everlasting torment was engrafted upon the doctrines of the Christian church during the period of the apostasy, the great falling away which culminated in Papacy, some have inquired whether it does not seem, according to the works of Josephus, that this doctrine was firmly held by the Jews; and, if so, they ask, does it not seem evident that the early Christians, being largely converts from Judaism, brought this doctrine with them, in the very outstart of Christianity?

We answer, No; the doctrine of everlasting torment sprang naturally from the doctrine of human immortality, which as a philosophic question was first promulgated in anything like the present form by the Platonic school of Grecian philosophy. These first affirmed that each man contained a fragment of deity, and that this would prevent him from ever dying. This foundation laid, it was as easy to describe a place for evil-doers as for well-doers. But to the credit of those heathen philosophers be it recorded that they failed to develop, or at least to manifest, that depth of degradation from benevolence and reason and pity, necessary to paint, by word and pen and brush, such details of horrors and agonies as were soon incorporated into their doctrine, and a belief thereof declared "necessary to salvation" in the professed church of Christ.

To appreciate the case, it is necessary to remember that, when the Christian church was established, Greece stood at the head of intelligence and civilization. Alexander the Great had conquered the world, and had spread respect for Greece everywhere; and though, from a military point of view, Rome had taken her place, it was otherwise in literature. For centuries, Grecian philosophers and philosophies led the intellectual world, and impregnated and affected everything. It became customary for philosophers and teachers of other theories to claim that their systems and theories were nearly the same as those of the Grecians, and to endeavor to remove differences between their old theories and the popular Grecian views. And some sought to make capital by claiming that their system embraced all the good points of Platonism with others which Plato did not see.

Of this class were the teachers in the Christian church in the second, third and fourth centuries. Conceding the popularly accepted correctness of the philosophers, they claimed that the same good features of philosophy were found in Christ's teachings, and that he was one of the greatest philosophers, etc. Thus a blending of Platonism and Christianity took place. This became the more pronounced as kings and emperors began to scrutinize religious teachings, and to favor those most likely to awe the people and make them law-abiding. While heathen teachers were truckling to such imperial scrutiny, and teaching an everlasting punishment for those who violated the laws of the emperors (who ruled as divinely appointed), we cannot suppose otherwise than that the ambitious characters in the church at that time, who were seeking to displace heathenism and to become the dominant religious power instead, would make prominent such doctrines as would in the eyes of the emperors seem to have an equal hold upon the fears and prejudices of the people. And what could be more to the purpose than the doctrine of the endless torment of the refractory?

The same motives evidently operated with Josephus when writing concerning the belief of the Jews. His works should be read as apologies for Judaism, and as efforts to exalt that nation in the eyes of Rome and the world. It should be remembered that the Jews had the reputation of being a very rebellious people, very unwilling to be ruled even by the Cæsars They were hoping, in harmony with God's promises, to become the chief nation. Many rebellious outbreaks had occurred among them, and their peculiar religion, different from all others, came in for its share of blame for favoring too much the spirit of liberty.

Josephus had an object in writing his two principal works, "Antiquities" and "Wars of the Jews." He wrote them in the Greek language while living at Rome, where he was the friend and guest successively of the Roman emperors Ves-

pasian, Titus and Domitian, and where he was in constant contact with the Grecian philosophers. These books were written for the purpose of showing off the Jewish people, their courage, laws, ethics, etc., to the best advantage before the Grecian philosophers and Roman dignitaries. This object is covertly admitted in his preface to his "Antiquities," in which he says:

"I have undertaken the present work as thinking it will appear to all the Greeks worthy of their study. . . . Those that read my book may wonder that my discourse of laws and historical facts contains so much of *philosophy*. . . . However, those that have a mind to know the reasons of everything may find here a very curious philosophical theory."

In a word, as a shrewd man who himself had become imbued with the spirit of the Grecian philosophers then prevailing, Josephus drew from the Law and the Prophets, and from the traditions of the elders and the theories of the various sects of the Jews, all he could find that in the most remote degree would tend to show:—

First, that the Jewish religion was not far behind popular Grecian philosophy; but that *somewhat* analogous theories had been drawn from Moses' law, and held by some Jews, long before the Grecian philosophers broached them.

Secondly, that it was not their religious ideas which made the Jews as a people hard to control or "rebellious," as all liberty-lovers were esteemd by the Cæsars. Hence he attempts to prove, at a time when virtue was esteemed to consist mainly in submission, that Moses' law "taught first of all that God is the Father and Lord of all things, and bestows a happy life upon those that follow him, but plunges such as do not walk in the paths of virtue into inevitable miseries." And it is in support of this idea, and for such purposes, evidently, that Josephus, after saying: "There are three philosophical sects among the Jews; first, the Pharisees; second, the Sadducees, and third, the Essenes," proceeds to give an account of their three theories, especially detailing any features which resembled Grecian philosophy. And because the last and least, the Essenes, most resembled the doctrines of the Stoics and leading Grecian theories, Josephus devotes nearly ten times as much space to their views as to the views of both Sadducees and Pharisees combined. And yet the Essenes were so insignificant a sect that the New Testament does not even mention them, while Josephus himself admits they were few. Whatever views they held, therefore, on any subject, cannot be claimed as having Jewish sanction, when the vast majority of Jews held contrary opinions. The very fact that our Lord and the apostles did not refer to them is good evidence that the Essenes' philosophy by no means represented the Jewish ideas. This small sect probably grew up later and probably absorbed from Grecian philosophy its ideas concerning immortality and the everlasting torment of the non-virtuous. It should be remembered that Josephus was not born until three years after our Lord's crucifixion, and that he published his "Wars" A. D. 75 and "Antiquities" A. D. 93—at a time when he and other Jews, like all the rest of the world, were eagerly swallowing Grecian philosophy and science falsely so called, against which Paul warned the church.—Col. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:20.

Josephus directed special attention to the Essenes because it suited his object to do so. He admits that the Sadducees, next to the largest body of Jewish people, did not believe in human immortality. And of the Pharisees' views he makes a blind statement, calculated to mislead, as follows: "They also believe that souls have an *immortal vigor* in them [This might be understood to mean that the Pharisees did not believe as the Sadducees that death ended all existence, but believed in a vigor or life beyond the grave—by a resurrection of the dead], and that under the earth there will be rewards and punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and that the latter are to be detained in an everlasting *prison* [death—not torture], but that the former [the virtuous] shall have *power to revive and live again*."

Is it not apparent that Josephus has whittled and stretched the views of the Pharisees, as much as his elastic conscience would allow, to show a harmony between them and the philosophies of Greece? Paul, who had been a Pharisee, contradicts Josephus. While Josephus says they believed "that only the virtuous would revive and *live again* [Does not this imply *a resurrection*, and imply also that the others would not *live* again, but remain *dead*, in the great prison—the tomb?]" Paul, on the contrary, says: "I have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."—Acts 24:15.

We have no hesitancy about accepting the testimony of the inspired Apostle Paul, not only in regard to what the Jews believed, but also as to what he and the early church believed; and we repeat, that the theory of the everlasting *torment* of the wicked, based upon the theory that the human soul cannot die, is contrary to both the Old and the New Testament teachings, and was introduced among Jews and Christians by Grecian philosophers. Thank God for the purer philosophy of the Scriptures, which teaches that the death of the soul (being) is the penalty of sin (Ezek. 18:20); that all souls condemned through Adam's sin were redeemed by Christ's soul (Isa. 53:10); and that only for wilful, individual sin will any die the Second death—an everlasting *punishment*, but not an everlasting torment.

CHOOSE LIFE THAT YE MAY LIVE

"I have set before thee this day life and good, death and evil." "I have set before thee life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."—Deut. 30:15, 19.

We come now to the consideration of other Scripture statements in harmony with the conclusions set forth in the preceding articles.

The words here quoted are from Moses to Israel. To appreciate them we must remember that Israel as a people, and all their covenants, sacrifices, etc., had a typical significance.

God knew that they could not obtain life by keeping the Law, no matter how much they would *choose* to do so, because they, like all others of the fallen race, were weak, depraved through the effect of the "sour grape" of sin which Adam had eaten, and which his children had continued to eat. (Jer. 31:29) Thus, as Paul declares, the law given to Israel could not give them life because of the weaknesses or depravity of their fallen nature—Rom. 8:3, Heb. 7:19; 10:1-10.

Nevertheless, God foresaw a benefit to them from even an unsuccessful attempt to live perfectly; namely, that it would develop them, as well as show them the need of the *better* sacrifice (the ransom which our Lord Jesus gave) and a *greater* deliverer than Moses. And with all this their trial furnished a pattern or shadow of the individual trial insured to the whole world (which Israel typified) and secured by the better sacrifices for sin, which were there prefigured, to be accomplished by the great prophet of whom Moses was but a type.

Thus seeing that the trial for life or death presented to Israel was but typical of the individual trial of the whole world, and its issues of life and death (of eternal life or the second death), may help some to see that the great thousand-year-day of trial, of which our Lord Jesus has been appointed the Judge, contains the *two* issues, life and death. All will then be called upon to decide, under that most favorable opportunity, for righteousness and life or sin and death, and a choice must be made. And, although there will be rewards and "stripes" according to the deeds of the present life, as well as according to their conduct under that trial (John 3:19; Matt. 10:42; Matt. 11:20-24), the verdict in the end will be in harmony with the choice expressed by the conduct of each during that age of trial.

The second trial, its sentence and its result, are also shown in the words of Moses quoted by Peter (Acts 3:22, 23): "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me. Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul [being] which will not hear [obey] that Prophet [and thus choose *life*] shall be *destroyed* from among the people." In few words this calls attention to the world's great trial, yet future. It shows the great Prophet or Teacher raised up by God to give a new judgment or trial to the condemned race which he has redeemed from the condemnation which came upon it through its progenitor, Adam. It shows, too, the conditions of eternal life to be righteous obedience, and that with the close of that trial some will be judged worthy of that life, and some worthy of destruction—the second death.

Our Lord Jesus, having redeemed all by his perfect and precious sacrifice, is the Head of this great Prophet; and during the Gospel age God has been selecting the members of his body, who, with Christ Jesus, shall be God's agents in judging the world. Together they will be that Great Prophet or Teacher promised. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"—1 Cor. 6:2.

The first trial was of mankind only, and hence its penalty or curse, the first death, was only upon man. But the second trial is to be much more comprehensive. It will not only be the trial of fallen and imperfect mankind, but it will include every other thing and principle and being out of harmony

with Jehovah. "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing."

The "judgment to come" will include the judgment to condemnation of all false *systems*—civil, social and religious. These will be judged, condemned and banished early in the Millennial day, the light of truth causing them to come into disrepute and therefore to pass away. This judgment comes first, in order that the trial of man may proceed unhindered by error, prejudice, etc. It will also include the trial of "the angels which sinned"—those angels "which kept not their first estate" of purity and obedience to God. Thus it is written by the Apostle of the members of the body of the great Prophet and High Priest, who is to be Judge of all—"Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels?"—1 Cor. 6:3.

This being the case, the condemnation of the Millennial trial (destruction, second death) will cover a wider range of offenders than the penalty or curse for the sin of Adam, which passed upon *all men*." In a word, the destruction at the close of the trial will be the utter destruction of *every being* and *every thing* which will not glorify God and be of use and blessing to his general creation.

FORGIVABLE AND UNPARDONABLE SINS

In the preceding pages we briefly show the extreme penalty for wilful sin. Adam's penalty, which involved his entire race, was of this sort, and only as the result of Christ's death as our ransom from that penalty of that wilful sin is any forgiveness of it or subsequent sins possible.

Forgivable sins are those which result from weaknesses incurred through that one Adamic sin which Christ settled once for all. They are such as are not wilful, but are committed through ignorance or weaknesses of the flesh. God stands pledged to forgive all such sins upon our repentance, in the name and merit of Christ's sacrifice.

Unpardonable sins, sins which cannot be forgiven, are such as are wilfully done. As the penalty of the first wilful sin was death—extinction of being—so death is the penalty of every wilful sin against full knowledge and ability to choose and to do the right. This is called second death, in distinction from the first or Adamic penalty, from which Christ's ransom sacrifice will release all mankind.

The "sin unto [second] death," for the forgiveness of which the Apostle declares it is useless to pray (1 John 5:16), is not only a wilful sin but a sin against clear knowledge, a sin for which no adequate excuse can be found. Because it is a sin against clear knowledge, or enlightenment in holiness, it is called the "sin against the holy Spirit" (Matt. 12:31,32), for which there is no forgiveness.

But there are other partly-wilful sins, which are, therefore, partially unpardonable. In such the temptations within and without (all of which are directly or indirectly results of the fall) have a share,—the will consenting under the pressure of the temptation or because of the weakness. The Lord alone knows how to properly estimate our responsibilities and guilt in such cases. But to the true child of God there is but one proper course to take,—repentance and an appeal for mercy in the name and merit of Christ, the great sacrifice for sin. The Lord will forgive such a penitent, in the sense of restoring him to his favor; but he will be made to suffer "stripes" (Luke 12:47,48) for the sin, in proportion as God sees it to have been wilfully committed.

Not infrequently a conscientious person realizes that he has committed sin, and that it had some wilfulness in it. He properly feels condemned, guilty before God; realizing his own guilt, and forgetting the fountain for sin and uncleanness, opened by God for our weak, fallen race, he falls into a state of sadness, believing that he has committed the sin unto death. Such wander in deserts drear, until they find the cleansing fountain. Let such remember, however, that the very facts of their sorrow for sin and their desire to return to divine favor are proofs that they have not committed sin unto death; for the Apostle declares that those who commit sin of this sort cannot be renewed unto repentance. (Heb. 6:6.) Penitents, then, may always feel confident that their sins were in part, at least, results of the fall, and hence not unto death, but requiring forgiveness and stripes.

Such is the wonderful provision of God, through Christ, for the acceptance of every soul which, forsaking sin and the love of it, seeks righteousness and life through him who is the Way, as well as the Truth and the Life. Thus all, whether naturally stronger or weaker, have an equal opportunity to gain everlasting life as well as to gain the great price of joint-heirship with Christ.

FUTURE RETRIBUTION

While the Scriptures teach that the present Gospel age is the church's Judgment-day or period of trial, and that the world's Judgment-day or time of trial will be the Millennial age, it is nevertheless a reasonable question to ask,—To what extent will those who are not of the consecrated church be held responsible, in the Millennial age, for their misdeeds, of cruelty, dishonesty and immorality, of the present time? And to what extent will those of the same class then be rewarded for present efforts to live moral and benevolent lives?

These are important questions, especially to the world, and well would it be for them if they could realize their importance and profit thereby. They are important also to the church, because of our interest in the world, and because of our desire to understand and teach correctly our Father's plans.

We have learned that the sacrifice of Christ secures for all mankind, however vile, an awakening from death, and the privilege of thereafter coming to perfection, and, if they will, of living forever. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:15.) The object of their being again brought into existence will be to give them a favorable opportunity to secure everlasting life, on the conditions which God requires—obedience to his righteous will. We have no intimation whatever in the Scriptures that, when awakened, the moral condition of men will have changed, but we have much, in both reason and revelation, to show that as they went into death weak and depraved so they will come out of it. As there is "no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave" (Eccl. 9:10), they will have learned nothing; and since they were sinners and unworthy of life and divine favor when they died, they will still be unworthy; and as they have received neither full rewards nor *full* punishments for the deeds of the present life, it is evident that just such a time of awakening as God has promised during the Millennium is necessary;—for rewarding, and punishing, and giving to all mankind the opportunity for eternal life secured by Christ's great ransom-sacrifice.

While strictly speaking, the world is not now on trial—that is, the present is not the time for its full and complete trial, yet men are not now, nor have they ever been entirely without light and ability, for the use of which they are accountable. In the darkest days of the world's history, and in the deepest degradation of savage life, there has always been at least a measure of the light of conscience pointing more or less directly to righteousness and virtue. That the deeds of the present life have much to do with the future, Paul taught very clearly when, before Felix, he reasoned of justice and self-government, in view of the judgment to come, so that Felix trembled.—Acts 24:25, Diaglott translation.

At the first advent of our Lord, an increased measure of light came to men, and to that extent increased their responsibility, as he said: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (John 3:19.) For those evil deeds committed against the light possessed, whether of conscience or of revelation, men will have to give an account, and will receive, in their day of judgment, a just recompense of reward. And, likewise, to the extent of their effort to live righteously: they will receive their reward in the day of trial.—Matt. 10:42.

If men would consider what even reason discerns, that a time of reckoning, of judgment, is coming, that God will not forever permit evil to triumph, and that in some way he will punish evil-doers, it would undoubtedly save them many sorrows and chastisements in the age to come. Said the Prophet, "Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?" (Isaiah 29:15.) Behold, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. 15:3); and "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Eccl. 12:14.) He "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts."—1 Cor. 4:5.

The age of Christ's reign will be a time of just judgment; and though it will be an age of golden opportunities to all, it will be a time of severe discipline, trial and punishment to many. That the judgment will be fair and impartial, and with due consideration for the circumstances and

the opportunities of each individual, is also assured—by the character of the Judge (the Christ—John 5:22; 1 Cor. 6:2), by his perfect knowledge, by his unwavering justice and goodness, by his divine power and by his great love as shown in his sacrifice to redeem men from death, that they might enjoy the privilege of this favorable, individual trial.

The varied circumstances and opportunities of men, in this and past ages, indicate that a just judgment will recognize differences in the degree of individual responsibility, which will also necessitate differences in the Lord's future dealings with them. And this reasonable deduction we find clearly confirmed by the Scriptures. The Judge has been, and still is, taking minute cognizance of men's actions and words (Prov. 5:21), although they have been entirely unaware of it; and he declares that "Every idle ['pernicious,' injurious or malicious] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36); and that even a cup of cold water, given to one of his little ones, because he is Christ's, shall in nowise lose its reward. (Matt. 10:42) The context shows that the "pernicious" words to which Jesus referred were words of wilful and malicious opposition spoken against manifest light. (Matt. 12:24, 31, 32) He also affirmed that it would be more tolerable for Tyre, Sidon and Sodom in the day of judgment than for Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, which had misimproved greater advantages of light and opportunity.—Matt. 11:20-24.

In the very nature of things, we can see that the punishments of that age will be in proportion to past guilt. Every sin indulged, and every evil propensity cultivated, hardens the heart and makes the way back to purity and virtue more difficult. Consequently, sins wilfully indulged now, will require punishment and discipline in the age to come; and the more deeply the soul is dyed in willing sin, the more severe will be the measures required to correct it. As a wise parent would punish a wayward child, so Christ will punish the wicked for their good.

His punishments will always be administered in justice, tempered with mercy, and relieved by his approval and reward to those who are rightly exercised thereby. And it will only be when punishments, instruction and encouragements fail; in short, when love and mercy have done all that wisdom can approve (which is all that could be asked), that any will meet the final punishment which his case demands—the second death.

None of the world will meet that penalty until they have first had all the blessed opportunities of the age to come. And while this is true of the world, the same principle applies now to the consecrated children of God in this our judgment (trial) day. We now receive God's favors (through faith), while the world will receive them in the next age, viz., instruction, assistance, encouragement, discipline and punishment. "For what son is he whom the Father chastiseth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." Therefore, when we receive grievous chastisement, we should accept it as from a loving Father for our correction, not forgetting "the exhortation which speaketh unto us as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."—Heb. 12:4-13.

How just and equal are God's ways! Read carefully the rules of the coming age—Jer. 31:29-34 and Ezek. 18:20-32. They prove to us, beyond the possibility of a doubt, the sincerity and reality of all his professions of love to men: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?"—Ezek. 33:11.

All who in this life repent of sin, and, as the term repentance implies, begin and continue the work of reformation to the best of their ability, will form character which will be a benefit to them in the age to come; when awakened in the resurrection age, they will be to that extent advanced towards perfection, and their progress will be more rapid and easy; while with others it will be more slow, tedious and difficult. This is implied in the words of our Lord (John 5:29, 30—Diaglott): "The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life [those whose trial is past, and who were judged worthy of life, will be raised perfect—the faithful of past ages to perfect human life, the overcomers of the gospel age to perfect life as divine beings], and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."—These are awakened to judgment—to receive a course of discipline and correction—as the necessary means for their perfecting, or, otherwise, their condemnation to the second death.

The man who, in this life, by fraud and injustice, accumulated and hoarded great wealth, which was scattered to the winds when he was laid in the dust, will doubtless awake to lament his loss, and bewail his poverty and his utter inability under the new order of things to repeat unlawful measures to accumulate a fortune. With many it will be a severe chastisement and a bitter experience to overcome the propensities to avarice, selfishness, pride, ambition and idleness, fostered and pampered for years in the present life. Occasionally we see an illustration of this form of punishment now, when a man of great wealth suddenly loses all, and the haughty spirit of himself and family must fall.

We are told (Dan. 12:2) that some shall awake to shame and age-lasting contempt. And who can doubt that, when every secret thing is brought into judgment (Eccl. 12:14), and the dark side of many a character that now stands measurably approved among men is then made known, many a face will blush and hide itself in confusion? When the man who steals is required to refund the stolen property to its rightful owner, with the addition of twenty per cent interest, and the man who deceives, falsely accuses or otherwise wrongs his neighbor, is required to acknowledge his crimes and so far as possible to repair damages, on peril of an eternal loss of life, will not this be retributive justice? Note the clear statement of this in God's typical dealings with Israel, whom he made to represent the world.—1 Cor. 10:11; Lev. 6:1-7. See also "Tabernacle Shadows," page 99.

As we are thus permitted to look into the perfect plan of God, how forcibly we are reminded of his word through the prophet Isaiah, "Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet." (Isa. 28:17) We also see the wholesome influence of such discipline. Parents, in disciplining their children, realize the imperative necessity of making their punishments proportionate to the character of the offences; and so in God's government: great punishments following great offences are not greater than is necessary to establish justice and to effect great moral reforms.

Seeing that the Lord will thus equitably adjust human affairs in his own due time, we can afford to endure hardness for the present, and resist evil with good, even at the cost of present disadvantage. Therefore, "Recompense to no man evil for evil." "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. 12:17-19; Phil. 2:5.

The present order of things will not always continue: a time of reckoning is coming. The just Judge of all the earth says, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay"; and the Apostle Peter adds, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." (2 Pet. 2:9) And, as we have seen, those punishments will be adapted to the nature of the offences, and the benevolent object in view—man's permanent establishment in righteousness.

Other Scriptures corroborative of this view of future rewards and punishments are as follows: 2 Sam. 3:39; Matt. 16:27; 1 Pet. 3:12; Psa. 19:11; 91:8; Prov. 11:18; Isa. 40:10; 49:4; Matt. 5:12; 10:41, 42; Luke 6:35; Rev. 22:12; Rom. 14:11, 12.

LET HONESTY AND TRUTH PREVAIL

Having demonstrated that neither the Bible nor reason offers the slightest support to the doctrine that eternal torment is the penalty for sin, we note the fact that the various church creeds, and confessions, and hymn-books, and theological treatises, are its only supports; and that under the increasing light of our day, and the consequent emancipation of reason, belief in this horrible, fiendish doctrine of the dark ages is fast dying out. But alas! this is not because Christian people generally are zealous for the truth of God's Word and for his character, and willing to destroy their grim creed-idols. Ah no! they still bow before their admitted falsities; they still pledge themselves to their defense, and spend time and money for their support, though at heart ashamed of them, and privately denying them.

The general influence of all this is, to cause the honest-hearted of the world to despise Christianity and the Bible; and to make hypocrites and semi-infidels of nominal Christians. Because the nominal church clings to this old blasphemy, and falsely presents its own error as the teaching of the Bible, the Word of God, though still nominally reverenced, is being practically repudiated. Thus the Bible, the great anchor of truth and liberty, is being cut loose from,

by the very ones who, if not deceived regarding its teachings, would be held and blessed by it.

The general effect, not far distant, will be, first open infidelity, then anarchy. For much, very much of this, lukewarm Christians, both in pulpit and pews, who know or ought to know better, are responsible. Many such are willing to compromise the truth, to slander God's character, and to stultify and deceive themselves, for the sake of peace, or ease, or present earthly advantage. And any minister, who, by uttering a word for an unpopular truth, will risk the loss of his stipend and his reputation for being "established" in the bog of error, is considered a bold man, even though he ignominiously withhold his name from his published protests.

If professed Christians would be honest with themselves and true to God, they would soon learn that "their fear toward God is taught by the precepts of men." (Isa. 29:13) If all would decide to let God be true, though it should prove every man a liar (Rom. 3:4), and show all human creeds to be imperfect and misleading, there would be a great creed smashing work done very shortly. Then the Bible would be studied and appreciated as never before; and its testimony that the wages of sin is death (extinction), would be recognized as a "just recompense of reward."

We have given foregoing but a mere suggestion of the light now shining in "due season" for the "household of faith." We invite correspondence from all who "hunger and thirst after *right*." We have *free* tracts, and books to loan to the poor in spirit who are poor also in purse. See page 2.

VOL. XXI ALLEGHENY, PA., APRIL 15, 1900 No. 8

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

The "shaking" of the ecclesiastical "heavens" continues. Dr. Hillis' denunciation of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which as a Presbyterian he has supported for many years, is about as strong as he could make it. He is credited with the following language in his discourse to the Plymouth Church Brooklyn, N. Y., on Sunday, March 25:—

"The Confession of Faith says that certain men and angels are foreordained to everlasting death, being particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished, and every young man who enters the Presbyterian church has to solemnly swear to believe and teach this frightful view. And every attempt to revise and expel that statement from the creed has been successfully combated by a majority that wishes to retain the doctrine. It would seem as if a man would prefer to be burned at the stake rather than hold or assert or charge such infinite cruelty upon the all-merciful and all-loving God. The day the scholastics wrote that chapter in the Confession of Faith they got the devil confused with God.

"I would rather shake my fist in the face of the Eternal and fling every vile epithet toward his stainless throne, where eternal mercy sits with the world's atoning Savior, than lift my hand with that creed before God's throne and affirm that I taught or believed it."

The matter is before the Chicago Presbytery, which is divided in sentiment—many of its members averring that they agree to Dr. Hillis' views of the subject. The gentleman proposes to resign his connection with Presbyterianism if the latter objects to his attacks upon it from the inside. The world looks on approvingly, and says, Bravo, Dr. Hillis! But to our view the gentleman has little to be proud of; for, granting that, as he says, he has held privately for years the views he now expresses publicly, it follows that for all those years he lived a lie before the whole world. And if for those years he kept silence because he was making a personal name and fame and following, which he has now attained, it follows that for all those years, according to the gentleman's own words quoted above, he was doing worse than "shaking his fist in the face of the Eternal"—worse than to have "flung—every vile epithet toward God's stainless throne where eternal mercy sits with the world's atoning Savior."

What an astounding confession this is to be sent forth to the world! We are reminded of our Lord's words, "Out of thine own mouth I will judge thee!" And yet this side of the case strikes very few. Why? Because they are in a similar plight having been for years directly or indirectly upholding this same creed and thus to the extent of their influence (either as ministers and officers or else as common members of churches avowing these creeds) they, too, have been thus blaspheming the Eternal and his stainless throne. Other ministers in Presbyterian churches look with envy at Dr Hillis' freedom and wish that the time might soon come that they would have sufficient individual influence and prestige to stand alone, that they, too, might declare their independence and cease their blasphemy against the divine character which causes uneasiness, notwithstanding long usage to it and notwithstanding the fact that "others do the same." Added to this is now another fear, that the tide of public sentiment is on the turn—that the pews, if they knew as much as the pulpits respecting such matters, would be much more honest;—and that the risk of jumping out too soon as "reformers," and thus losing prestige and possibly bread and butter, may be offset soon by the reverse risk of not jumping soon enough to get glory as a "reformer" and on the contrary being covered with odium as those who have deceived the people as long as possible.

Surely it would have been much more to Dr. Hillis' credit to have first resigned all relationship to Presbyterianism and then in a very humble manner to have confessed to Plymouth church his shortcomings of the past and his resolution henceforth to preach the truth, or at least his convictions respecting it.

* * *

Rev. Dr. Donehoo, of Pittsburgh, the very next Sunday (April 1st) took a similar stand against the Westminster Confession, which when ordained, he solemnly vowed that he believed and would teach. Yet, while still posing as a Presbyterian and doing violence to his oath of office, he confessed in the following language, quoted in the daily press, that he has for the many years of his Presbyterian membership and ministry been acting a lie—he confesses he "*never could believe*" what he professed. We quote:—

"The question suggested to me by the text is the following, 'Are men foreordained to be damned?' It is about the bluntest, harshest, most unreasonable one that an unprejudiced reader of the Bible could have presented for his consideration. I am sorry to say that it is one that has been present in my thoughts from my earliest recollection. I have heard it discussed in the pulpit, have read many works on the subject, and have often gravely considered it in private conversation with brethren, tho I have never for one instant had any doubts on the subject so far as I am concerned. Whatever the Westminster divines may have believed on the subject, their language as now understood expresses in unmistakable phrase that such was their belief. Thus they declare: 'By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others are foreordained to everlasting death, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.'

"I never could believe such a thing, and I pray to God to preserve me from ever either unwittingly endorsing or so much as entertaining such an insane thought in my heart. Nor would I refer to this at all were it not just now published all over the land that the great Presbyterian church was about to drag a faithful minister of the gospel to trial for protesting against the idea that any man is foreordained of God to be damned to all eternity. If such a sifting process as that just now hinted at was to be fearlessly put in force throughout the church, and every man who preaches and prays every Sabbath day of his life the very opposite of this horrible dogma, whether he has the brains or the courage to admit it or not, there would be such a depletion in the ranks of the church as would throw St. Bartholomew in the shade."

The gentleman frankly avows that he would have kept quiet still longer, and have continued to tacitly endorse the slander against God had it not been his fear that a hunt for "heretics" might be started in Presbyterian circles. He hopes that a sufficient number of Presbyterian ministers will growl to deter the others from enforcing the laws and rules of the denomination. Yet strange to say, the men who stay inside the denomination and denounce it, and declare their perfidy in respect to its teachings and their unfaithfulness to God's character and Word, are honored; while honest men who refuse thus to stultify themselves and to blaspheme God's holy name for bread and "honor one of another" are disesteemed. After all then the chief fault is with the people;—the preachers merely debase themselves to supply the popular demand. It is time for all who have any moral honesty to show it. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. 18:4.

SELF-DENIAL AND CROSS-BEARING CONDITIONS

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me [be my follower], let him deny himself, and take up his cross." Matt. 16:24.

Generally the thought attached to this passage in the minds of Christian people is that the Lord is here laying down the terms and conditions upon which eternal torment may be escaped. This result of false teaching, received from earliest infancy, thus casts a false shadow upon very many of the utterances of our Lord and the apostles. To the Jew, however, who had no thought in his mind of eternal torment for anybody, the above utterance would have no such significance. The disciples, to whom it was addressed, received it exactly for what it says. To understand it as they did let us take their standpoint: As Jews they shared the nation's hopes, based upon the Abrahamic promise, viz., that in due time God proposed to bless all nations, and that Israel was to be his instrumentality through which the blessings would flow. We are to remember that based upon this hope all Israel was in expectation of a Messiah whose first work it would be to organize Israel in some sense of the word, and then, as its great Head and Guide, bring to pass the blessed conditions.

The disciples knew that Jesus claimed to be this great Messiah, and they had left all to follow him, in order that they might have a share with him in his kingdom,—according to his promise, a very honorable share in it, a seat in his throne. When, therefore, he addressed them on this subject in the above words nothing could have been further from their thoughts than that he should mean that only those who would conform to these strict rules would escape an eternity of torture: on the contrary, their understanding would be that all who would not conform to these rules, and be close followers of Jesus' example, would fail to share with him in the kingdom glories and honors—fail to be associated with him as joint-heirs of the kingdom. They certainly expected that his kingdom, when organized, would bless all nations, and if it would bless all other nations assuredly it would bless also the Jewish nation, out of which the Master was proposing to select his joint-heirs. From this standpoint our Lord's words are reasonable, and from no other standpoint.

It would be thoroughly unreasonable every way to suppose that the Lord laid down the hard and fast condition that everyone who would not become his follower and a cross-bearer to the full extent of self-denial, even of parents and children if need be, would be tormented on this account, or even destroyed. In fact, we know that the same great Teacher declared, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him," and we see most evidently that but a small proportion of the nations was at that time drawn to Jesus by the Father through the word of grace. We see that the great majority were blinded. How evident, then, it is that our Lord had no reference to the blinded ones who did not become his disciples, but intended his remarks exclusively for the class addressed, whose eyes had been opened and whose ears had been unstopped, and who had become his followers by a consecration. Note the Master's words, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear;"—here is the suggestion that the majority of the Jews did not see and did not hear, and hence had no call to be followers of Jesus in the same special sense; the majority being not even drawn of the Father, not being in a condition of heart to be drawn by the truth.

Note how our Lord refers to this matter, and speaks of the Jewish leaders, saying that they were blind guides, leading the blind people, and all about to "fall into the ditch." (Matt. 15:14) This falling into the ditch seems to those who are deluded by the eternal torment theory, to be but another suggestion that all the Jewish nation, both leaders and people were fast hastening to "hell," to torment. But on the contrary, the Scriptures show clearly that the ditch to which they were hastening was the great time of trouble which came upon their nation after our Lord's crucifixion, and which culminated with the utter destruction of their city by the army of Titus in the year 70 A. D.—since which time they have been nationally disintegrated and destroyed.

That the apostles did not understand that all who did not follow with them in the narrow way of self-sacrifice, self-denial, cross-bearing, were to be tormented, is testified by the Apostle Peter who, speaking under the inspiration of the holy spirit, declared to these same Jews that they had crucified Messiah, and then he adds, "But I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."—Acts 3:17.

This blind ignorance is referred to also by the Apostle Paul: in discussing the matter in his Epistle to the Romans he pointed out that Israel was blinded and did stumble and fall into the ditch, and did not attain the great prize which it was seeking, and that the elect only obtained that prize. He points us to the elect "remnant" selected from the nation before its complete disintegration, and informs us that this remnant, being less than the number which God had predetermined, the elect church, is to be completed during this Gospel age by the selection of the remainder from amongst the Gentiles to be fellow-heirs with the Israelites in the same promise made to Abraham. These are denominated "spiritual Israel," and the Apostle points out that this change in the divine operation was foreknown to the Lord, and was a part of his plan, as revealed through the prophets—that the Gentiles also should be fellow-heirs of the same promise.—Rom. 11:7-12.

The Apostle proceeds to show that the blindness will continue upon fleshly Israel until the Gospel church is completed, and that then blindness will be turned from them, and they shall see; and God's favor shall come upon them, and they will be amongst the first to be blessed under the new order of things following the glorification of the elect church.

With these thoughts in our minds, putting ourselves exactly in the place of the apostles, we are much better prepared to understand the meaning of the Master's words, "If any man will be my follower he must deny himself and take up his cross." The Apostle points us to the same thought, saying that it is only if we suffer with him that we shall reign with him; if we be dead with him, that we shall live with him. The reference is exclusively to those on the "narrow way," and does not at all refer to the world of mankind. The verses following, a part of the same discourse, declare that whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for the Lord's sake shall find it; this also is exclusively applicable to those who had had their eyes opened, and had become his followers, and is not at all applicable to others.

All who become Jesus' followers first take two steps, viz., justification and consecration, or sanctification. Justification is imputed to them as the result of faith in Christ as their Redeemer, and its object is to place fallen sinful human beings on such a reckonedly perfect plane or standing before God as would permit them to present their bodies living sacrifices, "holy and acceptable to God" through Christ. Consecration, self-surrender, sanctification, called in our text self-denial, consists in the giving up of our wills to the will of the Lord: and our wills controlling this implies our all.

This class, having received their share of the ransom, (justification) and having used it, exchanging its hopes of restitution for the heavenly hopes, "heavenly calling," spiritual prosperity and prospective joint-heirship with Christ, have no longer any earthly rights or hopes: hence such must either gain the spiritual life they have started out for or must lose all life. And the terms or conditions upon which the heavenly life is to be attained are the sacrifice of the earthly life and its interests. Therefore, as here stated, in respect to this class, whoever of them saves his earthly life (refusing to sacrifice it, etc.) after having made the consecration, loses it entirely—loses all hope of a future life. And on the other hand, those of this class who are now faithful in laying down the present life for the Lord's sake shall find life eternal under the glorious conditions of the kingdom. "If we be dead with with him, we shall also live with him."—2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

The succeeding verse (26) is a part of the same discourse, not to people in general, but applicable to the disciples, the followers and cross-bearers only, the little flock. It reads: "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul (being, existence), or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul (his future existence)?" We are to remember that only one offer of life eternal has yet been made to mankind; and this was the offer that Jesus was making to his followers, and that has since been made throughout this Gospel age to whoever has ears to hear and a will to walk in the narrow way. There is no offer of eternal life to the world yet, altho the Scriptures clearly show us that there is to be an offer of eternal life under other conditions during the Millennial age; but none can either accept or reject those conditions yet, for they are not offered to any.

Those now invited to eternal life under its most glorious conditions of "glory, honor, immortality," and joint-heirship with the Redeemer in the kingdom are exhorted by our Lord to appreciate highly the value of eternal life; and it is implied that anyone who will at all consider the matter will readily acknowledge that to give all that he has of earthly life and its vanities in exchange for his life eternal would be to get that great boon at a very small price—at a great bargain; We see men who as death draws near, are willing to give their all to retain their hold a little longer on the present life; how much more should we be willing to lay down our lives

voluntary sacrifices, in daily self-denials, in sharing the sufferings of Christ in this present time, that we may thereby attain, according to God's good promise in Christ, the glorious and eternal life promised to the overcomers.

WHAT CONSTITUTES CROSS-BEARING?

But now we come back to the original proposition of our text, and inquire particularly respecting the declared terms of discipleship, What do they signify, and how do they apply to us individually in our daily lives? What is it for us to deny ourselves? It signifies that having consecrated ourselves to the Lord we should have no wills of our own; self should be ignored, or, as the Apostle Paul expresses it, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "Reckon ye yourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." Self-denial, then, means to ignore self-will, self-gratification: and this includes all the earthly ambitions and desires, the sinful, and no less those that are laudable and proper. We pledge ourselves at the very beginning that we are not following our own inclinations and our own wills, but are to be wholly subject to the will of our Head, the Lord Jesus, if we may be in turn counted in as members in particular of his body, the elect church.

Very graciously, the Lord vails from our sight at the beginning of the way some of the trials of the flesh and conflicts between the mind of the flesh and the new mind, which this full consecration must involve if we press along the line toward the mark which he has set for us as the standard of character. Could we see all that is implied from the very beginning of the race we would be disheartened no doubt, but as we grow in grace, and become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, we grow also in knowledge and in love toward the Lord and toward all who are in fellowship with him, and thus it becomes daily easier for us, as we sing,

> ". . the pathway smooths
> Since first we learned to love it."

As a result, by and by the trials which came at first seem to be as nothing, but other trials come instead, as we discern more distinctly, more clearly, the good, the acceptable, the perfect will of God. Thus our trial condition progresses, and what is required of us is that step by step we shall be faithful to what we see to be the Lord's will, and shall seek to the best of our ability to submit ourselves thereto. This is self-denial.—forsaking all else to be Jesus' disciples.

Cross-bearing is closely related to self-denial, and yet a distinction between them may be noted. Self-denial relates more particularly to passive obedience and endurance for the Lord's sake; cross-bearing relates more particularly to activities in the Lord's service, which we find to be contrary to our natural inclinations. Faithfulness in self-denial means courage and zeal; cross-bearing means victory, overcoming. Our self-denials may be victories gained in our own hearts, of which others may know nothing, and of which they should know nothing, if we desire to have the fulness of the Lord's blessing, for we are to make sure that we do not deny ourselves to be seen of men, but merely for the Lord's approval. Our cross-bearings, however, may be seen, to some extent at least, by those who are in close contact with us, and especially by those who are walking in the same "narrow way."

CROSS-BEARERS GENERALLY MISUNDERSTOOD

And how appropriate it is that all cross-bearers should recognize each other, and be able to sympathize with one another and give an encouraging word, a sympathizing look or a helping hand, as opportunity may offer. As for others, we cannot expect sympathy from them, for from their standpoint we are counted fools (Acts 26:24; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2:14; 3:18), unwise, following an unwise course, bringing our difficulties upon ourselves, because we insist on following an ideal Pattern, the pattern of our dear Redeemer, instead of following the pattern of churchianity and the world. Such, of course, have only sneers for the faithful, and often no doubt think of them as they speak of them, as being hypocrites. This indeed is all part of the cross-bearing, especially when those who deride and who sneer are those whom we love and whose esteem we would enjoy, if we could have it in conjunction with the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Look, for instance, at our Lord Jesus, and the cross which he bore—not the literal cross of wood which he bore to Calvary, amid shame and jeers, but the cross-bearing which he practised continually throughout the three and a half years of his ministry from the time of his consecration at Jordan. Note how faithfulness to the truth, in testifying respecting his mission, the kingdom that he was establishing, and the terms and conditions of membership in it, being misunderstood by the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees, led to opposition continually, so that they not only maligned his name, but in their hatred sought his life and finally obtained it. Note that they were not worldly people, as that word is generally understood, but members of the leading denominations of his day: and that the so-called holiness people of that day were his most bitter assailants. He could indeed have fallen into line with the Pharisees or with the Sadducees, and have been considered "respectable," and have had a large following, but fidelity to the truth would not permit him to do this, but forced him to take a stand independent of all sects and parties, and this brought against him the wrath of all of them, and was his continual and daily cross-bearing, that had to be borne, if he would "overcome" and be granted association with the Father in the kingdom. And may not all of his faithful followers expect similar experiences, under similar conditions now? We think so; we know so; they have such experiences.

The Apostle mentions some of these crosses, and declares that the endurance of them are marks of his faithfulness as a servant of the Lord: "In much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings," by dishonor, by evil report, as deceivers and yet true, as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. 6:4-10) How much our Master knew of being counted a deceiver, while yet he was the true one, of being called Beelzebub, while really the Prince of life! What a cross it must have been to endure such slanderous misrepresentations, and contradictions of sinners against himself; and how faithfully he bore the cross. And shall not all of his followers expect to similarly share this cross with him, and be misunderstood, misrepresented, misjudged, by those who are more or less blinded by the adversary! Such dishonor, such evil reports, are amongst the things which our Lord specifically declared would be a part of our cross-bearing when he said, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad (in all such cross-bearings), for great is your reward in heaven."

CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS SHARE HIS CROSS

In a word, our Lord calls upon his disciples to follow him, in direct opposition to the world-current. He declares that the disciple must not expect to be above his Lord in being spared such experiences, but promises great rewards at the end of the journey—life eternal, with exceeding glory.

The awfulness of the teaching of the creeds of Christendom respecting the fate of the world in general is only grasped when we begin to seriously consider the narrowness of the way in which all of the Lord's true followers are called to walk in his footsteps. Surely, if all except such faithful saints, an extremely "little flock," are to be eternally tormented, it would mean that there are to be many members of every family on earth consigned to that awful and unending agony. How absurd is the proposition, how unreasonable, how unscriptural, when the Scriptures are rightly understood!

But how reasonable is the proper interpretation of our text, how reasonable its application to those who have been drawn of the Father to the Son, and who then have accepted of the Son and his great sacrifice for sin, and who have considered it a reasonable service to present their bodies living sacrifices, and have consecrated their all to him, that they might have fellowship in his sufferings, and ultimate fellowship also in his glory. These can see readily that the kingdom honor and glory to which they are called, are blessings so great, honors so profound, and their works as kings and priests and judges in the Millennial age so particular, that all of these testings of faith, patience, love and obedience are wholly reasonable to them.

All such we exhort, especially at this particular season of the commemoration of our dear Redeemer's death, that they catch not merely at the outward form of self-denial, practiced by nominal Christendom during the Lenten season, but that whatever of outward self-denial they may practice they may learn the full meaning of self-consecration and immolation which our Lord's words signify: and that they be not content with the wearing of a cross as an ornament, but grasp fully and clearly the purport of the Master's words respecting the true cross-bearing, that in due time they may also attain to the crown-wearing promised as a reward to the faithful. Let us at this season of the year renew our covenant of sacrifice with the Lord, determined, in the words of the Apostle, that we will more zealously than ever—Lay aside every weight, and every besetting sin, and run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel, looking unto Jesus, in whose footsteps we seek to run.—Heb. 12:1

CHRIST THE FIRST TO RISE FROM THE DEAD

MARK 5:22-24, 35-43.—APRIL 15.

"He is risen, as he said."—Matt. 28:6.

The selection of the narrative of the awakening of the daughter of Jairus as an Easter lesson was no doubt under the common but mistaken supposition that the miracle performed upon this child was similar to the miracle of our Lord's resurrection, which Easter Sunday generally celebrates. We will examine the lesson on its own merits, and then see that the Scriptures distinctly and pointedly distinguish between the two miracles—and that the miracle performed upon Jairus' daughter is nowhere designated a resurrection, nor was it such in fact.

Jairus was evidently a man of considerable influence in his community, for to be a ruler of the synagogue meant, in the custom of that time, that he was also a member of the local Sanhedrin, the court which tried certain classes of offenders, preserved general order, convened the assembly, etc. The rulers of the synagogue had its affairs in charge also, and invited its readers and speakers, managed the schools in connection with it, etc. As a man of high station in the city, he no doubt was acquainted with the nobleman of the same city (Capernaum), whose son Jesus had healed, as recorded in John 4:46-53. His knowledge of that case no doubt helped to increase his own faith in the Lord's power so remarkably manifested in the circumstances of this lesson.

It was while Jesus was at the house of Matthew (Levi, the publican—see lesson of March 18), enjoying the banquet which Matthew had intended should bring his publican friends in contact with the Master, and probably toward the conclusion of the banquet, that Jairus arrived on he scene to beseech our Lord for the recovery of his daughter. In the account as given by Matthew (9:18) the ruler is represented as saying that his daughter was already dead, while in the account before us the implication is that altho she was in an extreme condition life still remained. The probability is that at the time Jairus left his child she was in an extremely critical condition, and that he surmised that by the time he was talking with the Lord she was quite probably dead—(and such was the case and the servants already enroute to notify Jairus). Quite possibly Jairus mentioned the matter from this standpoint: She was at the point of death when I left her; she is no doubt dead now, but come and lay thy hands on her that she may be healed and live. It was a wonderful exhibition of faith, and one which our Lord evidently fully appreciated, for he did not hesitate to go with him.

It was during this journey from the home of Matthew to the home of Jairus, a great throng of people accompanying him, that the poor woman who had an issue of blood twelve years, and had spent all that she had and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, conceived the thought that if she could but touch the hem of Jesus' garment she should be cured—and by the exercise of her faith in this manner was healed. We can imagine the feelings of Jairus in consequence of this delay; while it added to his faith in the power of Jesus, it at the same time tested his faith in respect to the recovery of his child. The test became more severe, because just at this juncture messengers arrived from his wife, saying that the child was dead, and that it would therefore be unnecessary to trouble the great Teacher.

Similar are the Lord's providential dealings with many of his poeple: he gives us a ground for faith, and then, as we exercise that faith and act in harmony with it, he gives fresh corroboration; meanwhile testing it, by permitting various difficulties, contrary suggestions, doubts, fears, etc.—not only such as would arise in our minds, but such as would be brought to us through others, sometimes those nearest and dearest. Yet our experiences have been that in all such trials of faith the Lord has been ready to speak peace, comfort and full assurance to our hearts, if we would but listen to his words. So it was with Jairus. When the servants arrived, and said, Hope is gone, submit to the inevitable; Jesus also spoke a word, saying, "Be not afraid; only believe." O, how much there is in faith! How necessary God causes that it shall be during this present age. He desires that His people shall "Walk by faith." "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and the Apostle assures us that "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Indeed, in many respects faith (not credulity) is the prime essential of an "overcomer." No one can be an overcomer without it; with it anyonce can be an "overcomer." God's grace in Christ making full provision for all such. Divine promises and blessing are to the faith-full only—both as respects the present and the eternal life.

Jesus when he had come to Jairus' house, permitted only Peter, James and John to accompany him as witnesses of the power of God. The favor manifested toward these three apostles on so many occasions is not to be esteemed as simply a selfish partiality but rather as an indication that these three who were specially zealous amongst the apostles were further advanced in spiritual things, and best able to appreciate the privileges granted them. Their selection was but another manifestation of what our Lord called attention to in one of his parables as being the divine principle of government, viz., that "to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly"—to him that hath used, and profited by divine favor most faithfully, shall proportionately more and larger favors be granted; because he more than others has by his faithfulness become capable of enjoying and appreciating and profiting by additional favors. The Lord evidently loves fervency (warmth) of spirit or disposition. No doubt he appreciates some who are naturally cold and phlegmatic, but just as evidently he appreciates still more those who have a keener interest, a warmer love, and more intense manifestations. Noting our Lord's appreciation of zeal should lead all who are his followers today to strive after greater fervency of spirit, greater zeal and energy in running the race set before us in the Gospel—greater interest in the Master's cause in all its branches.

The journey both ways had consumed considerable time, and the preparations for the burial were far advanced at the time of our Lord's arrival, for it was the Jewish custom to have a speedy burial after death. The hired mourners (whom Matthew designates "minstrels") were already there, and the usual unseemly tumult of the time was in progress. Our Lord rebuked the mourners and spoke of the maid as sleeping, just as he similarly said of Lazarus, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; I go that I may awake him." This aroused the laugh of scorn, his hearers not appreciating what he meant, even as the disciples did not appreciate the word "sleep," when used in connection with Lazarus, until our Lord said plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

The use of the word "sleep" for death is very frequent in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament the patriarchs are said to "sleep with their fathers," and this was said alike of both good and bad, kings and prophets and common people. In the New Testament the Apostle speaks of those that "sleep in Jesus," for whom we are to sorrow not as others who have no hope, because we believe in the resurrection of the dead. In the case of Stephen it is said that he "fell asleep," and the Apostle in speaking of the closing of the Gospel age declared that some of the church would not thus sleep, saying, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." (1 Kings 2.10; Acts 7:60; 1 Thes. 4:14; 1 Cor. 15:51). Dr. Lightfoot calls attention to the fact that the Jewish theological writings, the Talmud, contain the expression "when he slept" hundreds of times, as signifying the time of death; and our word cemetery means "sleeping place." Dr. Trench, the noted scholar, says of this word sleep, "Thereby the reality of death is not denied, but only the fact implicitly assumed that death will be followed by a resurrection, as sleep is (followed) by an awakening."

Death would not have been even figuratively called sleep, except for the provision for a resurrection, nor would it have been appropriate had no awakening of the dead been intended. And altho this awakening could not take place without a redemption, and altho the redemption price securing the awakening was not paid until Calvary, nevertheless all of God's people who had faith in his promise made to Abraham ("In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed") realized that what God had promised he would surely fulfil, and that since millions of the families of the earth had gone down into death prior to the promise, and before the coming of the Seed of Abraham, therefore the fulfillment of that promise signified a general awakening from the sleep of death for all mankind—in order that all might have the opportunity of being blessed by the glorious Seed of Abraham.

It was from this standpoint that our Lord spoke and acted; he was already, since his baptism at Jordan, in process of paying the ransom—his entire life was consecrated and had been accepted of the Father, altho the sacrifice had not yet been finished, and was not completed until on Calvary he cried in his dying moment, "It is finished." As a result of the finishing of the ransom there, our Lord declared that in due time the prison-house of death would be opened and that all the sleeping prisoners would come forth; he declared, "All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth;" they that have done well (those now on trial, and approved by the Lord as overcomers) unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill (those who

have not escaped the condemnation, nor been approved of God) unto a resurrection by judgment-trial.—John 5:28, 29.)

That judgment-trial will be their blessed opportunity of coming to a knowledge of the truth respecting the divine character and plan, and if they will of coming into harmony with it, and by the development of character during the Millennium reaching full perfection of restitution at its close. Meantime, they sleep—"sleep in Jesus," in the sense that a hope of awakening in the resurrection morning centers in Jesus by divine arrangement, through the atonement sacrifice which by the grace of God, he gave a ransom for all.—1 Tim. 2:6.

Thus we see that the future life held out before us in the Scriptures is a resurrection hope. In harmony with this the Apostle declared, "Of the hope and resurrection of the dead am I called in question." (Acts 23:6), and again it is declared that his constant theme in preaching was "Jesus and the resurrection." (Acts 17:18) There is no hope of a future life without a resurrection, and there is no hope of a resurrection except in Jesus—that he died for our sins, and thus paid the death penalty which was against us, and thus permitted the wages of sin, death, to become merely a temporary "sleep," from which he will awaken mankind, that they may be blessed under all the great and wonderful privileges of his kingdom during the Millennial age, otherwise in Scripture called the day of judgment, or trial for the world, as this present Gospel age is the day of trial for the church.

When ready, in the presence of his three chosen disciples and the father and mother of the maiden, Jesus took her by the hand, saying, "Talitha cumi." These words are in the Aramaic language spoken by the common people of that time. "Talitha" in the ordinary dialect of the people, is a word of endearment to a young maiden, so that the words are equivalent to 'Rise, my child.' "—Alford.

AWAKENING OF THE DEAD NOT RESURRECTION

The maid awakened to life and consciousness. She did not come back from heaven or from hell, but merely awakened out of the sleep of death, and renewed the experiences of life as before. Such an awakening from sleep—such a restoration of the life forces that had been temporarily suspended, is of the nature of a resurrection, but is not a resurrection. We are to remember that the maiden was not *alive* before—that perfect life has not been enjoyed by any member of Adam's race since father Adam's fall into disobedience and under the divine sentence of death. As the Apostle declares, "In Adam all die," and again, "Death passed upon all," and this maiden was no exception to the rule. Our Lord, in speaking on the subject, implied that none have life in any sense of the word, except those who accept him, and they only in a reckoned sense by faith. His words were, "Let the dead bury their dead." He that hath the Son hath life." As the maiden was therefore legally dead, without perfect life, and without the right to it, before she fell asleep, so likewise, when she awakened, in answer to our Lord's command, she awakened merely to that death condition in which she previously was.

To have resurrected her he would have meant to have lifted her completely out of death in every sense of the word, out of mental, moral and physical degradation, up to the grand heights of perfection of mind and body, as represented in the person of father Adam, and our Lord did nothing of this kind. He merely awakened her, leaving her upon the same plane of death on which she had been born, and had thus far lived for twelve years. The maiden will still have her opportunity of sharing in the general "resurrection by judgments" or restitution during the Millennial age—unless at some subsequent time she accepted the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, and became one of his followers, a member of the church of this Gospel age; in which event she would, if faithful, be accounted worthy of a part in the chief or first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality. But the point we here make is merely that this lesson does not treat of her resurrection, but of her awakening.

In harmony with this is the plain statement of the Scriptures that our Lord Jesus himself, in his resurrection, was "the first fruits of them that slept." (1 Cor. 15:20) Again, the Apostle makes the same point very emphatic in his discourse to Agrippa, saying that all of his preaching was in harmony with the statements of Moses and the prophets: "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead."—Acts 26:23.

These plain statements of Scripture cannot be ignored with impunity by those who desire to be taught of God, and to rid themselves of erroneous theories and speculations respecting the word resurrection. Our Lord's resurrection was indeed the first, and hence the others were not resurrections at all. Our Lord was raised up—clear up—all the way up—out of death—into the full perfection of life. It was not necessary that he should be raised to the perfection of human nature again, for indeed it was the human nature of Jesus that was sacrificed on our behalf—one sacrifice forever—which could never be taken back or rescinded—otherwise it would have meant the repeal of man's redemption—the undoing of the at-one-ment work.

Rather, we are to remember that when our Lord Jesus made his consecration at baptism he was "begotten of the spirit," a spirit being—and that which was begotten of the spirit was in due time "born of the spirit," a spirit being—and referring to this spirit birth, his resurrection, we read that he was "the first-born from the dead." "the first-born among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:18) These are additional proof texts to the effect that neither Lazarus nor Jairus' daughter, nor the son of the widow of Nain, nor the young man whom the Apostle Paul awakened, nor Dorcas, whom Peter awakened, nor the child of the Shunnamite woman whom Elisha awakened, were "born from the dead" in any sense of the word, either on the fleshly or on the spiritual plane.

Let us, then, in thinking of our dear Redeemer's resurrection, seek more and more to grasp its greatness, and to realize that nothing of the kind ever occurred before, and that as he was the first-born from the dead, so his "brethren," the church, are to come next in order. Let us remember also that his resurrection to spirit nature is quite a different resurrection from what the world of mankind may ever hope to share—theirs being a restitution resurrection to human conditions, human perfection and life. The higher, chief, or first resurrection which our Lord experienced, is promised as a special reward to his faithful church and to no others. It is this that the Apostle calls the resurrection of the dead, which he describes in 1 Cor. 15:42-44. Our great endeavor, therefore, as followers in the footsteps of Jesus, should be the same that was before the mind of the great Apostle, when he said, "That I may know the power of his resurrection (the first resurrection, to spiritual conditions, glory, honor and immortality), and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made comformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the (special, chief) resurrection of the dead."—Phil. 3:9-15.

THE VOLUNTEER WORK

Since the sending forth of the double number of our journal last issue, the "Volunteer" enlistments have increased wonderfully. The dear friends of the truth everywhere seem to think that if this issue is to be the "ammunition" used by the Volunteers the results will be momentous; hence many are anxious to enlist in the service which promises nothing of earthly fame or reward, but large appreciation by the Captain of our salvation, and large rewards in the world to come.

There are probably as many as a hundred colored brethren on the Watch Tower lists, some of them very clear in the truth, and very earnest in its service, financially and otherwise. We have received letters from several of these, who had intended engaging in the volunteer work, expressing surprise that in the call for volunteers in the March 1st issue we restricted the inquiry to white Protestant churches. They rightly realized that we have not the slightest of race prejudice, and that we love the colored brethren with just the same warmth of heart that we love the white, and they queried therefore why such a distinction should be made in the call. The reason is that so far as we are able to judge, colored people have less education than whites—many of them quite insufficient to permit them to profit by such reading as we have to give forth. Our conclusion therefore is based upon the supposition that reading matter distributed to a colored congregation would more than half of it be utterly wasted, and a very small percentage indeed likely to yield good results. We advise, therefore, that where the Watch Tower literature, is introduced to colored people it be not by promiscuous circulation, but only to those who give evidence of some ear for the truth.

We avoid, so far as possible, putting the pearls of present truth into the hands of the vicious and depraved, whites as well as blacks. Wherever we have reason to believe that people love sin rather than righteousness, we have no desire to remove from their minds any of the shackles which ignorance and superstition have put upon them; rather, we would leave

them bound until, in the Millennial age, when these shackles shall all be removed, they will be under the strong hand of a strong governor, who will recompense every iniquity as well as every effort toward righteousness.

Similarly, the exclusion of Roman Catholic churches was not intended as any slight upon the people connected with them, for whom we have only the greatest good will and best wishes. Nor did it indicate that we thought none of the Roman Catholics amenable to the truth, for, on the contrary, there are quite a number of very zealous friends of the truth who were reared in Catholicism; indeed, only last Sunday (April 1st) at our meeting in the Bible House Chapel, four Roman Catholics made public profession of faith in the Redeemer and of full consecration to him, and symbolized it in water immersion. We excluded Roman Catholic churches from the Volunteer service because the vast majority of their attendants are either too ignorant or too bigoted to read and think for themselves. True, much of this would apply also to Protestants; but the percentage of hopefuls amongst the latter is so much greater as to justify, we think, the enormous expense involved in this circulation of free reading matter at the churches throughout this country.

* * *

The volunteer service is open to all of the Lord's dear people, brethren and sisters, white and colored, who have a desire thus to serve the great Captain of our salvation, and to help deliver their "brethren" from the bondage of Babylon into the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free from sectarianism, superstition and every yoke of bondage. Nor do we desire to place this service as a yoke or burden upon any, but as the word indicates, it is only for "volunteers." We believe that the Lord would not have any conscriptions or drafts connected with his service. As to whether or not this is a way in which you can serve the Lord's cause is not for us but for you to decide. We merely give you our opinion, that this is one of the best means of serving the truth—preaching the Gospel of the kingdom—breaking the chains of error that are upon the "brethren"—honoring the name and character of our heavenly Father, and extolling the great redemption accomplished by Jesus our Saviour It is a "harvest" work, in that it is gathering to the Lord his true people,—gathering them out of the various sects—not into another sect, but into heart-union with the Lord and with all who are at one with him through oneness of spirit, engendered by love of the truth.

WRAPPERS ADDRESSED FOR SAMPLE TOWERS

We are expecting great results from the volunteer service this year, and those who engage in it to any degree will, we believe, look back with great pleasure to their share in it. But regardless of how much blessing may come to others by this service, we are convinced that great blessings are coming to the Lord's people, through the self-denial and cross-bearing which this volunteer service implies. The bringing of our hearts into such a condition of devotion to the Master means a spiritual blessing and a character-development which surely will be great aids in the attainment of the kingdom. However, to his own master each servant stands or falls, and we are to remember not to judge or offend one another, but rather to assist each other.

In harmony with this we are quite willing to co-operate with all the Lord's dear people in whichever of the various methods of serving the truth they may decide to be the most appropriate and best suited to their circumstances, conditions, zeal, etc We will therefore not restrict this "ammunition" to the volunteer work at the churches, but will supply it freely to others, for use amongst their friends, or in any manner that they may be able to use it. For instance, some have already sent us in numerous addresses of persons whom they have reason to believe might be amenable to the influence of the truth, and others have gotten extras for loaning amongst their friends and neighbors. While these may not be strictly counted in amongst the volunteers, we may consider them a kind of sharpshooters and "guerillas."

Those who wish us to mail samples to their friends direct from our office should write the addresses on wrappers of about the same size we use in mailing the Watch Tower (12 by 8 inches—the address to be written lengthwise of the sheet, and about one and a half inches from the top), and these addressed wrappers should be mailed to us, a postal card accompanying them in explanation. The harvest is great, the laborers are few comparatively, and the wages promised by the Master are enormous—"glory, honor and immortality" to the faithful.

* * *

Your success, and the kind of a reception you receive when circulating the truth, will in many instances depend largely upon your own manner. It is an old saying that "Like begets like," and if you go forth with your hearts full of love for the dear "brethren" whom you seek to serve, and if previous to starting you go on your knees to the Lord to ask his blessing upon yourselves, as his servants, and upon your effort in his service, praying for wisdom, grace and a fulness of his spirit of love, your manner will not be bold and blatant: but kind, courteous, humble, yet withal courageous, for you are there as a brother on the business of the Elder Brother, the King, and have nothing whatever to be ashamed of.

Your mission is both honorable and laudable. It is an appeal, not to the passions and prejudices of the people, but to their intellects and their hearts. This kind of preaching is as honorable as that done from the platform; yea, much more honorable, for many ministers are confessing in public from time to time, and to their shame, that for years they have been preaching, contrary to their consciences, a God-dishonoring, inconsistent, unreasonable and unscriptural message. They have been charging good round salaries for this falsification and defamation, while you, on the contrary, as a true minister of the Lord and the truth, not only serve to others "meat in due season" from the Master's table, but do it with good conscience, and without earthly reward or any hope of name or fame.

EFFECTUAL VOLUNTEER WORK

One dear brother, whose letter appears in this issue, had the "Dawn" in his possession, but was too prejudiced to study it, until he witnessed a "Volunteer distribution" at a church he attended, and saw amongst the Volunteers one whom he recognized as the head of a large mercantile business. He said to himself at once, "There is something real and tangible about the faith of these Christian people, and I must study the literature to find the basis of such self-denial and cross-bearing." He did investigate, and as a result is now a Volunteer himself. He is a man of college education, good natural ability, fills a fine position, and is not ashamed of the Lord, nor of the word of his grace, which has established his own heart and given him a faith and a hope beyond all compare. His present aspirations are, to be humble and faithful until death, and then to be a sharer, a joint-heir with the Lord in his Millennial kingdom, which shall bless the world.

In addition to meekness and love, manifested in look, in word and in act, we advise the dear volunteers to keep a reasonable distance away from church edifices whose congregations they seek to serve. A reasonable distance will, of course, depend somewhat upon circumstances. A quarter or a half block would not be too distant, if thereby the people could be well served. Of course, no one should take offense at a gratuitous distribution of spiritual food directly at the church door; yet experience shows that some do take offense at this, and feel as did the Pharisees of old respecting the Lord's message, when they asked, "Are we blind also?" It is well to avoid arousing prejudice. Our ammunition is not intended to wound, to hurt, to kill, but to do good, to comfort, to inspire with new Christian life and hope.

* * *

We have decided to discontinue the general volunteer circulation of the "Bible versus Evolution" pamphlet, and to use this volunteer number everywhere instead. Consequently all the new recruits to this volunteer service will be supplied with the new ammunition, and the various companies may get together at once and, through one of their number, appointed as secretary or lieutenant, communicate with us, informing us respecting the number of Protestant white churches, and so far as they may be able to judge, the average attendance at each, and the number of volunteers with their names. The Captain-General of our forces is the Lord Jesus, under whose banner alone we are enrolled, and whose cause alone we serve.

"From victory unto victory
His army shall he lead,
Till every foe is vanquished,
And Christ is Lord indeed."

A KIND MASTER, A GOOD SERVANT

LUKE 7:1-10.—APRIL 22.

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."—Psalm 103:13.

Masters and servants in the olden times occupied a much closer relationship to each other than they do today—a relationship which took on more of paternal sentiment. The change has been brought about gradually, and is not the result of great men of today having less heart than great men of the olden times, nor of employees being less faithful than employees of olden times: it is rather the result of changed conditions—the result of greater individuality and independence, which leads the employee to prefer to sell his time and energy on a strictly commercial basis rather than on a paternal basis. Nevertheless, the general influence is unfavorable in many respects: first, because men of great mental power and influence are to some extent under present arrangements cut off from fellowship and sympathy with their employees, and although the class distinctions are not less marked than in the past, nor even as much so, yet class rivalry and animosity is possibly greater than ever.

The employer, under present conditions, feels no responsibility for the employee, since he has made a bargain with him for so much money per day, without additional responsibilities, and the employee feels that having obtained the wage bargained for, and having used it according to his own will, he has no further claim upon his employer in case of sickness or other adversity. However, the system has its good features as well as its bad ones for it should cultivate independence, self-reliance and prudence; nevertheless, all discern that this division between the interests of masters and servants stands closely related to the great time of trouble which now impends.

The lesson of the healing of the centurion's servant at Capernaum strikingly illustrates the affectionate interest that prevailed between some good masters and their good servants in the past. True, we do not have any record that this servant was a good one, yet the inference is here, because the centurion himself was evidently an orderly man, and such men usually seek for and obtain orderly servants. Furthermore, in his conversation with our Lord he declares that he was accustomed to having his servants do what he bade them.—Verse 8.

The centurion himself was, of course, a Roman—not a Jew. He was, therefore, debarred in a general way from the Lord's blessings, which he declared on another occasion were for the children of the kingdom (Israelites) only, and not for strangers. No doubt because he realized himself as outside Judaism—an alien and a stranger, and foreigner from the covenants and blessings of God bestowed upon Israel. (Eph. 2:12), that he obtained the coöperation of the leading Jews of the city, that they would favor his cause with the Lord, and intercede that his petition might be granted.

We notice the good deeds of this centurion. He evidently respected the religion of the Jews, and had used his wealth in the building of a synagogue, the ruins of which are supposed to have been found recently. Of these ruins Edersheim says, "The remains now, after eighteen centuries, in their richness of elaborate carvings of cornices and tablets, of capitals and niches, show with what liberal hand he had dealt his votive offerings." It is presumed that this miracle preceded the awakening of Jairus' daughter, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that Jairus himself was one of the elders of the Jews who came to Jesus in the interest of the centurion; and this to some extent helps to account for his great faith in our Lord's power to revive his daughter, even though dead.

Our Lord seems to have readily granted the centurion's request; and the fact that it was not presented personally is presumed not to signify any lack of respect, but the very reverse, a realization on his part that Jews were averse to having any dealings with Gentiles, except along strictly business lines. His further modesty and meekness were manifest in the fact that before Jesus had reached his house he sent friends (not servants) to hinder Jesus from defiling himself by coming into a Gentile's house. For altho he was a man of influence and power, he realized the barrier between himself and the Jews, according to which the Pharisees would have considered that they defiled themselves by entering his house. He accordingly suggested that our Lord would merely speak the word, and that he had fullest confidence that the word could be spoken as well outside as inside the house—that one possessing such power as the Lord Jesus manifested had agencies at his command which would not require him to personally see and touch the servant in order to heal him, even as the centurion himself was accustomed to perform various matters through the instrumentality of his servants.

This was a wonderful illustration, both of meekness and of faith, and it was appreciated by our Lord accordingly. There is a lesson in it for all of the Lord's people, to the effect that the more we exercise faith in the Lord along reasonable lines, in harmony with the teachings of his Word, the more he will be pleased with us. This same thing was illustrated in the case of Thomas, who, being absent at the time of our Lord's first appearance to the eleven, declared that nothing would satisfy him respecting the Lord's resurrection except the putting of his fingers into the nail-prints of his hands. Our Lord, while granting him the demonstration which he asked, intimated that he would have had a greater blessing if he could have exercised a greater faith, saying, "(More) blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Let all of the Lord's people remember this, and instead of doubting the Lord's willingness to perform what he has promised, and requiring signs and further evidences and assurances let us rather rest content that he who has so graciously done for us in the past more than we could have asked or thought is equally faithful today, and will fulfill to us all the good promises of his Word. The more heartily we shall accept his promises, the more fully we shall trust to his gracious providences, the more peace of heart we shall have ourselves, and the more the Lord will delight himself in us as his servants and brethren, and the more he will be pleased to favor us and to use us.

Our Lord's remark: "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," was a grand tribute of approval for the Gentile centurion. It distinctly indicates that the fact that the Lord's favor which for over eighteen hundred years had been confined to Israel was not merely because the Israelites were alone worthy, nor because in them alone was found such faith as that on account of which father Abraham was blessed, and the blessing pronounced on his children. But altho the Lord found greater faith in the centurion than amongst others in Israel, nevertheless he could not and did not invite the centurion to become one of his disciples, because "the gifts and callings of God are not things to be repented of," and the divine favor to Israelites must and did continue down to the full end of the "seventy weeks" of favor promised through Daniel, the prophet—altho the national favor ceased three and a half years sooner, in the midst of the seventieth week, five days before our Lord's crucifixion, when he said of that nation, "Your house is left unto you desolate; ye shall see me no more until that day."—Matt. 23:38; Dan. 9:24.

It is certainly within the range of possibility that this centurion, whose good works and alms were so highly commended by the Jews, and whose faith was so highly spoken of by our Lord, might have been removed by Roman authority from Capernaum to Cæsarea, another fortress, and that he may have been the centurion named Cornelius, the first Gentile accepted to the privileges and favors of the Gospel church, at the expiration of the "seventy weeks" of favor confined to the Israelites.—Acts 10:1-35.

One lesson connected with this subject which should specially commend itself to any of the Lord's people who are masters or employers is the lesson of kindness for servants. If a Gentile would be so careful for the interests of his servant, and thus bestir and trouble himself much to secure his release from pain, much more should every true Christian not only feel a kindliness for those who are of the household of faith but also be disposed to do good unto all men as they may have opportunity. We may be sure that all such evidences of interest in fellow-creatures, all such evidences of the spirit of love and kindness, are pleasing in the Lord's sight; and not only so, but that every time we exercise ourselves along such lines we deepen them and strengthen, confirm and establish character along the lines of love and mercy. This is one of the ways in which we are to develop ourselves more and more as copies of God's dear Son.—Rom. 8:29.

THE DISAPPOINTED PROPHET'S WISE COURSE

LUKE 7:18-28.—APRIL 29.

"He hath done all things well."—Mark 7:37.

While Jesus was performing many miracles, making numerous disciples, and meeting with comparatively little opposition, things were going very differently with his cousin, John the Baptiser. Yet this was only in accordance with what John himself had prophesied, saying, "He must increase, but I must decrease." John was in prison, about 120 miles

from where Jesus was laboring so successfully. To be shut up in a dark dungeon of the kind usual at that time, and to have our Lord proceeding with his work, and raising no voice of protest on his behalf, and exercising none of his mighty power for his deliverance, probably seemed very strange to John—especially in view of his expectations respecting the work of the Messiah—that he would be a great earthly general and king, in harmony with the general Jewish expectations.

We see how readily John might have permitted doubts and fears to enter his mind. He might have said, This whole matter is a fraud, and Jesus and I have been deceiving ourselves. He might have lost all faith in God's providential dealings in the past, and all heart and hope for the present and for the future; but notwithstanding the great disappointment he felt, his faith continued its firm hold on the Lord. This is indicated in his sending of his disciples to Jesus, to make inquiry, and also in the character of the inquiry. He does not say, Is this whole matter a farce, and are we deluded? but on the contrary his question was a sound one, and expresses the conviction that thus far the Lord has been leading, and that the only doubt in the prophet's mind was whether or not, as he was the forerunner of Jesus, Jesus in turn, greater than he, might be the forerunner of some one else still greater and yet to come. And strictly speaking, this was exactly the case; for Jesus in the flesh was indeed the forerunner and preparer of the way before the still greater glorified Christ of the second advent, who will accomplish the great and wonderful things foretold by all the holy prophets since the world began.—Acts 3:21-23.

Our Lord, it will be noticed, did not answer John's question directly—he did not say that there was not another coming and still greater work than that which he was performing, but he did give John to understand distinctly that the work he was then doing was the very work which had been foretold in the prophets, and the proper thing to be done at that time. While John's messengers were with Jesus a number of miracles were performed in their sight, and Jesus sent them back to John with instructions that they bear witness to him of the work of the Lord progressing in his hands, and to say to John that while the opportunities to stumble at Jesus, his work and his words, were many, and while many would stumble at these, as the prophet had declared (Isa. 8:14) yet a special blessing would rest upon all who would not stumble, but whose faith in the Lord would continue, despite various disappointments of expectation respecting his work and their fulfilments—through misapprehension of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan, which, as the heavens are higher than the earth, were higher than human conception could have foreseen. For instance, what Jew could have thought for a moment of the still higher than Jewish expectations of the kingdom—of the spiritual kingdom-class to be selected first before the establishment of the earthly kingdom, and to be sharers with Messiah in his glory, honor and immortality?

All of the Lord's faithful servants need to remember the same lessons which were thus forcefully impressed upon John: they need to remember that when sometimes matters turn out very differently with themselves than what they had expected, when they receive injuries, reproaches and oppression, as the rewards of faithfulness to duty and to truth, it does not mean that God has forgotten them, nor that they were misled in their previous service to the Lord; nor does it mean that the Lord has changed his plan; nor that he is careless or indifferent respecting their condition. True, their first thought should be whether or not present unfavorable conditions are in the nature of chastisements or the results of any misdoings on their part, or failures to serve the Lord in his own way, but if they find their course to be harmonious with the divine will and Word they should at once rest their faith upon the Lord, and conclude that God knows better than they how to manage his own work. Then while thankful to be used in that work for a time they should nevertheless be pleased, if it were the Lord's will, to be set aside for a time—perhaps for the good of others, or perhaps for their own training in the school of experience and in the learning of lessons of patience and of faith.

But such a resting in the Lord, such a centering of life in him, can be enjoyed only by those who have made considerable progress, who have run a considerable distance in the way of the Lord, and who have already been exercised under the Lord's providences, and have learned many lessons in his school. This, however, is the condition which all of the Lord's true followers are to strive to attain, as the only one thoroughly pleasing to the Lord. The proper course of all God's servants when perplexed is the one followed by John, namely, to go to the Lord with the perplexity—not doubtingly, but inquiringly—and be set at rest by his Word. We may not be able to hear the Lord's words with our own ears, but we can receive it second hand as did John—through the testimonies of the apostles and prophets, by whose writings God has provided in advance replies to all proper queries.

The question arises, Was John imprisoned on account of officiousness—on account of trying to mind Herod's business? Or was he imprisoned because of his faithfulness in the discharge of that duty? Was it right or was it wrong for him to reprove the king, and to say to him that it was not lawful for him to take as his wife his brother Philip's wife? There is no question that Herod was in the wrong, and that John's expression on the subject was a correct one, and that Herod was living in adultery, but the question is, Was this any of John's business? Did he need to meddle with the king's affairs, and thus get himself into trouble? And if it was John's duty to reprove Herod on this subject, was it not the duty of our Lord Jesus to have done the same, and in addition to have uttered a protest against the imprisonment of John, and in general to have raised a great hubbub over the injustice being done by the wicked ruler? And if John was right in this matter was our Lord Jesus wrong in not following the same course? Or if Jesus was right in not following John's course in reproving Herod, does it prove that John erred in giving the reproof?

We answer that our Lord's conduct is certainly to be considered as above reproach, since "in him was no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;" but this does not prove guile and sin on John's part in following a different course. We are to remember that in many respects John and his ministry differed widely from our Lord and his ministry. For instance, the uncouth skin-girdle which John wore was very different from the seamless robe which the Lord wore; and the Scriptures call attention to the fact that John lived a very abstemious life, "neither eating nor drinking" ordinary food, but practicing a continual fasting or self-denial as respects these comforts, while our Lord Jesus came "both eating and drinking," attended wedding feasts and banquets made in his honor. The lesson is that these grand characters each fulfilled his own mission, according to the divine arrangement, but that they had different missions. John's mission was pre-eminently that of a reprover and reformer, and we are to understand that as a prophet he was supernaturally guided in respect to the various features of the course which he took Our Lord's mission, on the contrary, was a different one; he was gathering to himself those whom John's ministry served to arouse to righteousness and to zeal to know and do the Lord's will.

We who are called to be the "body" of Christ and to follow him, may learn a lesson in this as respects our proper course: we are not sent forth as John was, to dwell in the wilderness, living and dressing uncouthly, and to criticise and denounce everything and everybody. Some of the Lord's dear people fail to notice that such commissions are special and very rare, and sometimes in following the wrong copy, undesignedly bring reproach upon the Lord's cause. We are to be copies of God's dear Son, our Lord, and not to be copies of John the Baptiser. We are not to stir up strife by trying to mind other people's business, nor to seek to govern all the affairs of this world, reproving emperors, kings, governors, etc., but to the contrary of this are exhorted by the Apostle to remember that what God sees fit to permit we can see fit to endure.

Even tho we find many things which we cannot commend or indorse, we may equally find ourselves able to avoid any special denunciation of them—especially of things which have no bearing whatever upon the proper understanding and fulfilling of the Lord's Word. The Apostle points out our proper position, saying, "As much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." And our Lord emphasized the same thought, saying, "Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called the children of God."

Some of the holiest of the Lord's people err on this subject in their own families, and needlessly arouse prejudice and opposition, and make their homes unhappy, by continually finding fault with things which tho not up to the standard of saintliness and cross-bearing, are nevertheless not immoral or wicked even in tendency. Parents and guardians are surely to guard against all tendencies toward immorality, etc., but to find fault with those they love merely because they are only nominal Christians and have the spirit of worldliness, is certainly unwise. Their general life of peace and joy in the holy Spirit is the very best reproof of worldliness they can give and the best recommendation of the glorious gospel they profess. This is the epistle that will be read, the light that will reprove darkness. In other words, we must not expect from nor try to force upon the unconsecrated the details of our own self-denials. We must wait until they shall see full conse

cration to be their "reasonable service" and present their bodies living sacrifices to God. Pastors and teachers, however, should seek to keep continually before the Lord's consecrated flock the high Scripture standard, realizing that many influences are continually at work to lower the standard of holiness and devotion.

JOHN MORE THAN A PROPHET

The multitude who stood about must have heard the message which John's disciples brought to Jesus, and no doubt queried within themselves, if not audibly, Is John losing faith in Jesus as the Messiah? If John is a prophet himself, should he not be informed by God on this subject, without sending to inquire of Jesus? Does not this, in connection with the fact that John did no miracles, prove that John was not a prophet, but merely some sort of a reformer, possibly self-appointed? Our Lord seems to have detected such a questioning, and hence after John's discipline were gone, so that his words could not be construed as a sop of flattery to hold John's confidence, he delivered quite a eulogy upon his faithful forerunner, which we paraphrase thus: What did you expect in John—a weak, pliable character, easily swayed by every wind of doctrine and fancy, as a reed is easily swayed by the wind? Those who get such an impression respecting his character are deceiving themselves. On the contrary, he is a prophet, yea, more than a prophet—he is a special ambassador and messenger of God at this present time, to do an introductory work related to the kingdom which I am now preaching. He is referred to by Malachi the prophet (3:1). Indeed, I declare to you that there has never arisen a greater prophet than John, and yet I say to you that the least one in the kingdom-class is greater than he; for he does not belong to the kingdom-class at all, but to the previous dispensation—"the house of servants." "The law and the prophets were until John" (and he is the last of the prophets), and since then the kingdom of heaven is preached, that now whosoever will of this divinely favored nation may press his way and gain an entrance into it and become a son of God.—John 12:1.

Note in the text the clearness of our Lord's words respecting the distinction between the new institution which he was founding and the old institution founded by Moses, and which was then coming to an end, giving place to the new. The Apostle shows that the call of us Gentiles during this Gospel age to a joint-heirship in the kingdom as members of the kingdom-class is because those of the Jews ready to receive the kingdom favor upon the Lord's terms were fewer than the predetermined number. Our call is to fill the places of those "natural branches" of the Abrahamic stock, by being grafted into and made partakers of the original root of divine favor —the Abrahamic promise—to be members of the seed of Abraham, in which as a kingdom-class all the families of earth shall be blessed with certain favors of knowledge and opportunity.—Compare Rom. 11:1-33; Gal. 3:16, 29.

How highly we who belong to the new dispensation should value its privileges and opportunities, and seek to "make our calling and our election sure." (2 Pet. 1:4-11) If those who were called with an earthly calling to be a "house of servants' rendered but a reasonable service when they engaged in the Lord's work zealously, as did John the Baptist, and have been faithful, how much more zeal and energy ought we to put forth who have been favored so much more highly! "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness!" Let us remember that this "high-calling," this "heavenly calling," to joint-heirship with our Lord in the kingdom, is a very special and a very limited call, that it will soon end, and that so far as the divine revelation shows, it will never be repeated. In view of these things let us lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race set before us in the gospel, looking unto Jesus, the author, until he shall have become the finisher, of our faith.—Heb. 12:1.

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THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

Each year seems to add to the interest of the Lord's people in the celebration of the great event which lies at the foundation of all our Christian hopes—the celebration of the death of "Christ, our Passover." Each year the matter seems to be more clearly grasped by a larger number, and correspondingly the solemnity and holy joy proper to the occasion seems to be the more intense, and the overflowing blessing to be more pronounced.

Many of the little companies of the Lord's people who celebrated on the evening of April 12th have responded to our request for information respecting the numbers participating, and the measure of the Lord's Spirit and blessing prevailing. From these reports we judge that the number participating this year was considerably more than last year. Though we have not heard from nearly so many, the totals are larger. We believe, too, from the letters that the meaning of the institution was very deeply appreciated, not only as marking the great sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, but also as marking the consecration of his people to be one with him in his sacrifice.

The Allegheny church had a most blessed season, about 290 participating. We first reviewed the general meaning of the Passover, as it was instituted with the Jews, tracing the relationship between the typical Passover Lamb and Christ the Lamb of God, our Passover, and saw in the first-born of Israel passed over in that night a type of the church of the first-born, which God is passing over during this Gospel night. We saw that subsequently these first-born ones became the leaders of Israel as a whole, and their deliverers from Egyptian bondage, and we saw that the anti-type of that deliverance will be the ultimate deliverance of all who love God and who desire to serve him, from the bondage of the world and of sin, and of Satan, the antitype of Pharaoh, and that this ultimate deliverance would be during the Millennial age, when "the church of the first-born" ones will be associated with Christ in the Millennial kingdom.

Next we saw how that the Jews had celebrated the type for over sixteen centuries, with no knowledge of the antitype, and yet that in God's due time Christ, the antitypical Lamb, was slain on the very same day of the month that the typical Lamb was slain; and that on the very same day in which he and his disciples met as Jews to celebrate the typical Lamb and the typical passing over, our Lord instituted a new memorial, which would not look back to the type, but to himself, as the antitype. We noted also the appropriateness of the emblems which Jesus choose to represent his flesh and his blood; we saw that unleavened bread most beautifully illustrated the purity, the sinlessness, of our dear Redeemer, and that the cup, the fruit of the vine, represented his sufferings—not sufferings that were grievous, but joyous, endured willingly, gladly, on our behalf, and we rejoiced in these things.

We considered how we were to feed upon the Lord in our hearts while using the bread emblematically—that we could feed upon his flesh in the sense of calling to mind the fact that only through his sacrifice could we have life, only by his becoming our substitute in death could we, as a race, be set free from the condemnation that was upon us through father Adam's transgression. We considered the fruit of the vine, the symbol of our Lord's blood, as the sealing of the New Covenant under which God, through Christ, could be merciful toward our imperfections, accepting our intentions, even though the weaknesses of the flesh might sometimes hinder us from attaining all the desired results.

Then we viewed the matter from the other standpoint—the secondary one mentioned by the Apostle in 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, viz., that the entire church is one loaf, and that it is the duty and the privilege of all who have become members of the one loaf, the one body of Christ, to be broken in the service of the Head and in the service of each other, that thus we might have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings and ultimately be sharers in his glory. We saw that the cup of blessing with which we bless is indeed our communion or fellowship in the blood [sufferings] of Christ, our mingling of our lives with his life, our joining with him in "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." We sought to enter into the very deep meaning of the beautiful symbol, and to have it in our hearts a power of God, leading us to keener appreciation of our dear Saviour, and to a keener devotion as his disciples, to walk in his footsteps.

Then, after a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the living Bread that came down from heaven—for Jesus, who was not a condemned member of the human family, but a specially provided one, suitable to be our Saviour, our Bread, our Life-giver, and for all the blessing which we have through his great sacrifice, we partook of the bread. After this we gave thanks for the cup, acknowledging that we have no righteousness of our own, even though all the past were forgiven, and that we could not hope to stand before God acceptably or

to have any dealings with him except under the gracious provisions of the *New Covenant, sealed with the precious blood of Christ. We gave thanks also that by God's grace we have been called to fellowship with Jesus, and told the Lord of our hopes that by his grace we might run our course with faithfulness and eventually be received to joint-heirship with our Master in his glory when we are partakers with him of the joys of the kingdom.

The simple but impressive memorial being ended, it was requested that in order that the solemnity of the hour might abide with us, to our mutual comfort and joy, we should part on that evening without entering into any conversation likely to attract our minds from the precious things which filled them, but rather might, for the hours following, remember the severe trials of the disciples, and the dear Master's trials, and seek to enter into close sympathy with his faithfulness, and to be all the more on guard against the wiles of the adversary, which seems to be so potent at this season of the year. Then singing the first hymn we were dismissed.

An incident which added to our blessing in connection with this service was the fact that our dear Brother Horace A. Randle, who for about twenty years has been a missionary in China, was with us, and took part in the service with evident pleasure to himself and profit to us all. Bro. Randle wrote us in January last that he was about to start on his long journey of 16,000 miles, with the desire and intention to reach Allegheny in time for this Memorial service. He arrived just the day before, and was very warmly welcomed by us all. He addressed us on Easter Sunday, amongst other good things telling us of his great joy in the harvest truth, and of his intense desire to make known the grace of God to all the Lord's dear people, and of some efforts he had already put forth, and some of the fruitage which the Lord had permitted him to see amongst the missionaries of his acquaintance. Yet with regret he told us of how few of the missionaries seem to have any interest in these matters, and how the majority of the responses he received were in the nature of scoffings. We hope that our dear brother will put his address into writing that we may lay it before the larger church some time in the near future.

We have received reports, all of them excellent, from 280 celebrations—from every State of the Union and from Canada. A few of these were from solitary individuals, who had no opportunity of meeting with others, but to whom the Lord granted much blessing, compensating them for their loneliness otherwise. It may be interesting that we give the numbers participating at some of the gatherings reported, as follows:—

Baltimore, Md., 20; Brantford, Ont., 29; New York, 18; Poughkeepsie, N. Y., 16; Washington City, 23; Scranton, Pa., 28; Boston, Mass., 97; Philadelphia, Pa., 55; Toronto, Ont., 37; Tiffin, O., 22; Sippo, O., 19; Youngstown, O., 25; Cleveland, O., 38; Columbus, O., 27; Canton, O., 22; Toledo, O., 28; Wheeling, W. Va., 16; Dayton, O., 16; Indianapolis, Ind., 34; Chicago, Ill., 70; Saginaw, Mich., 18; St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minn., 23; Weatherford, Tex., 24; St. Louis, Mo., 55; Omaha, Neb., 19; Council Bluffs, Ia., 16; Vanetia, Tex., 16; Los Angeles, Cal., 61; Allegheny, 290.

We are not foolish enough to think that these figures give any occasion for boasting; for the total amounts to only a few over 2,600, and we have every reason to suppose that we have heard from two-thirds of those who celebrated: foreign reports will come later. However, we have every reason to believe that these numbers represent people who not only profess Christ, but who also are seeking daily to live the Christ-life. Moreover, they are full of the Jubilee music, and having heard the joyful sound they are all repeating it far and near. Consequently we expect a much larger showing next year, as others of the Lord's truth-hungry, famished household are found and fed with things new and old now supplied us by our Lord.

Boston reports the largest numbers of immersions preceding the Memorial, viz., 23.

* See June 15, 1919, issue, for critical examination of Covenants.

KNOWLEDGE INCREASES RESPONSIBILITIES

MATT. 11:20-30.—MAY 6.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Our Lord would seem to have been somewhat disappointed at the result of his ministry, especially in Capernaum, where he had resided a considerable time, and our lesson opens with a warning to the people of Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida, that having been favored with many mighty works and many evidences of Jesus' Messiaship, and that the kingdom was being offered to them, etc., they would be held correspondingly responsible. As Capernaum had been greatly blessed highly exalted, or, figuratively, "exalted up to heaven" in its privileges and opportunities, the result to it would be greater degradation, and eventually it would be brought low into the dust—destroyed, "brought down to hell," in the text, signifying brought down to hades, the death state. And surely this was fulfilled in the trouble which came upon the Jews, and which destroyed their nationality, as a result of their having failed to accept the Messiah, and the kingdom which he offered to establish.

But though our Lord was disappointed that he was so generally rejected, he cannot have expected that he would be widely welcomed by the people. He must have known, as he elsewhere describes to his disciples, quoting from the prophecies, that he would be rejected by Israel, and that the kingdom offer would pass by them. As a matter of fact his rejection on their part incidentally permitted the sending of the gracious call to the kingdom honors to believers among the Gentiles, and thus we are favored at the present time.

The contrast which the Master draws between Bethsaida and Chorazin and Tyre and Sidon is a strong one. The latter two were flourishing Gentile cities, yet, as was common in such, very full of wickedness and immorality, so that evidently their names were synonymous for that which was unholy, licentious, unclean. So then, for our Lord to say that if his mighty works had been done in those unholy cities they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes, that is, with deep contrition, was to say that the people of Bethsaida and Chorazin were in very much worse condition of heart than those Gentiles: futher from such a condition as God could bless.

From this we may gather that God takes a different standpoint of viewing such matters from that taken by the majority of people. He does not merely say, Is this a moral or an immoral city? Are these people decent or indecent? The question which the Lord would examine rather would be, What is the heart attitude of this people or that people, this individual or that individual? What is he aiming, striving for?—how would he be effected thereby if granted clearer light respecting the divine will? Hence, if we look at ourselves, and find that we are not immoral, not coarse, sensual, brutish, but more refined than many others, this is well; it is what we should be in view of our favors, privileges and mercies: but we are to remember that we might still be very far short of what would be pleasing to the Lord, and that if God should favor us with certain privileges and blessings and opportunities, and we were to reject them, our attitude in his sight might be worse than that of the immoral.

Turning to Capernaum, most favored of all, our Lord contrasts her with Sodom, whose wickedness was very great, so that it brought upon her a fierce destruction from the Lord. Capernaum is clearly told that from the Lord's standpoint of view her people were more wicked, less worthy of divine favor, more worthy of punishment, than the people of Sodom. This was a severe arraignment, and yet, we can see, a just one, for the poor Sodomites, walking in the way of sin, ignorance of God, etc., gradually went down and down, according to the course of fallen nature, while the people of Capernaum had much advantage every way as Jews, whom the Lord had blessed with a knowledge of himself, and to whom now, finally, he had sent Messiah, and whose miracles they had seen repeatedly, and with whose beautiful character and teaching they had been brought much in contact through his considerable residence in their midst.

In view of these privileges and mercies, their rejection of Messiah and failure to grasp their opportunities branded them, so to speak, as being inferior to the Sodomites, in appreciation of righteousness and truth; for our Lord declares that the Sodomites would not have met the end they did had they had similar privileges and mercies bestowed upon them.

The question naturally arises, Why did not our Lord grant the Sodomites as good an opportunity as he granted the people of Capernaum, and why did he not grant the people of Tyre and Sidon, who were still living, as favorable an op-

portunity as he granted to the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida? We answer, that none of these people were granted a trial for eternal life. The Sodomites did not have such a trial; the people of Tyre and Sidon had no trial of any kind; nor did the people of Palestine have a trial for life eternal. The trial which they did have was a trial respecting their love for the Lord and for righteousness, and of their readiness to be his people and supporters of his kingdom. The result of the trial showed that they were not sufficiently in love with righteousness to appreciate the Lord's kingdom, nor to become its friends and servants; and in consequence of this their city and their land, and they as a people were rejected by the Lord from being his agencies in connection with the establishment of his kingdom.

That no individual trial for eternal life had yet come to any of these people is evident from several facts: (1) that the whole world was under condemnation through Adam's transgression; (2) that no one could be relieved from that condemnation, so as to have a fresh individual trial for life, until the ransom price was paid, and it was not yet finished; (3) this is further implied by our Lord's statement (verse 24) that there would be a day of judgment future—a day of testing, a day of trial, a day to see who would be worthy of eternal life and who unworthy. (Acts 17:31) In that judgment day, the Millennial age, all are to have a chance for everlasting life; for the granting of this very chance to all of Adam's race was the very object of our Redeemer's death. Meantime, the people of Bethsaida, Chorazin and Capernaum, having rejected the Lord and having been rejected by him, he nevertheless found some there and has been selecting others since, of a special class, which he is calling to joint-heirship with himself in that Millennial kingdom, under whose beneficent reign of righteousness a full and impartial judgment or trial for life shall be granted to all. He would have his hearers understand, however, that in that future trial time the people of Tyre and Sidon and Sodom would be treated with more consideration and allowance than those, who having many more privileges, had hardened their hearts against what they did see and know. "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee," Capernaum.

How scathing was the rebuke of these words, that the people of Sodom, notorious for their wickedness, licentiousness etc., should find more favor, more tolerance, at the Lord's hand, when he should begin the work of judging mankind, than themselves, who had been God's favored people, but who had not appreciated his favors, and had done despite unto his goodness! But if any infer from this that the people of Capernaum, when they shall be on trial for life during the Millennial age, will be unkindly treated, it would be a great mistake; because the declaration of the Lord's Word distinctly is that the world shall be "judged in righteousness"—not in wrath, malice, not with a desire to do them injury, but with a desire to do them every good possible—hence it will be "tolerable" for the people of Capernaum in that day—very tolerable—it will be a grand and blessed opportunity for them to come to a full, clear knowledge of the Lord; but it will be still more tolerable for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sins, although greater in some respects, were less heinous in the sight of God—they were less against character, more sins of ignorance.

We may assume, therefore, that during the Millennial age disciplines, such people as those of Tyre and Sidon and those of Sodom, who had never known God to any degree, who had never known his laws, will be in a condition of heart much more readily amenable to the influences and requirements of that time than will be some others—the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, who having known more respecting God had misused the opportunities of the present life—who broke down their characters instead of building them.

And these are merely ensamples, for we know that all those that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth—"they that have done good [the saints, the overcomers] unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil [all mankind outside of the saints] unto the resurrection of judgment"—John 5:28, 29.

We can readily see, in harmony with our Lord's declaration in this lesson, that many who in the present life have no knowledge and no opportunity may be nothing disadvantaged thereby in that judgment time, but on the contrary may be more susceptible to the good influences of the kingdom and its laws than some others will be who have had contact with the light to some extent in the present life, but who have refused it. What a blessed promise is this one, of a future judgment or trial! How much it means to the whole groaning creation, that God, who let the sentence of Adam fall on all without giving them an individual trial, has provided a redemption for all from that first sentence, and has provided that each member of the race shall individually have a trial, a judgment, in due time, at the hands of him who died for all. And then, how favorable the conditions are to be, under which that trial will be granted! Satan is to be bound, and the earth is to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord and his goodness and his gracious arrangements on behalf of his fallen creatures, whom he desires shall not perish, but, if they will, have eternal life through Christ.

However, as our Lord distinctly intimates (v. 5), these things respecting the coming judgment and the blessed opportunities which shall be accorded to every member of Adam's race, are hidden from the majority—especially do they seem to be hidden from the worldly-wise and prudent, who instead of accepting so gracious a plan, are rather inclined to teach the people that the poor Sodomites went to eternal torment without ever having had a chance, and with no prospect of ever having a chance in the future, although our Lord declares that if they had had as good an opportunity as the people of Capernaum they would have repented with a deep contrition. The wise and prudent are inclined to tell us also that the people of Tyre and Sidon, although not favored with our Lord's blessing, are also to be considered doomed to eternal torment, though they would have repented had they had as good an opportunity as the people of Palestine: and finally they tell us that these people of Palestine, having rejected our Lord, must necessarily be sufferers of eternal torment, and not merely losers of the kingdom. They fail to see: they are blind to the truth—blinded by the traditions of their religious teachers—as the Jews were.

Then, to add to their confusion, they begin to attempt to apply the Lord's words respecting a day of judgment, and of course interpret it to mean a day of damnation, instead of a day of trial. They fail to note that their claim is that the Sodomites were already in hell, suffering torments of the severest form for nearly two thousand years, at the time our Lord uttered these words. Do they think that the Sodomites could suffer any more after the day of judgment than they describe them as suffering now? What do they understand by the words "day of judgment," anyway? Evidently they have no proper conception of the meaning of the words. They see that our Lord referred it to a future time, and they are hopelessly confused and thoroughly unable to give any reasonable explanation of the matter, either in harmony with God's character or in harmony with their own wretched and God-dishonoring theories.—See Dawn, Vol I, page 137.

How comforting are our Lord's words, that these things are revealed, nevertheless, to some—to babes, to those who are not great, not wise, according to the course of this world; to those who are of humble mind, ready to be taught of the Lord, instead of wishing to teach the Lord. This great blessing, dearly beloved, is ours, and let us be very careful that we maintain the attitude of childlikeness and simplicity, that we may continue to be taught of God, and to "know the things that are freely given unto us of God." Let us rejoice in them and use them, and let the light shine out to others. The explanation of the fact that the divine plan is hidden from the great majority of the learned, the doctors of divinity, etc., is that so it has pleased the Father to let "the wise be taken in their own craftiness," and to reveal his purposes to those of an humble mind. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." (1 Cor. 3:19) The Father drew to the Son at the first advent, not the doctors of the law, the scribes and the notables, but certain "Israelites indeed," in whom was no guile, though they were but an humble few. And the same class has received the blessing all down the age.

The Master realized that his special instructions must be toward those whom the Father had given unto him, rather than toward the unready and unwilling ones who would not receive his testimony because not in a proper condition of heart to appreciate. To his faithful disciples, therefore, and to all of the same class since, he declared that all things he possessed he had received of the Father; he claimed nothing of himself; and further, he asserted that no one knew him truly, fully, intimately, but the Father, and that no man knew the Father except himself, the Son, and he to whom the Son revealed him. The average reader gets very little meaning out of this passage at first. The Christian who has been making progress for years, growing in grace and in the

knowledge of the Lord, can appreciate it much better. He realizes that while he had some knowledge about Jesus and about the Father at first, from the very inception of his Christian experience, yet it was a different matter to come to know the Father and to know the Son in the intimate sense, in the sense of becoming well acquainted with them, knowing their mind as one knows the mind, the heart, of an intimate friend. It is a privilege to receive such an acquaintance. It is not to be had by everybody; it requires seeking for and knocking for, and such seeking and knocking implies an earnest desire to have an intimate fellowship and communion. Such a growth in grace should be earnestly sought by all of the Lord's true followers who seek to be his joint-heirs in the kingdom; for without it they cannot make progress. In proportion as we know the Father and know the Son we will love them and seek more and more to do those things which are pleasing in their sight.

COME! WEARY AND HEAVY-LADEN

Still addressing the same class, and implying that there were some present of the right disposition who had not yet become his disciples, our Lord appealed to his hearers individually, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The difficulty with most of the people would seem to have been that they were neither weary nor heavy laden, but on the contrary pretty well self-contented. We cannot suppose that physical weariness and physical burdens was the thought before our Lord's mind, but rather the heart-burden and sin-weariness, which all true Israelites must have felt, if they were honest with themselves.

We are to remember that they were under the Law Covenant, that its requirements were very exacting, and that it made no allowance for weaknesses, imperfections, errors, etc.; consequently, all of those Jews should have felt themselves continually condemned in striving to carry the burden of the Law of Sinai. Not that the law was an unjust one or impossible to be kept by a perfect man, but because all being imperfect and fallen they were unable to keep the Law Covenant. So we may suppose that amongst the Jews at that time, while the majority were professing to be holy, law-keepers, who did no sin, there were some who honestly admitted to themselves and to others that they did not, could not, keep the law perfectly, and who therefore felt burdened and wearied with their fruitless endeavors. Such felt their need of a burden-bearer, such felt their soul-sickness and need of the good Physician, and to such Jesus addressed himself, inviting them to come to him and receive rest, relief.

This coming to Christ for rest is the first step toward a Christian life; it is justification, the acceptance of him as the satisfaction for our sins; and from the time we thus accept him, as the Apostle declares, we have joy and peace through believing. (Rom. 5:1; 15:13) But having been thus received and blessed, there is something more for us to do, viz., to learn that there is another burden and another yoke which we should take upon us voluntarily.

A yoke is a symbol of servitude, and so our Lord implies that those who are set free (either from the yoke of the Law Covenant, as were the believing Jews, or from the yoke of Satan, as were the believing Gentiles) should become his servants, should take his yoke, should learn to do his will. A yoke generally is arranged for two, and our Lord speaks of it as his yoke, by which we are to understand that he also is a servant; having come to do the Father's will, and having put on the yoke of servitude, he invites us to become true yoke-fellows with himself in the doing of the Father's will, co-laborers together with Christ in the great work of the world's deliverance from sin and death.

The secret of the ability to wear this yoke, and to have companionship with Christ in his service, and to have as a result a great blessing in our own hearts, a rest unto our souls, lies, he explains, in our learning to be meek and lowly of heart as he was. It will be impossible for those who are proud, haughty, self-willed, ambitious, worldly-wise, etc., to labor in the same yoke with Jesus, or to find the true rest of soul which we properly seek. But if we are meek, teachable, humble-minded, ready to know and to do the Lord's will at any cost, then indeed we shall find rest to our soul's satisfaction—the peace of God which passeth all understanding will rule in our hearts.

We notice a difference between the two rests of vs. 28 and 29. Of the first it is said that the Lord will give it to him who comes to him in faith; of the second, it is said that he finds this rest to his soul through becoming a yoke-fellow with Jesus. And so it is: there are two blessings; the first blessing is that of justification—the joy of having our sins forgiven, realizing ourselves no longer strangers and foreigners from our heavenly Father, but brought nigh by the blood of Christ; the second is the joy which comes more gradually, a fruitage, a grace, a development in the heart, the growing and abiding peace and joy of the holy spirit. This second blessing, however, is attained by very few; the majority of nominal Christians know nothing of it; and yet it is the very object of the calling of this Gospel age, and those who fail to come to the Lord and to take his yoke, and to learn of him, to become thus "copies of God's dear Son," will fail utterly of the special purpose and call of this Gospel age, and will have neither part nor lot in the kingdom. The blessing of justification by faith is merely to fit and prepare us to take the yoke and to become a co-laborer with the Lord in the Father's service.

This yoke which Jesus invites us to come under with him is a very formidable affair from the standpoint of the world; to them it seems to be a most unreasonable yoke, a most terrible burden—to consecrate life, time, means, everything to the service of God; but from the standpoint of those who have come unto Jesus, and to whom he has spoken peace and rest through justification, the matter is very different. To such it must seem a "reasonable service," that since the Lord has graciously redeemed our lives and our all, we should use what remains of that life to his praise and glory; and after we have fastened the yoke upon ourselves we find that it is an easy one, and that with it any burden, any duty, any trial, any difficulty, any vexation of spirit, any burden of any kind that could come to us, would be light indeed, because of this yoke.

Why? Because those who wear this yoke have the assurances of the divine Word, that all things are working together for good to them; that the heavier the burden that may be attached the greater will be the blessing and the reward by and by; the more severe the experiences during the present time, the brighter shall be the glory, and the brighter shall be their character and the more sure shall they be of being fitted and polished for the heavenly kingdom. From this standpoint every burden is light, because our yoke is appreciated, and is so easy, so reasonable; and additionally it is so light because the Lord is with us in this yoke. He is the great Burden-bearer, and will not suffer us to be tempted nor to be pressed with more of the burdens of life than we should probably be able to endure. He is watching out for the interests of all those who take his yoke upon them. Their burdens are his burdens, their trials are his trials, their interests are his interests: yea, all things shall work for good to them because they love him.

Let us remember, however, that the Lord takes no slaves in this way; he does not fasten the yoke upon any; he merely invites us to come, and then to fasten his yoke upon ourselves, to make a full consecration of ourselves to him and to his service.

TWO TYPES OF SINNERS

LUKE 7:36-50.—MAY 13.

"Thy faith hath saved thee."

Simon was a very common name amongst the Jews, and hence it is not so remarkable that there were two Simons at whose homes Jesus was entertained. It is a little peculiar, however, that there are so many features of similarity connected with the two entertainments—that at both of them our Lord's feet were anointed, etc. (Compare Matt. 26:6-13) It is supposed that about a year and a half elapsed between the two events, that recorded by Matthew being just prior to our Lord's death, "anointing for my burial."

In this lesson we see Simon, a Pharisee, evidently considerably impressed with our Lord's character and teachings, and more favorably inclined toward him than the majority. He thought it would be pleasant to invite Jesus to dinner, thus to honor him, and possibly have a little notoriety himself in connection with the noted Nazarene.

When our Lord accepted the invitation and attended the dinner Simon treated him kindly and politely, but did not go to any extreme of politeness in his entertainment; perhaps

thinking of him as not being used to special attentions, but rather as being a companion of fishermen and common people generally. Simon therefore did not salute him with a kiss on his arrival, as was usual with honored guests, for that would have seemed like bestowing too much honor upon an ordinary person whom he, as a Pharisee, was not yet prepared to fully endorse; nor did he send the servant to take off the Master's sandals and to wash his feet, according to the custom of the best entertainers of that time. He may have said to himself: This man and his disciples are not used to being entertained in such style, and my servants would recognize themselves as being on a par at least with any of these men except the Teacher himself. Without, therefore, going to the extremes of polite entertaining, the Pharisee had nevertheless cordially welcomed the Lord to his table, feeling no doubt that in doing this he was honoring the Lord, and not sufficiently realizing that he was the one who was being honored, in the privilege of entertaining so noble a guest. How will Simon regard the matter when, in the resurrection time (during the Millennium), he ascertains that his guest was "the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth?"

The Apostle urges upon us all, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels [God's messengers] unawares." The Lord wishes his people to be generous with such things as they have (but not to be vain-gloriously extravagant), hence it is written again, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth: and there is that withholdeth more than is meet [proper] and it tendeth to poverty." It is a part of our present lesson to learn of our own mean selfishness, which all have inherited through the fall, and gradually, under the instruction of the Lord's Word, to get the victory over this and become more generous—more like our Father in Heaven.

Let us be specially generous and hospitable toward the "brethren," who really represent the Lord himself; not only as "ambassadors for God," but also as "members of the body of Christ."

The "woman of the city" mentioned, was evidently a common character, widely known to the people of the city, though she might not be known to Jesus and the disciples, who were not residents. Whatever the woman's previous life may have been, she had experienced deep contrition of heart, and a desire to live a better life. She had heard about Jesus, the great Teacher, and that unlike the Pharisess he did not disdain to speak with and to encourage fallen ones and to help them up again. She felt that she would like to go to the Lord in prayer for forgiveness, and would like to make a fresh start in life, to seek thereafter to live more consistently. She knew not how to approach the matter; she knew not what to say respecting herself; she would merely take a little offering in her hand, and while he was reclining at dinner, after the custom of that time, and while his feet would be easily accessible to her, she would venture to anoint them with the fine ointment which she had brought with her. Saying not a word, her heart too full for utterance, she reached the Master's feet, and there her tears trickled over them. By her tears he should know, more eloquently than she could voice her sentiments in words, what were the true longings of her heart for forgiveness and for reconciliation.

How merciful and considerate of our needs, is the Lord's provision that when we come penitently to his feet for forgiveness we are not required to approach him through another, nor to formulate our petition in some exact form of language—he can read our hearts and accepts our tears and even our humblest efforts to make amends and to serve the "members of his body." And even though he may delay the message of forgiveness it is but to let the roots of penitence and faith sink deeper in our hearts.

Jesus for a time seemed to heed her not, and she may have questioned whether or not he was misunderstanding her motives and her prayer, but the fullness of her heart found vent in still more tears, and tenderly she wiped his feet and anointed them with the ointment. The Pharisee, meantime, was saying within himself: Now it is most fortunate that I invited Jesus to dinner to-day, and it is fortunate that this woman came in; it affords a proof, a test, respecting the ability of Jesus to read the hearts of those about him. If he were a prophet, if he were specially empowered and enlightened of God, he would have known the character of this woman; but he evidently does not know her character, and therefore is permitting her to anoint his feet, and this seems to be a proof that he is not a prophet.

But Jesus, fully conscious of all that was going on, and with a clear knowledge of the heart of the poor woman at his feet, and of the self-satisfied Pharisee who entertained him, was planning a way by which he might do good to both of them—a way by which he might set before all present a great truth. Therefore he put a parable to Simon, saying that a certain creditor had two debtors, the one owing a large amount, the other a small amount, and when they were totally unable to pay he cheerfully and promptly forgave them both. Then our Lord pointed his lesson on this little parable, by enquiring which of the two forgiven ones would be most appreciative of the creditor's leniency? Simon, who had not as yet caught the import of the parable, promptly answered that the one who had the largest debt forgiven would undoubtedly be the one who would be most appreciative, and our Lord approved this answer. Then directing attention to the woman, he reminded Simon that although he had been kind in inviting him to dinner, and although he appreciated his attentions, nevertheless the still greater attentions of the woman, and the still greater marks of respect which she had showed, were evidences that while they both loved, the woman loved the more: and the intimation clearly is that the greater love was developed by a greater realization of sin and a greater desire to be relieved from it.

Of course, in one sense of the word, all are sinners, all have come short of the glory of God, and are hopeless without forgiveness; yet the Pharisee occupied a different position from the woman, because under the Jewish Law Covenant he was already occupying a standpoint of typical justification, and was seeking to maintain that standing by living a life of strict regard for the divine Law. On the other hand, the woman, although under the same covenant, by living an abandoned life in open violation of the law, had lost her interest in the national typical justification, and was therefore in a much larger sense of the word a sinner. Simon knew very well that while he was trying to keep the law he was not keeping it perfectly, but infracted it in various ways from time to time, and yet he was not wilfully an infractor of the Law, as was the woman; hence in this sense of the word there was the wide difference between great sin and less sin; yet both needed the Saviour, and if the Pharisee had realized the truth of the matter he needed the Saviour just as much as did the woman; for the Law Covenant could not give him everlasting life—to attain that he must admit his sin and accept forgiveness and salvation from sin and its penalty, death, as a gift from the Saviour who honored him by consenting to be his guest.

Then Jesus turned to the woman and said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven." What words those must have been to her! Her prayer was answered—a prayer, which had arisen in her heart, and which had expressed itself through tears and ointment, had been heard and she was forgiven and all the past treated as forever blotted out. How thankful she must have felt! Poor Simon, however, so far as we know, did not come to the point of saying, Lord, I also am a sinner, and even though I have loved less than this woman I also need to be forgiven, and I pray for the forgiveness of my sins, that I may be counted one of your followers. No; the very fact that he had a religious standing in the nominal church, and had made a profession of holiness, seems to have stood in his way, and to have hindered him from accepting the grace of God and the forgiveness of sins. And so it is right along. How frequently do we see that people who have been living moral lives, evidently seeking to walk in paths of righteousness, are much less prepared to accept forgiveness through the Lord Jesus Christ than are some others who have been living more carelessly and who awaken to a realization of their undone condition, and go to the Lord more contritely and more earnestly, and exercise a greater faith, and feel for him consequently a greater love!

There is no intimation, however, that because of his failure to ask forgiveness and to become a follower of Jesus, Simon was condemned to "hell," etc.; quite to the contrary, he simply followed the course of his nation (blinded by prejudice and false traditions of men). Their rejection of Jesus lost to them the privileges of joint-heirship in Christ's kingdom, and led to their national rejection from God's favor until the opening of the Millennial age. Then, as the Apostle clearly shows, their blindness shall be removed and they shall be blest with a much clearer knowledge of the truth. Then the Lord will "pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, and they shall look upon him whom they pierced, and shall mourn because of him." Then when they weep as did the woman with the ointment, God, through the glorified Christ, will have mercy on them and forgive their sins. Then their trial for everlasting life will begin.—See Rom. 11:25-32; Zech. 12:10.

The other guests at the table were particularly struck with our Lord's declaration that the woman's sins were forgiven her. Not recognizing the speaker to be the Messiah, the Son of God, they questioned the propriety of such words, but this was one reason why our Lord uttered the words; it was one of his unostentatious methods of calling attention to the fact that he was the Messiah, and that as such, and in view of the work which he was yet to do all power to forgive sins was in his hands.

Then he said to the woman, "Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace." He wished her to know that it was not her tears that had brought the forgiveness; that it was not the value of the ointment that had moved him to forgive her, but that the thing which was pleasing in his sight, and on account of which her sins were forgiven, was her faith. She not only realized her own sinful condition, but she had realized that this great Teacher had the power to forgive her and to restore her, and she had trusted, and acted upon this, and our Lord wished her to realize that the reward she had received was because of exercise of this faith. And so we may realize in respect to all of the Lord's favors in the case of each one of his people. When we come unto the Lord, with tears of penitence, we are to know that they do not prevail; and if we present gifts we are to know that they do not prevail, and that the tears and the offerings could avail us nothing except as we present to the Lord our faith, accepting him as the one who has power to forgive sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And not only is this necessary at the beginning of the Christian way, but similarly faith is necessary all the journey through. If we do not continue in faith we cannot progress. "According to thy faith be it unto thee," would seem to be the Lord's method of dealing with all who are his disciples, from first to last of their Christian walk and experience.

The center of the lesson, then, is abiding faith in the Lord: faith when he seems not to notice us; faith when things seem to be going prosperously with us in our spiritual affairs and in our temporal affairs and faith equally strong when the currents and forces seem all to be against us. The victory that overcometh the world is the faith that in all conditions is able to look up to the Lord with absolute confidence in his goodness and faithfulness, and to realize that according to his promise eventually all things will work together for good to us because we are his people.—1 John 5:5; Rom. 8:29.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

MATT. 13:1-8, 18-23.—MAY 20.

"The seed is the word of God."—Luke 8:11.

Jesus and his disciples had just returned to Capernaum, his home, from a tour of Galilee, and the multitudes, many of whom had heard him before and witnessed his miracles, gathered about him as he sat on the beach of Lake Galilee, assuredly expecting that they would hear some gracious words from his lips. And the Master never seemed weary of presenting his message, although frequently, as in this case, the mass of his hearers understood but dimly his parables. There was a fishing-boat lying near, quite possibly owned by some of his friends or relatives, and evidently with the owner's consent Jesus used the boat as his pulpit, speaking to the multitude which lined the beach, which at this point is said to rise rapidly, and which therefore would give the general effect of an amphitheatre. A traveler once made an experiment, to see how well the voice would carry under such circumstances, at this spot, and says, "It was remarkable how distinctly every word was heard, though our voices were not raised, even at three hundred yards off; and it was very easy to comprehend how, in this clear air, a preacher sitting in a boat could address a vast multitude sitting upon the shore."

The Master had no difficulty in finding a topic. Quite possibly his eye rested on a seed-sower, and as a result we have this parable, designed to show that there are different classes of hearers, and that it is not merely the eloquence or force or truthfulness of the message that determines the result, but chiefly the attitude of the heart that hears; hence the importance of the injunction, "Take heed how ye hear"—see that your heart is in a right condition to receive the truth, if you would expect a benefit from it; do not expect that the mere hearing of the truth will profit you, irrespective of your own character conditions.

The good seed of the parable is the Word of God, the truth, even as false teaching, human philosophies and doctrines of devils, are not wheat-seed but tare-seed; our Lord is not showing in this parable what will be the result of sowing good or bad seed, but merely that the good seed can accomplish its work only in certain classes of hearts.

The class of heart that is like the "wayside," solid and compact with selfishness, not open and generous, is very unfavorable ground for the truth; nothing need be expected from such ground. The sower will let as little as possible fall on such, but whatever does fall upon it the Adversary will soon take away. "Wayside" hearers are not necessarily bad people, in the sense of grossly wicked, but they are bad in the sense of being unsuited to the Lord's present work and call. They will need to have the furrow run through them again and again, that troubles of various kinds may make them more generous, more open, more ready for the message. But in many instances the Lord will not run the plowshare of truth through such soil in this present age; rather, he will leave it for the Millennial age, when he will be dealing, not only with these hearts that were partially prepared and which have become unsuitable, but when also he will have a work to do with the great masses of mankind, which, like the virgin forests and prairies of earth, are yet uncleared, unplowed and unbroken. The great time of trouble at the beginning of the Millennial age will be a time, we believe, in which the Lord will run the plowshare of truth in every direction throughout the world, as it is written, "The plowman shall follow close after the reaper." (Amos. 9:13) And, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9), and thus be prepared for the new sowing time of the new age, under circumstances more favorable in some respects than the present, though less favorable in other respects.

Another class upon which the same good truth falls at the present time is one that has a good appearance upon the surface—fine soil, etc., but underneath, and but a few inches from the surface, is rock. The soil on the surface is but a veneer to hide the rock; it has the appearance of depth of character, sympathy and love, but this is merely a deception. Civilized customs have popularized at least an outward imitation of the graces of the holy spirit, and appearances of good heartedness, but down below in the real heart and intention is selfishness, that would merely follow the ways of righteousness because of popularity or because of some hoped-for gain, but thoroughly unable to appreciate self-sacrifice for anything or anybody. This class of shallow characters sometimes receives the truth with avidity, with joy, and seems to contain some of the truth's most enthusiastic followers; but this is merely for a little while, because of novelty or pride to show off, and not from love of the truth. The selfishness which is the substratum of their character will not permit them to endure hardness for the truth's sake. Consequently, as soon as they find that with the truth always goes something of persecution and tribulation they are surprised, thoroughly disheartened, and all their interest speedily dies out. This class has no hope for the kingdom either. They are not of the kind that the sower expects will yield a crop to maturity in the present harvest.

The third class of hearers favored by the truth in this present time is referred to by our Lord as "thorny ground." This does not mean poor ground, for the thorns are to be found in the very best of ground, especially the thorns of Palestine, to which our Lord undoubtedly had reference. Of these Prof. Thomson says, "These thorns are not briar bushes or brambles, but are an after-growth of a variety of thistles, which come up quickly in every wheat-field of Palestine." We may say, then, that every Christian who receives the wheat or word of God into a good and honest heart during this Gospel age is in danger of having it choked with the thorns, and of thus becoming one of the class referred to in the parable, a class that was favored, that had every advantage, but which brought forth no crop worth gathering, because the thorns took possession of it to such an extent as to choke out the wheat-seed.

We have heard Christian people describe the thorns which threaten the good seed in the hearts of God's people to be theaters, card-playing, carousals, etc., etc., but this is a great mistake; the hearts that are beset with such things are probably not good ground in any sense of the word, and probably have never received the good seed. But how reasonable is the

interpretation which our Lord himself gives—the thorns are the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches—just exactly what every Christian realizes. The cares of this life are not gross immoralities, but the home duties, family cares, business cares, etc. The deceitfulness of riches is not merely the baneful influence which is exercised upon those who possess riches, but especially it represents the snares, the difficulties, the entanglements, the misleadings of efforts to become rich. How many Christian people can testify that their spirituality, their love for the Lord and for the truth and for the kingdom have been choked in great measure by wealth-coveting and wealth seeking! How many can testify that the cares of this life have crowded out their fellowship with the Lord, and the power of his word in their hearts, and how as a result their lives are barren, unfruitful of anything in the way of character development, service of God and for the "brethren" and others.

What can such as realize that thorns are growing in their hearts and choking the Word of the Lord do to get rid of them? How can they overcome this difficulty of permitting the cares of this life to absorb their time, their talents, their influence? How can they get rid of the false allurements and attractions of riches? How can they become fruitful toward God in good works in riches of grace in their hearts and characters, in riches of the knowledge of the divine Word and plan?

It is a difficult matter to get rid of these thorns, if they spring up and get well under way after we have received the wheat and it will probably be a slow and tedious business to root them out; and one in which we could not hope at all for success by ourselves, unaided. All such must go to the Lord himself for the aid which he alone can give, and the method and process by which the Lord will assist them will be in the transforming of their minds so that they will mind not earthly things but heavenly things, set their affections on things above, not on things beneath, set their affections upon true riches of the divine nature and high calling, instead of on earthly riches, which are but transitory and unsatisfactory, even if attained.—Matt. 6:19-21.

And the way to effect this transforming of the mind, this uprooting of the thorns, is to draw time and attention away from the earthly things in a compulsory manner, limiting the time that we will give to earthly things, and devoting more and more time to spiritual interests in our own hearts and in the hearts of our families and friends. This will mean more time for the study and practice of the truth; and as the truth comes in it will be found to be the sanctifying power of God which alone can uproot the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, and keep our hearts in the right attitude to bear much fruit to our Master's praise.

The "good ground" hearers are those whose hearts are in good condition, ready for the word of the Lord, plowed and furrowed by experiences. This class free from thorns, is ready to bring forth an abundant harvest, and yet even of this class all may not yield the same amount of fruitage to our Master's sowing, for he represents that some will bring forth thirty, some sixty and some an hundred fold. He does not speak slightingly of those which bring forth but the thirty fold, but leaves it to us to discern that those who bring forth the hundred fold are the most pleasing in his sight. We have much to do with this matter of the amount of fruitage which we yield to the Lord; it will be measured by the degree of our zeal, our love for him; consequently the class bringing forth the hundred fold represents those Christians who love the Lord the most fervently, whose hearts are warmest for him, his truth and his people. The Apostle Paul was undoubtedly one of this hundred-fold class, the Apostle Peter was another, and no doubt there have been many in humble positions unknown to fame, whose love for the Lord, and zeal for his cause have been counted to them as hundred fold return for every seed of truth they received. Let us each with more and more care seek to bring forth much fruit, and as one means to this end to keep down the thorns and everything that would choke or hinder the influence of the truth in our hearts, in our daily lives, and in our words. Let us cultivate the seed and not the thorns.

THE MESSAGE OF THE KINGDOM

Luke says, "The seed is the Word of God"; Matthew says, "The word of the kingdom." Our Lord no doubt used both expressions—the good seed is God's word or message of the kingdom. Indeed, the message of the kingdom may be said to be the only message God has yet given to mankind as a message of hope. He intimated the kingdom to Abraham when he promised him that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed; the intimation was that Abraham's seed should be blessed by being granted kingdom powers which should prove a blessing to the world at large. Israel, at the time of this parable, was hoping to attain this very promise.

All the promises through the prophets pertain to the kingdom, the time when it shall be established, the blessings which shall flow from it to the uttermost parts of the earth when all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest when righteousness shall flourish throughout the world, and when sin and sinners and Satan himself will be subjected to the powers of righteousness, in the hands of the Messiah. At the time of the utterance of this parable the seed, word or message of the kingdom had taken on a special form, viz., an invitation to some to become joint-heirs with the Messiah, the heir of the kingdom.

Whoever has never heard anything about the kingdom has never heard anything about the Gospel, for it is the "Gospel of the kingdom," as our Lord declared. Hence we see that much of the preaching of eternal torment and other things falsely called the Gospel of the kingdom, are delusions which are not of God, not his word, not the good seed that would bring forth the good fruit. The false messages have brought forth "tares" in abundance. This good seed of the kingdom it is that rightly received into a good heart cannot be easily choked with earthly hopes or ambitions—for the kingdom hope is above all, grand, pre-eminent, soul-satisfying. The kingdom hope is as an anchor to the soul, and does not permit the cares of this life to seem large and to crush it out. On the contrary, to honest hearts which have received the good seed of the kingdom the cares of this life are merely incidental trials which are to be overcome, that thereby character may be formed, much fruit brought forth, to the Lord's praise, and a share in the kingdom atained. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself," and bringeth forth much fruit.

NEWS FROM THE "BRITISH BRANCH"

You will all be glad to learn of the safe arrival of Brother Henninges and wife at their destination. A "pilgrim" trip to the principal centers of interest was made while word was sent to the home office respecting the British postal laws, etc., bearing on the work proposed to be done there. Much interest was found at various points and the friends of the truth, we may well hope, were edified and enthused.

We were surprised and rather disappointed to find that British postal laws are much less favorable than our own. However the Lord pointed out to us (we believe) a manner of adapting our work to the laws as they stand which we doubt not will accomplish a great work there this year. At all events we have resolved to try it for the remainder of this year at least (D. V.) and accordingly an office will be opened at once and soon as possible the address will appear in the WATCH TOWER. We have prepared over four tons of reading matter for shipment, part of which has probably already reached London, and the remainder is now on the ocean.

The following from London will be interesting:—

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—You did not overestimate the matter which in your last you termed a "pleasant surprise" for British brethren. Bro. Henninges' visit to us is indeed a joyful privilege and to hear him set forth things "new and old" is a pleasure that words cannot describe. We certainly feel that there is scope for much work on the lines that our brother has come over to adopt, if the way be made plain to him by the Lord.

Of course it is not for us to urge or push this matter unduly, however much we feel it would gratify us, but this we can offer, that if the Lord makes plain the way to you and him our sympathies can then take practical form. These are my personal feelings, but I know I am only voicing those of many of our dear brethren here. It would have done your heart good to have seen the little gatherings of glad faces at the last four or five meetings; to feel the warm, sympathetic hand-grasps and the cheery, honest words of encouragement and the earnest God-speeds given to our dear Bro. Henninges and his dear wife. Not but that we always have joy in meeting together and great joy indeed, but this joy seems a super-added one—a joy abounding.

We give thanks to our Lord that he has made you such a

channel of blessing to us, and we pray that our eyes and hearts may be anointed and that we may be given that discerning spirit which discriminates between that which harmonizes with and that which militates against our Father's revealed plan. So with the boldness and assurance born of sad experience we can confidently approach our Father's throne with requests according to his will.

If there are any suggestions from you to us as to how we may aid in this present scheme for additionally helping our English brethren we shall be glad to hear from you. In the meantime we are one with you in this Gospel of the kingdom, in unity of spirit, in the bond of love and in righteousness of life. Yours in our present Lord,

BRO. AND SISTER GUARD.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

ABOUT MAGNETIC—HYPNOTIC CURES, ETC.

Question.—The world is full of aches and pains, diseases, and naturally we look about us for relief. You have already expressed your judgment that the cures effected by Christian Scientists and Spiritualists are probably produced by improper spiritual influences, although exercised to some extent at least in harmony with natural laws. I desire now to inquire respecting cures by hypnotism, and still other cures by so-called magnetic healers. What shall we think of these, and will it be proper for the Lord's consecrated people to avail themselves of such means for attaining health?

Answer.—We feel suspicious of magnetic and mental healing. In our judgment they in many instances are allied with or related to hypnotism; yet it is particularly difficult to draw the line here, because we all know that there is such a thing as a legitimate mental influence which we all exercise upon one another, favorably or unfavorably. We know, for instance, that hope and faith, love and joy, are healing and helpful influences, and that doubt and despair, anger and malice, are injurious influences whether exercised by our own minds upon our own bodies, or upon others. In this proper sense of the word every child of God possessing the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, is a mental healer, and a heart healer, a wound healer; wherever he or she may be, the influence will be uplifting, comforting, strengthening to good impulses. If therefore the Lord's consecrated ones visit the sick, their presence should be a refreshment, comforting, cheering and helpful, and so much the more if they carry in their hearts and communicate with their lips the exceeding great and precious promises of our Father's Word. With this much of mental healing we are most thoroughly in accord.

But Christian Science, Mind Healing and Magnetic Healing, running upon this same line, seem to us to carry it to an extreme—in the case of Christian Science to the extreme of lying to oneself and believing the lie, and thus gradually becoming a liar, self-deceived and deceiving others in respect to all of life's affairs. We cannot believe that any course so opposed to that which the Scriptures mark out can be of God, nor can we believe that the cures it at times effects are either natural or of God; we can only suppose, therefore, that the Adversary favors this lying and deceiving process to the intent that he may beguile the mind through further lies and deceptions far from God and the truth.

Magnetic Healing is more on the order of hypnotic healing; that is to say, the magnetic healer gains a control over the mind of his subject which is somewhat akin to the control gained by mesmerists and hypnotists, and akin to the spirit control of spiritualism over its mediums. We can have no sympathy with anything of this kind, for even if we were satisfied that the power of control was merely a human power and not a Satanic one (and we are not satisfied of this), we cannot feel that it is right for one human being to subject his mind, his will, to another, when the evidences prove that every such subjection decreases his will power and places the subject more and more in the position of a slave or machine, subject to the influence or control of others—breaking down his personality.

The Lord's people are admonished to make such a submission of their minds to the Lord, and no one else; and we are confident that the Lord will take no advantage of us under such conditions, to rob us of any good quality. On the whole, then, we urge all of the Lord's people to be on guard against mind healers, magnetic healers, etc., especially where, as in the case of Christian Science the mind is to be given up to believe a lie, or in the case of hypnotism, it is to be given up or subjected entirely to another. Our minds are our greatest possession, and are to be given only to the Lord and to each other as directed by the Word of the Lord; and if we cannot have health without violating these principles, we can afford to be without the health for the few more days that remain under the present conditions, knowing that by and by, if faithful to the Lord, we shall have the perfect resurrection bodies promised.

WHO IS BORN OF GOD?

Question.—In 2 John 5:1 we read, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Does this signify that we are begotten of the spirit at the same moment that we are justified through faith?

Answer.—No; the Apostle, in the words quoted, is not attempting to give the complete philosophy of salvation, that being given in other parts of his own testimony, and that of the other apostles. He is discussing the condition of a believer who has not only been justified through faith, but who continuing to be a believer, is acting upon that faith and the Lord's call which comes to the justified, and who, in harmony with that justification and call, has presented himself a living sacrifice to the Lord, and has been begotten of the holy Spirit. He is still a believer, must always continue to be a believer, must always continue to maintain his faith, which is the foundation of his reckoned new nature in Christ.

The word here rendered "born" should be rendered "begotten;" it is the same word in the Greek as the word rendered "begotten" following it in the same verse.

Numerous Scriptures show us that our condition as sinners is such that we cannot be begotten of God through his holy spirit until after we have been justified through faith As sinners we were "children of wrath even as others," and were "called to repentance" (but not called to the "high calling"): as repentant sinners we are pointed to the Lord Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life, by whom alone we can return to harmony with the Father. When we accept Christ as our Saviour and his sacrifice as our ransom price we are justified by faith—reckonedly perfected—and have peace with God, and realize that we are no longer children of wrath, aliens, strangers and foreigners, being brought nigh by the blood of Christ. Our justification, however, is not our begetting to new nature, but, as the Word itself signifies, a making right of our old natures—a compensating on our Lord's part for the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh which are ours through the fall, so that we are reckoned as tho we were perfect men—like father Adam before he sinned

It is to such justified or reckonedly perfect men and women that the Lord sends the "high calling" of this Gospel age—a call to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, a call to suffer with him for righteousness' sake in this present time, with a promise of sharing with him glory, honor and immortality in the future, of being joint-heirs with him in the kingdom which is to bring restitution blessings to all mankind.

The call of this Gospel age is to find the "royal priesthood," of which our Lord Jesus is the Head or Chief Priest, and all his faithful ones the under priests. The work of this priesthood is especially future—during the Millennial age the instruction, guidance and teaching of the world of mankind. The call to this priesthood includes two things: (1) A call in the present time to faithfulness even unto sacrifice, and none can be in this priesthood except he offers up himself a willing sacrifice in the divine service. (2) It includes the glorification that shall follow the exaltation of the sacrificers.

The thing which each is to sacrifice is himself, his will, his life, his all (Heb. 8:3; Rom. 12:1); but God cannot accept to his holy altar any blemished sacrifice, and hence he has not invited sinners to sacrifice themselves—for they are all blemished. None but our Lord Jesus, therefore, could be actually acceptable as a sin-offering on Jehovah's altar: hence the provision is that his church, called to present their bodies living sacrifices, and to thus have fellowship in Christ's sufferings, and by and by in his glory, must first be "justified freely from all things" by the merit of Christ's sacrifice, before they could be accepted as sacrificers "holy and acceptable to God" or in any degree come within the limitations of the high calling.

Altho the Apostle, in the verse you quote, does not particularize the three steps of (1) knowledge, (2) faith and (3) consecration, he nevertheless implies them, as will be noticed from the context: vss. 3 and 4 tell us that the class the Apostle refers to are overcomers of the world, and that they

seek to keep God's commandments, and do so willingly, not feeling them "grievous." Thus we see that he is speaking only of the consecrated class; and since we know that there were none righteous,—no, not one,—of all of Adam's race, and since we know also that the unrighteous could not be accepted as joint-sacrificers with Christ, we know assuredly that the Apostle John had in mind a class of consecrated and spirit-begotten ones, who previously had been prepared by a knowledge of Christ and by a faith in him unto justification.

That "new creature" represented by the new mind which is now begotten of the holy spirit when the justified believer reaches that point where he sacrifices the human will and presents himself unreservedly to the Lord, is merely "begotten." The present life is the formative period during which there is no independent life, but merely the reckoned one of our "mother," the Abrahamic Covenant. (Gal. 4:23-31) Our birth will be in the first resurrection, when we shall be "born from the dead." Then we shall have life and our mother covenant will be dead, having borne the promised seed that shall bless all nations. Compare Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5.

HOW WILL THE DEAD HEAR?

Question.—What is implied by the expression, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and they that hear shall live?"—John 5:25.

Answer.—The Greek text seems to be in full harmony with the English, and neither can be understood logically and in harmony with other Scriptures, except by understanding this to mean that the dead of mankind shall be awakened to such a condition as will permit them to hear, comprehend, understand, tho they will still be dead from the divine standpoint—dead in trespasses and sins—dead in the sense of being still under divine sentence of death. Then after hearing, comprehending, if they respond to the hearing, if they obey the voice, the command, the instruction, of that day of judgment, they shall eventually attain to perfection of life—being raised to the living-point gradually by the processes of restitution or resurrection, by (through) judgments, during the Millennium.

The fact is simply this, that a fall took place, a fall from a certain standing or condition of perfection and life and a redemption was provided at Calvary, on account of which there may be extended to all who fell an opportunity to rise again. The rising, be it never so insignificant in its beginning, must go on to completion—until the subject shall have been raised out of death into life. This raising up is necessarily up to the point or condition from which the fall occurred, and anything short of that would not be in the proper sense of the word a raising out of death and to perfection of life.

When considering the word *anastasis* it is proper that we should interpret it along this line, which is its only true and logical meaning, and if it were in any place used in a less comprehensive sense, it would evidently be the exceptional use of it, and should not militate against its full meaning.

But let us look for a moment at the resurrection of the just ones and the resurrection of unjust ones. There will be no question as to the resurrection of just ones, that to them *anastasis* means a perfect raising up to perfect conditions in the first resurrection. Likewise, we claim, is its meaning in respect to unjust ones. It does not say that all of the unjust ones will be raised up, and other Scriptures show that this will not be the case, but that only such of the unjust ones as will conform themselves to the laws of the kingdom, will thus be raised up and that others will fall back when but partly raised up and suffer second death;—those who refuse to hear (obey) their Lord in that day. Compare Acts 3:23.

JOINING TRADE UNIONS

Question.—Can I consistently join a Trade Union? I prefer to be free, but am threatened with loss of employment unless I join one.

Answer.—The Lord's injunctions are specifically along the lines of religion, and hence our separateness from unions should be specially along this line. A trade union has nothing of a religious worship connected with it, as have the churches and some of the secret orders. Of course, as those who are free indeed in Christ, we would prefer not to incur any obligation except to the Lord, but if obliged to join a Trade Union to obtain employment, I think you would do right to join one. I would, however, state to them that I preferred not to join them (not for the sake of the dues, being quite willing to pay my share of maintaining the proper price of labor), but from a desire to be free, lest at some time the Union might wish to dictate to my conscience what would not agree with it. I would therefore give them notice at once that I would be obedient to the demands of the Union so far as my conscience agreed, and that only.

ONLY A FEW MORE YEARS

——FRANCES C. SHORE.——

Only a few more years to learn our part.
Just a few more miles the race to run;
So gather courage fresh, O fainting heart!
O weary "feet," thy journey soon is done.

Only a few more months, but full of toil,
For in the "field" are hungry souls to feed,
Then struggle on, O weary, burdened one!
For thou shalt find a strength in time of need.

Only a few more days to fill with love—
Love for all God's creatures, friend and foe,
Love which shall cover every human fault,
And bring a balm for every earthly woe.

Only a few more hours, we know, for some,
Who in this life have fought a goodly fight,
Henceforth for them remains a glorious crown,
A rest within the radius of God's light.

Only a few more days of willing sacrifice,
Of patient standing when our work is done;
Soon in his radiant presence we'll rejoice,
And praise him in our everlasting home.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

A ZIONIST LEADER'S VIEW OF JESUS

Dr. Max Nordau, a widely known Hebrew leader, not long since in reply to a question concerning his view of Jesus, wrote the following:—

"The picture of Jesus as we have it given by the synoptic gospels is a vague outline and is a typical and ideal Jewish character. He observed the law; he taught the morality of Hillel—love thy neighbor as thyself—he constantly occupied himself with matters of eternity; he felt himself in spiritual communion with God; he despised that which was mortal in his being and all the accidental things of this life on earth. All these are characteristic peculiarities of the best Jews of the time of the Roman supremacy, especially of the Essenes. And as to his origin and ethical physiognomy, there, too, the language of Jesus was throughout Jewish. For all of his parables, parallels can be found in greater or less abundance in the Talmud. His prayer, the most beautiful that a believer ever formulated, is the quintessence of Jewish ideas concerning the relations between man and his Creator. The Sermon on the Mount is the substance of rabbinical ethics; its figures and comparisons are common among the rabbis.

"Jesus is soul of our soul, as he is flesh of our flesh, and who, then, could think of excluding him from the people of Israel? St. Peter will continue to be the only Jew who will say of this descendant of David: I know not the man! If the Jews have not to the present time paid that tribute of public honor to the exalted moral beauty of the character of Jesus, the ground for this is to be sought in the fact that those who tormented them did so in his name. The Jews concluded what the Master was from the doings of the disciples. This was a wrong, but it was pardonable on the part

of those who were eternally the objects of the never-ending hatred of so-called Christians. But every time that a Jew went back to the original sources concerning Jesus and learned to study Christ without regard to his followers, he was compelled to exclaim in amazement: Without accepting his Messianic claims, this man is of us! He honors our race and we claim him as our own, as we also claim the synoptic gospels as examples of genuine Jewish literature.

"And the revision of this trial? This had been done long since. The most learned specialists in the department of Jewish legal procedure have proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that the trial of Jesus, as tradition reports it, could never have taken place before a Jewish court of law. If Jesus was condemned to death, it was done by the Roman judge, and no Jew, faithful to his law, had the least thing to do with it.

"Jesus would never have been condemned to death on the cross before a Jewish court, as this method of punishing criminals was not allowed by the Jewish law; and it never could have taken place on a Friday, the evening before the Passover, as the law stringently forbade any execution on that day. If the Jews had condemned Jesus after the manner reported by tradition, then they would have committed a series of crimes, each of which would have been severely punished by the Jewish law. It is accordingly certain that the whole story of the trial of Jesus can be nothing but an act of vengeance intended to punish the Jews for not having recognized the divine mission of Christ."

This is interesting as showing the change that has come over the people who cried, "His blood be upon us and upon our children!" The Doctor's expression is falling into line with the Prophet's declaration of what must soon be the attitude of the Jews as a people, viz., "They shall look on him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him as one mourneth for an exceptional son."

Undoubtedly the best reading matter for the Jew is the New Testament, whose simple Gospel narrative and whose masterful Pauline arguments refer him freely to the Old Testament and show prophecy and fulfilment, type and antitype. However, we are not to expect Israel's blindness to fully depart before the divinely appointed time;—when the elect Gospel church shall have been completed and glorified. Nor are we then to expect their blessing and enlightenment except through the great trouble in which they will share with all others, and out of which they shall be saved and blest by the glorified spiritual Israel.—Rom. 11:25-27, 31.

METHODISM MORE DEMOCRATIC

The basis of the Methodist Episcopal church is hierarchical, exclusive, all power and authority being vested in the hands of the "clergy." But for some years public sentiment has been growing in favor of a more democratic arrangement, culminating in a demand that the "laity" be granted equal representation and voice with the ministers and bishops in the regulation of the M. E. church's affairs.

The ministers were loth to part with any measure of their "authority" and power, but finding the "laity" persistent they have with as good grace as possible finally yielded the point, as the following dispatch from the General Conference at Chicago shows:—

"CHICAGO, May 2.—The pulpit and the pew will hereafter share equally in the highest governmental body of the Methodist Episcopal church. Without a dissenting vote the General Conference, which opened at the Auditorium to-day, ratified the action of the annual conferences in extending equal representation to the laity. The 157 provisional delegates were admitted without a contest.

"The step taken makes the Methodist church a democratic body, and the rule of the preacher passes with the century. As the roll was made up to-day there are 356 preachers and 236 laymen on the regular list. At least 50 reserve laymen will close some of the breaches in the delegation."

Radical as this step is, it has little meaning and will have little effect in the affairs of Methodism, and it is because the preachers realize this that they yield the point without special contest. They well know that the *name* and *form* of liberty and power are all that their "laity" care for or know how to appreciate. So long as the preachers can keep "their people" in ignorance on the subject of hell, etc., they can manipulate them just as well in conference as elsewhere.

* * *

A memorial has been drafted for presentation to this General M. E. Conference requesting that the strictures of the Methodist discipline against dancing, theatre-going, etc., be expunged.

The Methodist "tares" know that they have just as much right to such things as the Presbyterian "tares" and the Baptist "tares;" and though they have been enjoying the interdicted amusements for years and intend to continue so to do whether the conference cancels the prohibition or not, yet somehow they would feel just a little more free if the words were not there. Not that their consciences are very tender on the subject, but that it gives some of the "wheat" class an opportunity to upbraid them and seems a curtailment of their "tare" privileges and pleasures.

And why should not the General Conference grant the request and expunge the article so obnoxious to the "tare" element? The Methodist "wheat" need no such restrictions even as the Presbyterian and Baptist and other "wheat" need them not. After all, the "tares" are not "the children of the kingdom" and why should such restrictions give some of them more of a deceptive appearance of being "wheat?" Let them do what they will—the wider the difference between "wheat" and "tares" the better, and the more speedy the separation, now that the harvest time of separation has come.

PRESBYTERIANISM STANDS "BEFORE GOD AND MAN WITH A LIE IN ITS RIGHT HAND"

Says One of its Ordained Ministers

"Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee," saith the Lord. And they gnawed their tongues [chewed their words] in pain, but continued to blaspheme [slander, misrepresent] the God of heaven.

The commotion amongst Presbyterians continues—some standing firm for their church creed, others repudiating it and begging to be released from it, but not noble-minded enough to step out into liberty in Christ (as they might so readily do) because of the cost of that liberty in name, salary, etc. Many thus indirectly confess that they despise the chain wherewith they are bound, and have despised it for years, and have realized it to be a lie and a blasphemy against God, and after confessing to this acting and confessing a lie for years they beg to be released without cost or loss either of human or divine favor, and especially without loss of bread and butter.

Note the expression of Rev. Samuel T. Carter in a Presbyterian journal—*The Evangelist*. He says:—

"It must be admitted that if a church is honest, that which stands in its Confession is its faith. It must be acknowledged that what is contained in its Confession is the faith of any honest church. The Westminister Confession of Faith is still the unquestioned Confession of the Presbyterian church. Is the Presbyterian church honest in its zeal for purity first and peace afterward?

"Be it known, then, to all the world that the Presbyterian church by its Confession declares that all the heathen perish, that many men are hopelessly lost from all eternity by the decree of God, and that there are infants in hell. . . . In reality the church does not believe these dreadful doctrines. Then it stands before God and man with a lie in its right hand."

The Independent, a high-class religious journal of Westminster proclivities, makes some very sensible remarks on the situation as follows:—

"The time for removal of error is always; and now revision of some sort begins to be exigent. The Presbyterian church is suffering for it. The arguments for it are those of truth and charity; the argument against it is that it will delay union with the Southern Presbyterian church, which is not yet ready for revision. But we doubt very much if revision is the best course to be pursued. Let the old Confession remain as a historical document. It expressed the views of the Westminster Assembly. It answered its purpose then. It was a noble but faulty document. It gave forth all the light its makers had. Put it where it belongs, as an expression, not of what we must believe, but of what its makers believed. They did grandly express their own faith, but they had no right to enslave our faith, any more than God has a right to enslave our will. There is no nobler intellectual work that a man can do than to formulate what he believes about God. Theology is the noblest of the sciences—a man of intelligence ought never to tire of making creeds for himself. He ought to revise his creed every year. A man's conduct, and so his religion, depends on what he believes about the relation between God and man. More evidence, more discovery, more study, more enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, will change his belief, his creed, and so affect his religious duty. We would leave the formulation of a creed to each man's own conscientious study."

We are surprised and gratified to have so able a journal as *The Independent* come forward thus boldly in advocacy of a

view we have been seeking to promulgate for years; namely, that each individual Christian should have *his own* creed, his own faith or belief respecting the things which God has revealed to his people by his spirit through his Word;—and that each Christian should keep adding to his knowledge and his faith daily from the inspired record, the Bible, using all the helps obtainable to this end. This is the thought of the Apostle when he speaks of *growth* in grace and knowledge and approach to the stature of manhood in Christ. He suggests that the beginner in the Christian way is but a "babe" who needs "the sincere milk of the Word that he may grow thereby," and that when further advanced he will need the "strong meat" of truth which is for the more matured.

With such an arrangement there is no room for the methods in vogue among Christians of all denominations which just now is causing Presbyterianism so much trouble—namely, the fixing by the Doctors of Divinity of each denomination of a creed (claimed to contain all the "milk" as well as all the "strong meat" of God's Word) which each "babe" as it is received is required to swallow, and which it is instructed will supply all the spiritual nutriment proper for it to receive to the end of life. Such doses or pills are administered by every sect—some sugar-coated to conceal the real contents from the "babe," and some like the Presbyterian creed, plain, honest and terribly bitter.

A gentlemen in Allegheny related to us his conversation with a Presbyterian pastor before his withdrawal from that church. The gentleman said, "Pastor, I find many things in our Confession of Faith which upon now more mature consideration I cannot endorse nor continue to be identified with, unless you can help me to reason them out." The pastor replied, "My dear brother, you are getting at this matter from the wrong standpoint; our Confession must be swallowed whole or not at all. It is like a Brandreth pill; if you attempt to chew it [reason it out] you can never swallow it."

How strange that the simple and rational way of feeding "milk" and then "meat," which affords both pleasure and nourishment, should have been discarded for the wickedly injurious practice of imposing upon the "babes" doctrinal pills which not only afford no nourishment but which hinder all growth, and as a result has filled Churchianity with "babes" who as respects spiritual things have never had their senses exercised to discern the true from the false and are utterly unable to follow the Apostle's counsel to "rightly divide the word of truth" and to "try the spirits" (doctrines) whether they be of God or are human fabrications.

A SIMPLE CONFESSION NECESSARY

However, a simple public confession is necessary to demonstrate who are "babes" in Christ—to distinguish such from "children of this world." But this confession should be very simple—so that the merest "babe" in Christ could comprehend and fully endorse it as his own. (1) It should declare faith in Christ as a personal Saviour; that he was sent of the Father and gave his life a *ransom* for all mankind. (2) A personal acceptance of him as a personal Saviour and a determination to forsake sin. (3) A full consecration to be a follower of Jesus in every respect and to lay down life itself in his service. Whoever could not confess these should, not be esteemed a "babe" in Christ at all—nor be fed as such, nor expected to grow up into Christ in all things.

May we expect the church nominal to follow this program—or that the voice of the *Independent* will be more potent than our own in bringing to pass such conditions? By no means. Churchianity contains too many "tares" and not enough "wheat" for such suggestions to be impressive. She will soon go down in the great time of trouble; and not until the kingdom has been set up need we expect a better general arrangement. Then it will apply not to the elect church, which will then be completed and glorified, but to the restitution class, then being developed.—Acts 3:19-21.

THE VOLUNTEER SERVICE

This work is now nobly started and just in time, we trust, to see it well accomplished before July, when so many church attendants are apt to absent themselves for the summer. The brethren and sisters engaging in this service seems to be profiting by it spiritually themselves and it is difficult to conceive of any other form of preaching present truth that could be more effective. The fact that this matter is handed out by Christian gentlemen and ladies adds to the weight and force of the matter circulated. The results cannot be even approximated this side the vail.

Order more "ammunition" as you find you will need it We have a good supply now. But be careful, please, not to order more than you will faithfully and promptly use—for it is expensive. Letters on this subject should have the word "*Volunteer*" at the head, and "Order No. 2" or "Order No 3" as the case may be. Initial orders should invariably be made out along the line mentioned in March 1st Tower.

CONGRATULATIONS TO BRITISH FRIENDS

We have pleasure in announcing to the friends in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales that our London branch office is open at the address given above. It is or will shortly be well stocked with DAWNS, booklets, tracts and WATCH TOWERS. This will greatly convenience you all, we are sure, not only saving time but also postage, and permitting you to use domestic instead of foreign Money Orders.

Volunteer orders will be filled from there also and we hope to hear of many fresh enlistments in this branch of the service

Any who feel disposed to enter the Colporteur work in Great Britain are invited to write *there* for full instructions how to work, where to work, terms, etc., etc.

Friends there desirous of visits from "Pilgrims" to hold public and parlor meetings in Great Britain are also invited to write. Address all such letters to

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY,
131 Gipsy Lane, Forest Gate, London E., England.

PROGRESS OF THE TRUTH IN CHINA

Our dear Brother Randle, formerly a Baptist missionary in China, has been with us at Allegheny for about a month, and we have learned to love him dearly as one of the Lord's "brethren." He has written for the TOWER a little sketch of his recent experiences in receiving the truth and of his efforts to let it shine forth in turn to others. We know it will be appreciated. The brother's depth of interest is well attested by his long journey of 16,000 miles to Allegheny. He proposes spending the remainder of his earthly life in sounding the Jubilee Trumpet—the Gospel of the kingdom. He will probably select Great Britain, his former home, as his future field for harvest work—preaching, and colporteuring the DAWNS.

Before leaving this country he has consented to do some "Pilgrim" work. He is now visiting a number of little gatherings in Ohio and western Pennsylvania, and later on will meet with the churches at Washington, Baltimore, Richmond, Philadelphia, New York City, etc., including some on the Hudson River. We confidently assure him a most hearty welcome from all WATCH TOWER readers he may be permitted to meet. His article follows:—

PRESENT TRUTH IN THE FAR EAST

There has been in China for years one solitary witness for the present truth, Miss Downing, of Chefoo. This lady was formerly a missionary of the Presbyterian Board and she chanced to meet with a stray WATCH TOWER, about the year 1883, in which she read an article on restitution, and at once decided to subscribe for the paper. She was the means of leading Mr. Fuller (whose letter is published at the end of VOL. III.) to study the DAWNS which proved so great a blessing to him. He died in 1894.

Amongst the missionaries of Shantung I am afraid Sister Downing was considered a queer old lady having some odd notions. She prevailed on me, however, to subscribe in 1892 for the WATCH TOWER and to get the *Diaglott*. The latter I much wanted I read a little here and there in the TOWER, but too rashly concluded that it was the organ of some kind of universalism, which I did not want to corrupt my orthodoxy, so threw them aside.

I was too much afraid of the word "Universalism." Now I know that some things *are* universal. God's sunshine is universal; it shines from pole to pole, upon both the just and

the unjust. So is his love. (John 3:16) Light and truth are yet to be universal (John 1:9; Isaiah 11:9), and so is the testimony of the ransom. (1 Tim. 2:6; John 12:32) Because of my prejudice then I continued four years longer in darkness.

Toward the end of that time I saw MILLENNIAL DAWN advertised in the *London Times*, and having been interested for years in the Lord's return, I had a growing desire to read that book. In the summer of 1896 Miss Downing lent me VOL. I., but a day or two later I received another copy from England, sent to me (without my request) by my dear mother. I returned Miss Downing her copy, and starting for my mission station, four days journey from Chefoo, I first read the PLAN OF THE AGES in a mule-litter. It wonderfully opened my eyes, and I became more and more astonished at the beautiful Bible exegesis it revealed. Later on I received VOLS II. and III., and continued to read with admiration. In November of the same year I wrote my first letter to Allegheny, asking for the TOWER, and more information of any kind along the same lines. After reading the three volumes myself, I read them again with my wife, and afterwards with my children, and God has been graciously pleased to lead both my wife and my eldest daughter into a joyous reception of the present truth.

In 1897 I began to speak with my missionary colleagues about the character of the Judgment Day, for I was rejoicing in the strong consolation it gave me to see that God's purposes regarding the heathen—to give them a gracious and full opportunity to enter into life—were infinitely more grand and beneficent than I had ever dreamed.

When the question of the Trinity loomed up it gave me a temporary shock, but I soon saw that I should neither honor the Father nor the Son by making the Lord Jesus more than the Bible clearly teaches, when examined without prejudice; and I recognized not only that all men should "honor the Son even as they honor the Father," but also that it was the supreme will of the Father to have it so.

In 1898, being persuaded that this testimony is from God, and is in conflict with nominal Christianity, I did not consider it necessary to confer with flesh and blood, but resigned my connection with both the Baptist church, and the Mission Board with which I was connected. Being now free from the creeds and traditions of men my first desire was to tell to others the truth that had given me such comfort and joy.

I was able to hold about a dozen meetings among missionaries in several stations, but my principal effort to reach the missionaries of the far East had to be done by correspondence, for they are scattered over thousands of miles of country, in some 500 different stations. For this purpose I had a circular letter printed (a copy of which appeared in the TOWER, June 15, 1899, page 157). To each of these letters we added something further in writing, and enclosing one or more tracts, sent them all out by letter post, which we considered to be much more likely to command a reading than if the whole thing had been printed and sent out as printed matter. In all we despatched the following:—1847 to missionaries in China; 385 to missionaries in Japan; 72 to missionaries in Corea; 20 to missionaries in Siam, etc.; making a total of 2324. The number of tracts sent out was about 5,000.

The vast majority ignored our appeal. This we fully expected, for we know that many are much too full of work for the Lord to hear him speaking to them. Still many replies were received, varying much in tone and spirit. No less than four accused me of blasphemy. One Doctor of Divinity thought I had lost my head; one predicted that I had begun to drift toward infidelity. Some deplored my departure from the faith, while yet others, more kindly in intention, begged me to return to the simplicity of the Gospel; but none of them knew the pearl of great price I had found.

One wrote to me thus:—"I am very grieved that you should have been so led away by the wicked one, and would solemnly urge you not to become one of Satan's agents, and a 'seducing spirit.' . . . We are living in perilous times, and I would warn you to beware of him who not only goeth about as a roaring lion, but also as an angel of light." Another wrote:—"It is just as Paul told Timothy, evil men will wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. I am so sorry to think that you, Dr. Randle, are one who is being deceived by these evil men." These are both personal and esteemed friends, from whom, as from many more, I am now counted alienated. May the Lord deal very graciously with them.

Others wrote thankfully, and showed their readiness for the harvest message. A well-educated Chinese woman wrote —"I have been reading the tracts you so kindly left me, first with interest, then with delight, and I feel so much happier than I have been for a long time; the more I read the more I want to read and the more light I get, but there is still much I want to know. I would like to have MILLENNIAL DAWN and the pamphlet on *Hell*. If you tell me how to send the money I will be ever so much obliged."

In all we sold 90 DAWNS and 38 pamphlets on *Hell*, *Tabernacle Shadows*, etc. One missionary, a young man who bought the four volumes, and has learned to appreciate and love the precious truths therein expounded, came out from Brethrenism, and is now standing alone in North China, bearing his testimony for the present truth. Four other missionaries are reading and studying the DAWNS with joy and profit, but have not yet come out of Babylon, which is to them no easy thing. I was also able to leave 25 volumes in Shanghai for further sale, and will be able to send more out if required, so that I trust the harvest work in the far East may continue to develop, until all shall have received at least some testimony to the light of present truth.

How true it is that the vast majority of the household of faith have no ear to hear the harvest message! As it was in Christ's first presence, so it is now. Immersed in their own work, many are preaching in his name, and doing wonderful works for him (Matt. 7:22), and yet they are as blind and deaf as the Pharisees of old, neither knowing nor doing the will of their Father in heaven. It is a strait gate indeed, and a narrow way, and verily few are finding the life they lead to. May we never cease to humbly and diligently inquire what is the Father's will concerning us, and abiding in Christ, that we may receive his spirit, may we be enabled not only to do that will, but also to see the loving-kindness that is in it!

HORACE A. RANDLE.

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

MATT. 13:24-33.—MAY 27.

"The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the Kingdom."

Parables of the kingdom are really word-pictures of the kingdom. No one of these parables represents the complete view of the subject, but merely one phase of it. The attentive Bible student will notice that the theme of the Gospel from first to last is the kingdom. The message first given to Father Abraham was that his posterity would bless the world—that is to say, be a kingdom exercising control over the world, and for its benefit and uplifting. This hope was before the Jewish mind for over sixteen hundred years, their expectation being that they would be exalted by God to that kingdom position and bless all the families of the earth, reconciling them to God. Our Lord's proclamation and that of his apostles, at the first advent was, "The kingdom of God is at hand" —God is now ready to establish his kingdom if the people are ready to receive it. "But his own received him not," and the kingdom was taken from them as a nation, to be given to the holy nation, the peculiar people, the royal priesthood, whom the Lord would select,—choosing first from fleshly Israel so many as were ready, and the remainder from amongst the Gentiles during this Gospel age

Naturally enough, the Jews did not grasp the situation, but were looking for our Lord to establish a fleshly kingdom in their midst; and it was to counteract this erroneous thought that Jesus uttered these parables of the kingdom—about nine of them—three being embraced in this lesson. The series began with the parable of the sower, examined in our last issue, which showed that there was but one true seed or message of the kingdom, and that the fruitfulness of that seed would depend upon the character of heart into which it would fall. Next we have in order the parable of

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES

Here the good seed or the message of the kingdom which our Lord planted is represented as springing up in believers, and constituting them children or heirs of the kingdom. It is very proper here to note that there is no other method at

present of becoming a child of God, an heir of the kingdom, except through the acceptance of the kingdom message, with all that it implies of consecration to the Lord, even unto death—"if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" in his kingdom.—Rom. 8:17.

The object of these parables, then, was not to depict to our minds what the kingdom would be like after it has been established in the world, but rather to picture before our minds something respecting the processes of development by which the kingdom-class would be selected from amongst mankind and made ready for the kingdom which is to be set up at the second coming of Christ in power and great glory, —when he shall establish that Millennial kingdom for the very purpose of granting a judgment or trial to all the families of the earth—peradventure under the favorable opportunities of knowledge, etc., then granted unto them, many may choose life through obedience to God and attain it.

As in the preceding parable the Lord Jesus, himself was the sower of the good seed, so in this parable. It was Jesus who was sowing the seeds of truth, the promises, etc., which, springing up in the hearts of his disciples, transformed them to newness of life, making of them new creatures, and operating through them as his mouthpieces carried similar blessings wherever the message, the Gospel of the kingdom, has gone.

"While men slept" the enemy of the sower of the good seed, viz., Satan, came and sowed tares amongst the wheat. The Lord himself not only made possible the kingdom by redeeming mankind, but announced his willingness to receive some as joint-heirs of it, and then departed for the far country, even heaven itself, not to return until the time for his kingdom to be established in glory and power. (Mark 13:34) His chosen apostles faithfully guarded the field so long as they lived, but when they fell asleep in death, as the Lord has foreseen and here predicted, the adversary found good opportunity to bring in false doctrines, to sow error, and through the error to produce amongst the wheat a crop of tares—darnel. Tares have the peculiarity that while growing they very decidedly resemble wheat, so that it is almost impossible to tell them apart until a certain degree of maturity is reached; then the difference is clearly discernible to all of experience.

We see the fulfilment of this feature of the parable in Christendom to-day; the wheat was sown broadcast over a certain part of the field, the world of mankind, especially throughout Europe and America, and the tare-seed, the error and false doctrine, seems to have been sown still more liberally; and looking back we date that sowing as commencing as soon as the apostles were "fallen asleep." In consequence we find to-day Christians, true Christians, genuine Christians, begotten of the Word of God's promises, and fully in accord with it, and seeking to bring forth good fruit in their lives; and we also see an almost innumerable tare-class of imitation Christians, begotten not of the truth nor of the word of the kingdom, utterly ignorant of it indeed; begotten of excitement, begotten of fear of hell, begotten of hopes of worldly advantage by joining a nominal church, begotten of pride and a desire to be in good society, begotten of social and financial ambition, etc.

It is often very difficult to discern clearly between these wheat and tare classes; nor has it been necessary so to do down through the eighteen centuries of this age, for the Master declared that they were to be permitted to grow together until the harvest-time, when the ripening of both under the clearer light of the harvest-time would manifest each class thoroughly and distinctly, and then a separation would take place under his supervision.

To our understanding we are now in the "harvest" or end of this age, and the light of present truth, as it shines for the Lord's people walking in the path of the just, which shines more and more unto the perfect day, as well as the light of present truth as it is shining upon the world and its social and financial and scientific questions, is tending to ripen both the wheat and the tares. The tare class no longer seeks to hide itself, but rather seems to claim that it is the genuine article, the scientific class, evolutionists, higher-critics, and in general the worldly-wise. The wheat class is also becoming more and more discernible, as it ripens in the faith and hope and joy begotten of the Gospel of the kingdom. The separating work mentioned in the parable is not only at hand, but in progress; a cleavage and separation between nominal Christians (tares) and true Christians (wheat), as nearly every one who is awake discerns: and this separation will be more and more discernible year by year as the harvest work progresses, until its close.

To have attempted to root out all the tares, and to have thus cleansed the wheatfield, at any time in the past, would have meant, as the parable shows, a complete shaking throughout the entire field, a commotion which would not have served the best interests of the wheat; hence the Lord has permitted for all these centuries that the two classes should live side by side and co-operate in church work, and unitedly profess to be his people, intending the separation to be manifest in the end of the age. And surely when the separation does occur it will cause a wonderful commotion in nominal Zion—"Babylon."

The reapers are first to gather the tares and bind them in bundles *to* burn them. They do not burn them at once, but proceed to gather the wheat into the garner; and not until after the wheat is garnered does the fire consume the tares. We are to remember that this is a parable, and that the fire is as much a symbol as the tares, the wheat and the garner; hence we are not to expect a literal burning of the masses of Christendom in a literal fire, after the little flock, the faithful wheat class, the children of the kingdom, have been gathered into the barn, the garner, the heavenly condition.

The fire which will then come upon the wheatfield, from which the wheat has been gathered, and in which the tares are bundled, will be what the Scriptures elsewhere denominate "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation" —social trouble, financial trouble, religious trouble, accompanied by famine and pestilence, and the end of it will be the disruption of all law, order and religion and the prevalence of anarchy. In that trouble all the tares will be destroyed, in the sense that none of them thereafter will claim to be what they are not—none of them will claim to be God's consecrated people. The various inducements by which they were brought to claim themselves to be Christ's followers, when they were not, will then be at an end. No longer will such a claim gain for them social or financial or other standing or advantage, and no longer will they make the false claim.

Explaining the parable privately to his disciples, our Lord showed them that the gathering of the wheat into the garner meant the completion of the work of this Gospel age—the completion of the kingdom class that shall bless the world, and he says, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Thus the Sun of Righteousness that is to arise in the Millennial morning, and which is to bless the whole world with the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God in Christ, is to be composed, not only of our Lord Jesus himself, the great light, but also of those chosen to be his joint-heirs in the kingdom, his associates in the shining forth of the light of truth.

This was a totally different conception of the kingdom from what had come to the minds of the Jewish people; and altho an explanation of the parable was given to the apostles and they answered that they understood it, we may well doubt if they grasped the subject comprehensively until after the day of Pentecost, when, as our Lord promised, the holy spirit brought them enlightenment of understanding.

THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED

The third parable-picture of the kingdom in its present embryotic condition of development is intended to show that from a very small beginning the nominal church of this Gospel age would attain to quite considerable proportions. Its start is likened to the small mustard-seed, which attains to the largest size of its class of herbs. Yet this large development does not necessarily signify advantage or anything specially desirable, but on the contrary it becomes a disadvantage, in that the fowls of the air come and lodge in its branches, and defile it. The "fowls of the air" in the preceding parable of the sower represented Satan and his agents, and we are, we think, justified in making a similar application here, and interpreting this to mean that the church planted by the Lord Jesus flourished rapidly and exceedingly, and that because of its attainments, strength, etc., Satan through his agents, came and lodged in the various branches of the church. They have been lodging in the branches of this Gospel church for these many centuries, and are still to be found in her, a defiling element. They come in, not for the benefit of the mustard-seed tree or shrub but for their own convenience and benefit. It is in harmony with this that in the present time the Lord speaks of Babylon, nominal Christendom, as "the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."—Rev. 18:2.

This contamination of the original good planting, by the adversary and his agents, is as prominent in this parable as in the parable of the tares, merely showing it from a different standpoint

THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN

Here again we have a word-picture of the Lord's church during this Gospel age of her development and preparation for the kingdom glory to follow.

In this parable we have brought to our attention the Lord's provision for the necessities of his people during this Gospel age—he did not leave them without a proper supply of food. The three measures of meal, equivalent to one ephah, constituted a good, liberal household supply. Like all of the Lord's provisions, it was good and pure, but as in the other parables the adversary introduced impurity, falsity, etc., so in this one leaven is introduced into the meal. Leaven represents corruption throughout the Scriptures: in every other instance of its Scriptural use it is represented as an evil, an impurity, something that is defiling. For instance, the Israelites were to put away all leaven, all impurity, at the time of the Passover, that they might come the nearer to the Lord in holiness, etc. Again, our Lord Jesus refers to leaven as a corruption, bidding his disciples "Beware of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees"—beware of the false doctrines, the corrupt influence, proceeding from the scribes and Pharisees. Again, the Apostle Paul represents the leaven as an evil thing, saying, "Purge out the old leaven."—Exod. 13:7; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor. 5:7.

It would not seem reasonable that our Lord should use the word leaven here as Christian people generally suppose, in a good sense, as implying some grace of the holy spirit. On the contrary, we recognize consistency in all of his teachings, and we may be as sure that he would not use leaven as a symbol of righteousness as that he would not use leprosy as a symbol of holiness.

How then shall we apply this parable? We answer, that the grace of God given to his people in the beginning of this age, (1) the faith once delivered to the saints, (2) the hope set before us in the Gospel, (3) love, the bond of perfectness, summed up the three measures of the Lord's provision for his people,—in partaking of which they were to become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. But gradually a woman arose, a false woman, represented in Revelation as a harlot, and as "that woman Jezebel." This Roman Catholic system obtained great power over the three measures of meal provided for God's household, and proceeded to mix therewith the leaven of her own impurity. The result was that all the family food, all the holy doctrines were contaminated with her false doctrines—nothing was left pure and clean, as handed to us originally by the apostles. The faith once delivered to the saints was distorted out of all semblance to its original simplicity; the hope set before us in the Gospel was changed to another hope entirely, unlike the original; the spirit of the Lord, love, was perverted to a selfish love of creeds of men and human institutions. Alas! no wonder all Christendom is spiritually sick, because of this adulteration in its food supply.

From this standpoint we readily see the force and meaning of the Master's declaration, that at his return he would gird himself, and come forth and serve his people, and that he would send forth at the hands of his servants things both new and old from the storehouse of his grace, "meat in due season."

THE HARVEST PLENTEOUS—THE LABORERS FEW

MATT. 9:35-10:8.—JUNE 3.

"It is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."—Matt. 10:20.

It is a great tribute to the spirit of liberty which prevailed amongst the Jews, that our Lord could and did preach the Gospel of the kingdom from city to city in their synagogues without molestation. In contrast, we may feel sure that were he to attempt to teach in any of the churches of to-day, of any denomination, he would be refused the privilege —no matter how faithfully he should adhere to the Scriptural declaration, and the more explicit his teachings the more unsatisfactory would they be to those now in charge, who have a theory of their own respecting the kingdom, which will not stand investigation, and whose weakness they would not wish to have exposed. And this loss of liberty amongst Christians, as compared with the Jews, in religious matters, is to their injury—making it that much the more difficult for them to hear the joyful sound of the present harvest message.

Nothwithstanding all the healing of disease which our Lord accomplished, there were still multitudes of sick who flocked from various directions to him, in hope of relief, and when we read that he was moved with compassion for the distressed sheep of Israel, it gives us a deeper appreciation of his kindness, his love, his mercy, and we do not feel that it was strange that he who had left the glory of the Father and the holy angels, and had humbled himself to man's estate, should now feel compassion for the weak and sinful, the degraded, depraved and pained. Rather, we say, It was just like him! Without such a spirit of compassion how would he have become our Redeemer, how would he have left the heavenly glory on our behalf! And when we think of him as being still the same it gives us fresh confidence, that notwithstanding our weaknesses and imperfections, and the imperfections and weaknesses of the whole world, "the groaning creation," this same Jesus has compassion, not only upon his people, but in a large sense in due time will have compassion upon all the families of the earth, and grant to all a full opportunity of recovery from the blights of sin, mental, moral and physical. Surely he only waits for the due time—the time appointed of the Father; then with his faithful, his kingdom-class, as the Seed of Abraham, he shall indeed, in times of restitution, bless all the families of the earth with a full opportunity of reconciliation to God, and thus of the attainment of life eternal.

At the time of our lesson his work had not yet taken this broad sweep; nor has it yet, altho it has advanced beyond the confines of that time. Then his message of reconciliation and his help were extended only to the lost sheep of the household of natural Israel—not to the Samaritans nor to the Gentiles. Since then the blessing of reconciliation has been extended so that whosoever has an ear to hear, amongst the Gentiles or amongst the Samaritans, has the privilege of reconciliation during this Gospel age; but the great time of opening deaf ears and causing all to know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, will be in the Millennial age to follow this one.

Compassion, however, will be an element of the Lord's character so long as there are any who need help, and desire it; and this will be until the close of the Millennial age when all willing to receive the help will have received it, and the only ones not blessed thereby will be those who shall have deliberately rejected his help. Then, and not until then, will his compassion cease to be exercised, for then there will be no need of compassion, that which is perfect having come through the grace of God in Christ.

Our Lord's compassion for the multitude suggested the sending forth of representatives, clothed with the power to heal the sick, etc., and in order to bring his disciples into line with his thought he told them that the harvest was plenteous, but the laborers were few, and that they should offer prayer on this subject. The substance of their prayer would necessarily be,—Lord of the harvest, send forth me as a reaper in the harvest. Jesus himself was the Lord of the harvest; the whole matter was in his hands, and evidently the twelve apostles quickly caught his thought and spirit respecting the increase of the harvest work, and in consequence he sent them forth two and two; yet he restricted their going, even as he had restricted his own ministry, to fleshly Israel, because all of God's covenants and promises were still confined to that nation, and would not be open to others until a due time which the Father had fixed, and specified through the Prophet Daniel—viz., the end of Israel's seventy weeks of favor—three and a half years beyond our Lord's crucifixion.

"And he gave them power [authority] over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of disease and sickness." This power was holy Spirit power, the same and yet different from that which they received later on at Pentecost from the Father. It was the same, in that the holy spirit or power of God is always the same power even tho it have differences of manifestation. It was holy, in that it was the spirit of our Lord Jesus, the holy Spirit or power which was granted without measure unto him,—which he at this time communicated to these apostles, that they might, as his representatives, do a work in his name.

Indeed, we may surmise that as the curing of disease caused vitality to go out of our Lord Jesus, to effect the cure, and that thus every cure meant the robbing of himself

of his own life-powers, his own vitality, so in this case we should understand that the power for the healing of the sick was Jesus' power, that the disciples did not use their own vitality, but merely his, which he communicated to them, and authorized them to use, saying, "Freely ye have received, freely give." They were giving what cost them nothing, but which was costing Jesus much daily and hourly. It is when we get this thought of our Lord's yielding up his life daily in doing good to others that we can best appreciate how his perfect life was so thoroughly used up in the short space of three and a half years.

The healing of the sick and the casting out of devils were but parts and incidents of their mission. In connection with it they were to preach the Gospel of the kingdom—the good news that the kingdom of God was nigh at hand; and the influence of the miracles should properly attract attention to the message, and make the people ready, yea, anxious, for the kingdom. But so far as the record shows, the people were anxious for the miracles, the healing, but very indifferent respecting the kingdom. They would take the cures from Jesus and his disciples, but if they wanted information respecting how and when the kingdom of God would come they would follow their blind guides as usual.

Nevertheless we may presume that the influence of this mission work throughout Israel was not entirely lost, and that after our Lord's crucifixion, and after the holy Spirit had come upon the disciples at Pentecost, and they preached the Gospel of the kingdom from a different standpoint, inviting all true Israelites to unite with Christ, and thus become joint-heirs of the kingdom with him—then it was that many, no doubt, of those who had heard previously and witnessed the miracles, were that much better prepared to enter the embryotic kingdom, the church through consecration of themselves to the Lord. And the conversion of several thousands within a few days after Pentecost corroborates this.

The harvest in the end of the Jewish age foreshadowed or typified the harvest of this Gospel age. And now, as then, Jesus is the Lord of the harvest, and his disciples, his messengers, are his agents in the gathering work. Now, as then, he seems to speak to these, saying that the harvest is great and that the laborers are few, and that if we have his spirit in the matter, and entreat him to send us forth in his service, he will be pleased to do so. And many are thus praying from day to day, and seeking to see what more their hands can find to do in the harvest work. And the Lord is graciously with such to guide their service and to bless the results to their own good as well as to the good of others. As all of the disciples then prayed this prayer, and got opportunity to engage in some part of the harvest work, so now all true disciples should be praying this prayer, and should be expecting and utilizing opportunities for service.

The methods of the harvest work then and now may be slightly different, and yet they are considerably alike. This is not the fleshly Israel, and the blessings sent at the hands of the harvest reapers are not temporal blessings—not the healings of physical disease; but they are better than these—the opening of eyes of understanding, a far greater blessing than the opening of natural eyes, the removal of deafness as respects the Lord's great plan, a far more precious boon than the restoration of natural hearing, etc. Likewise, the offering of the kingdom now is much more tangible and can be demonstarted much more clearly than was possible then, for it is nigh, even at the doors, and even the world can see the shakings of the present institutions, preparatory to their removal, that those things of truth and grace which cannot be shaken may remain, may be established, under the Lord's reign of righteousness.

As the harvest laborers going forth now seek the ripe wheat of this Gospel age, each should remember the words addressed to the laborers in the Jewish harvest, "It is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." Not that we are to expect to have miraculous powers of speech granted us, but that we are to be filled with the truth and its spirit, and then indeed it will be true that it will not be our own wisdom that we shall speak, nor our own plan that we shall declare, but the wisdom that cometh from above, and the plan of the Lord our God

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A WICKED WOMAN AND A WEAK MAN

MARK 6:14-29.—JUNE 10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"*Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be ye filled with the spirit.*"—Eph. 5:18.

Herodias, a young woman, closely related to the reigning family of the Herods, was ambitious to become a queen; her uncle Philip, being the eldest son of Herod the Great, was presumptively his heir, and accordingly she pressed her suit, and with such success that she was accepted as Philip's wife. But at the death of Herod the Great it was found that he had disinherited his eldest son, Philip, and that Herod Antipas was made successor to the kingdom.

It was necessary that Herod Antipas should go to Rome to be invested with regal authority, and while there he was the guest of his brother Philip and of Herodias, his wife and his niece, who of course was chagrined that she had failed of her ambition. However, ambitions know no bounds, especially selfish ones, and she seems at once to have set herself to captivate her younger uncle Antipas. Her cunning seems to have been without scruple of any kind, and remarkably successful. She so wrought upon Herod Antipas that he dismissed his wife, the daughter of the king of Arabia, and then Herodias with her own child, a girl of probably fourteen, left her husband Philip, to become the wife of Herod Antipas, and thus to attain the position of queen, which she had coveted.

The shortcomings and failure of others should become to us valuable lessons. In the case of Herodias before us we see illustrated the power of ambition, and how important it is that our ambitions be noble and true and pure. Nearly all there is of good accomplished in the world is somehow or other connected with good ambitions, and likewise nearly all the evil in the world is somehow or other associated with wrong ambitions. How important that we should learn to guard our ambitions, our desires, our hopes, our aims: we cannot accomplish anything without hopes and aims and ambitions: hence the necessity for securing good ones. And here let us note the fact that the majority of mankind have little or no ambition, and therefore are passing through life in a kind of maze, accomplishing comparatively little for themselves or others. This is a wrong condition; every man, woman and child should have a noble ambition, and should labor constantly for the attainment of that ambition.

Others of the world have such ambitions as had Herodias they are ambitions for wealth, or for social position and display, or for title and honor amongst men. These are all selfish ambitions, yet they are the powers that are moving politics and business and society every day—and we are sorry to say these are the ambitions which are moving many in the pulpits and many in various religious works. These are all wrong ambitions, and tho they may not all result as evilly as did that of Herodias they are all selfish, and all tend at least in the same general direction toward evil, and many are seduced by their selfish ambitions into doing those things which their consciences do not approve, and many such become seducers of others into evil deeds and reprehensible schemes.

The Christian has before him the only proper, legitimate and worthy ambition possible at the present time; nor does the average or nominal Christian have these correct ambitions but rather only such Christians as are taught of God, such as hear and heed the Word of the Lord. Before these are set the most noble, lofty ambitions; they are invited into the society, friendship and fellowship of the King of kings and Lord of lords. They are invited to become his companions, his brethren, co-workers together with him in the great work he is now accomplishing, and also to be joint-heirs with him in the great work of the Millennial kingdom which he is shortly to inaugurate. Could there be a higher ambition than this set before mortal man? Surely not. Moreover, it is an ambition which tends to develop all the higher qualities of mind and character, for the terms and conditions of this fellowship are based upon purity of heart, devotion to the Lord, etc., so that he that hath these ambitions and hopes in him purifieth himself even as he is pure with whom he has become associated. Let us have these true ambitions before us, that they may crowd out and trample down the inferior ambitions of earth and sensuality, that lead to sin, groveling and devilishness.

Herodias, having gained her point thus far, and finding herself in the coveted position of queen, undoubtedly felt greatly elated, flushed with her success; but in the midst of

this elation came the news respecting John the Baptist, and how he had had an interview with Herod the king, and in the presence of courtiers and others had declared that it was not lawful for him to have Herodias for his wife. This was a shock to Herodias. Who would have thought that any man would have been bold enough to have spoken to the king on such a subject; and who would have thought that the king would have heard him patiently, and even have seemed interested in him, and have considered him a prophet of the Lord God?

What wonder Herodias was angry with John the Baptist, and sought to wreck upon him her vengeance! Had she plotted and planned for years to reach her present position, and was she to be thwarted now, and to be cast out at the word of such a man as this? Moreover, if she were now cast out, it would mean a worse condition than ever, for of course she could not with decency go back to her husband Philip, and expect to be kindly received of him. Hence, if Herod should give ear to John the Baptist, and should permit his message to influence him, it might mean that Herodias would become an outcast. Can we wonder, then, that the evil ambition which had thus far ruled the woman's heart should now move her against the great prophet? We could only say that it would be the legitimate fruitage of such evil ambitions as she had for years been cultivating at the expense of every principle. It had not hesitated thus far at anything, and why should it hesitate even at murder, now in its greatest extremity?

So it is with all evil, selfish ambition—the tendency is always downward, going from evil to evil, from sin to sin, from crime to crime. On the contrary, the ambitions which are inspired of the Lord tend always upward and upward, higher and higher—whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are in harmony with God—this is the tendency and impulse of the ambition which God inspires, the wisdom which cometh down from above, which is first pure, then peaceable and easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good fruits.

THE KING OUTWITTED BY HIS WIFE

Herodias had sufficient influence over her husband to secure the arrest and imprisonment of John: but apparently she was chagrined that she could not accomplish her desires to the full in securing his death. This was not so much because Herod had a mind of his own, but rather, as the narrative declares, because of his fear. He knew John to be a righteous man and holy, and, as the Revised Version expresses it, "kept him safe"—possibly fearing that if John were set at liberty Herodias would find agents for his destruction. Apparently John was granted unusual liberties in prison, for his disciples had opportunity to come to him and to bear messages to and from him; and the intimation is that Herod was perplexed respecting how he should deal with him, and occasionally sent for him and heard him with interest.

Herodias concluded that this was a dangerous condition of things, and again her tact and shrewdness came to her assistance. Herod's birthday was approaching, and knowing that it was generally celebrated she proposed to make a special effort on that occasion to secure her ends. These birthday feasts were occasions of carousal; the king would be surrounded by the notable men of his realm; all would be considerably under the influence of wine, and then would be Herodias' opportunity for securing her wishes. She was crafty, however, and realized that John had an influence upon the king that to some extent at least off-set her own. She realized then that the king knew well her heart, and that he would hesitate to make a broad and liberal offer to her, and so she prepared her young daughter, educated in Rome, beautiful, attractive, that she should take the place before the king of the ordinary dancing girls who usually served on such occasions of revelry.

This was supposedly a rare treat, a high honor to the king, that his niece, a young lady of refinement, should take the position ordinarily occupied by one of a low class. The ruse was successful; the king and the court were charmed with the girl's beauty, and Herod's mind, inflamed with the wine, was generous and unselfish to the extreme. It was customary to remunerate the dancing girls liberally on such occasions, in proportion to the dignity of the entertainer and now how liberally should he treat this one, who had so bewitchingly pleased himself and the company, and who was his own niece and step-daughter? He would ask her what she would like to have, and in her natural hesitancy he would press the matter upon her, to mention whatever it might be, even to the half of his kingdom; and then boastfully he would make oath to his liberality. The girl, no doubt, was instructed of her mother what to expect, and yet the crafty woman had kept the design wholly within her own grasp. Her daughter should not know in advance, lest she should make some error; she would merely first have the king's word that she would have her desire; then she was to come to her mother and receive instructions. Childlike, she seems not to have had great ambitions and wishes of her own, and hence she at once adopted her mother's wish, and asked for the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

How horrible it seems, that anyone should have such a desire, such a murderous condition of heart! How strange it seems that a refined, educated woman should have such sentiments as would prompt such a request! Yet it was but the natural operation of the evil in the fallen heart. As the Apostle James says, the beginning of temptation is to be drawn away of desire, of ambition—enticed thereby. Then, when desire (ambition) has conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.—James 1:14, 15.

Even the weak and despicable Herod was shocked by the request. He had been trapped, and he saw it; he realized at once that this was a scheme on the part of his wife, and that now, as on former occasions, she had proven more than a match for him. What would he do? Would he resent such infamous conduct, and denounce his wife and her daughter as murderers, plotters against innocent blood of a righteous man? Would he take his stand for justice and for truth, and resolve that now, seeing the depth of wickedness into which he had been ensnared, he would strive to turn about in his course, and follow the advice of this prophet of the Lord, and reform?

EVIL RESULTS OF A WRONG STANDARD

No; he had not sufficient character for that; and from his wrong standpoint of view duty appeared to lie on the other side: First, had he not given his word, and should not the word of a king, given on his birthday, and at a feast, and in the presence of his chief generals and supporters, be inviolable? Moreover, in his maudlin condition he had riveted the matter with an oath, and now from his wrong standpoint pride asserted itself, and would not permit him to take the right course. Here again we see in an exaggerated form a principle which applies daily to worldly people in all of their affairs. They have a wrong standard before their minds. It is a standard of pride and self-esteem and love of approbation of others, and not a love for righteousness, for truth, and of deference for the Lord; and hence many have found themselves like Herod, led step by step, by what seems to them to be fate, and as they would say, beyond their control; but such matters are beyond the control of men because they are not under the proper control, because they are not the Lord's people; because they have not given their hearts to him. Therefore the affairs of life, instead of working for good to them and bringing them valuable lessons, helpful and elevating, are bringing them experiences which lead downward continually. The lesson here for the Lord's people is to make a proper start, to recognize the Lord, his will, his word, as the standard of justice and of truth, and to walk accordingly. A further lesson is, that wherever we may be, wherever the truth may find us, in a downward course, the only proper method is to at once recognize the voice of the Lord, the voice of right as paramount, and to obey that voice, regardless of how matters may seem or appear to fallen fellow men.

That the king was sorry is indeed an indication that his heart was not utterly corrupt, but that he should yield to what he knew to be wrong, through pride, is an evidence of utter lack of character. History shows that a certain amount of retribution came upon these guilty people forthwith: the sending back of his first wife led to a war between Herod and his father-in-law, the king of Abrabia, in which Herod's forces were worsted seriously. Later on Herodias prompted Herod to apply to Rome for an enlargement of his dignity and power, but his application was rejected, and instead he was dethroned, lost all his title, power and influence, and the only redeeming quality noted in the case of Herodias is that she shared Herod's loss and banishment. Poor woman! Perhaps finally she learned that earthly ambitions are much like the apples of Sodom; perhaps she learned the folly of the course she pursued, that it brought no true joy, no true blessing, but only excitement and one disappointment after another. Perhaps, too, King Herod learned some lessons. We read that

he heard of Jesus and his wonderful works, and that superstiously he concluded that this must be John risen from the dead Altho not a Jew, but of the family of Esau, he nevertheless had some knowledge of God and of the hopes set before the Israelites, and possibly his evil experiences brought him some valuable lessons.

So with many of the world in the present time: their experiences are bad and yet they impress lessons upon themselves, and upon others which ultimately may be of service, of value As we look at their mistakes let us learn to profit by avoiding them in our lives. Let us remember, too, that all ambitions and temptations are not on the large and terrible scale of this picture before us, yet that the same principles are involved. Let us learn to recognize principles, whether operating in little things or in great ones, and that he who is faithful to right principles in small things will be faithful in greater trials. Let us first of all learn that the proper course for us is to consecrate ourselves to the Lord, and then seek to have the lawful and laudable ambitions which he will inculcate through the Word.

FAITHFUL CO-LABORERS HEARD FROM

MR C. T. RUSSELL,

DEAR SIR:—I take the opportunity to write to you, in manifestation of my sincere and heartfelt approval of your magnificent works, now in my hand. Your volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN I must hold and confess to be a veritable Bible Key, justly deserving the appellation they bear—Helps for Bible Students I have in my possession volumes one to five, in addition to *What Say the Scriptures About Hell?* and *Spiritism*. Sir, before offering any opinion or remarks, permit me to say first, that with regard to your little work on *What Say the Scriptures About Hell?* I do a little Greek reading I know nothing of Hebrew, but I must confess that it puzzled me beyond measure to find out where our early interpreters of the Scriptures found the substance or foundation of that horrible doctrine. And gaining much, very much knowledge on the subject by reading that little work, I have to ask the question. "What was their motive for establishing this hell torment doctrine?" The only answer I can find is that it was from some selfish end to frighten men into Christianity, a plan the Almighty never intended, having made man a free agent to choose for himself. But these "devil doctrines" will soon have to give way to the light of present day truth. My profession being that of Christian work—a catechist and schoolmaster—in the latter position I sometimes, find it difficult indeed, after choosing a text, to know where to begin or where to end, not because words fail me but from the fact that the doctrines I have been brought up in were so twisted and distorted that I did not know where was solid ground. I am not ashamed to confess that many passages appeared so difficult that I preferred to leave them to themselves. But thanks to your invaluable helps, many such confounding passages are now as clear to me as daylight. Sir, I hold that Almighty God himself has raised you up to be the purveyor of heavenly food for his famishing children; so that I need not say anything more than wishing you a fair share of his divine blessing. I am still reading and studying my volumes. At first there were some things that seemed to conflict with my views and opinions, and where disagreement crept in, but that, I hold, was because I did not grasp the full purport of the subject, for no sooner than grasped, disagreement disappeared, leaving the approval to remain. I never quickly agree to a special subject or point, before I thoroughly sift and strain and pry into it to find its foundation and harmony. I came to this country in November, 1898, under the appointment of the Bishop of Jamaica. Before I left my island I once had the opportunity of seeing the first volume of DAWN, which a friend possessed, but partly destroyed—back and inside leaves were gone. I determined to find out the authorship and was gratified in having my wish supplied. Mr. A. M. Brownfield is the man from whom I obtained all. He is my constant visitor since. There is also another brother who has written me from Colon, after learning I was a reader of DAWN, Bro. Isaiah Richards. Sir, I am your disciple, I can assure you; and I hope one day to find myself where you are. This, I hope, is but the first of the many letters I expect to write. Yours in Christ,

H. E. WYNTER,—*Isthmus of Panama.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Many thanks for the kindly words and token of your letter of Dec. 25th. The gracefulness of your action manifests an imitation of him who was the embodiment of grace. (Psalm 45:2) Oh, to get nearer to him in thought, word and deed! The Christ-like spirit is so very rare, but the genuine article so very precious. I trust you will always bear in mind how very much we treasure up your many labors of love, and how our unceasing desire and prayer is, that Jehovah's richest blessing may constantly rest upon you and the great work committed to your care.

In our work here we are striving to do what we can. We are not realizing all we desire, for our hearts are so human, that, battle as one will, the prevailing spirit of indifference brings at times a keen sense of disappointment. The truth is so glorious that one is saddened at the reception it meets from the vast majority. But then, of course, God's "due time" is the grand refuge and sweetener; the "lamps" of the "ten virgins" are not intended to take the place of the sun, but to light their individual pathway. Each must have his own lamp and oil in it. The great bulwark of error is leaning upon others; true faith must be individual, endurance likewise. A mob of sheep rushing after a leader of their own nature is the general position; the Good Shepherd leads his sheep and calls them each by name. The body of Christ is to be one, as a collective number (John 14:21-23), but this oneness is contributed to by each individual.

How the truth isolates! It demands a strong individuality in each. Surely the life of Christ shows this most clearly. He was a reflex of the Father, he was the Father's great and perfect representative. "I seek not mine own will, but his that sent me." And yet what a wondrous *personality!* His was not a passive service, he was not a machine (holy Spirit does not destroy personality) but an active, willing, responsive being, God's "vessel unto honor." Christ's moral nature responded to the touch of God like a bud to the rays of the sun or a grand organ to the fingers of a musician, but he was alone, in the most complete sense, so far as this world was concerned. His motives, ideals and practices were so different. "He dwelt amongst us." Fellowship with God was his only source of companionship. "God was with him." Why? "Because I do always those things which please him." Surely this is our pattern: individual fellowship and service is the one means for individual strength. "Study to show thyself approved unto God." The bride of the Lamb when gathered into one is plural, but its building up is in the singular.

What a grand prospect the "truth" presents as the goal of this individual discipline! A perfect nature, "satisfied when I awake in thy likeness;" the goal of human creeds is paltry, absurd,—a future state of locality merely—going to heaven, missing "hell!"

There is beautiful scenery on earth, but it does not give rest or peace or happiness. Our restless nature is like a troubled sea, nothing outside can calm it; the trouble is *in* man; that is where it started, and that is where the reform must be made. The chief value of heaven is because of God's presence and nature, "it is his throne;" so with the earth: far greater planets roll in space, but Christ places this planet as next in importance to God's throne, not because of its intrinsic value, but because of God's promises, purpose and presence. "The earth is my footstool," hence Jesus says, "Swear not by it." "Forever with the Lord," in his nature, throne and work is the perfect goal.

But surely this perfect goal embraces even more; it is not merely for the individual believer and overcomer. "What shall they do, that are baptised for the dead?" etc. The joy set before Christ embraced more than his own perfect bliss. His glorified body is not only perfect, but it is a conquering one, "acording to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself." Preeminently this feature separates the "truth" from all human conceptions. Something to *do*, something to realize, "to show forth the praises of him who hath called us," etc. "The glory that shall be revealed in us." Service is the grandest law of God's universe. "My Father *worketh* hitherto, and I *work*." His angels are ministering spirits; perfect happiness and rest will only be realized by a perfect nature *performing* perfect service. May it be ours more and more to enter now into the true glory of service to see its lofty standard, its eternal basis, and by and by to see his face and enter into his joy.

Your brother in the one blessed hope,

ALFRED PEARSON —*New South Wales.*

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

WHY REV. LYMAN ABBOTT IS NOT A UNIVERSALIST

At a General Convention of Universalists one session was set apart as "Interdenominational Evening," and amongst other speakers was Dr. Lyman Abbott, a representative Congregationalist, who gave his reasons for not believing in universal salvation. Speaking as a liberal Congregationalist he declared that modern Congregationalism *does not accept the doctrine of eternal punishment as preached by the celebrated Jonathan Edwards* of the last century.

We make quotations from Dr. Abbott's discourse as follows:—

"I do not believe that any one of God's creatures will be kept by God in eternal existence simply that he may go on in sin and misery forever. The proposition has long since become spiritually unthinkable to me. I might perhaps believe that a soul could suffer eternally; but I can not believe that any being that God ever made will be kept in existence by God that he may go on in sin eternally.

"What was the old doctrine of eternal punishment? The Savoy Confession, up to about the middle of this century, was the recognized expression of orthodox Congregationalism. Not that it was binding on orthodox Congregationalists; but it was the only historic creed they possessed. Except in the matter of polity, and one or two minor matters, it was identical with the Westminister Confession of Faith; and this was the substance of its statement: It declared that our first parents fell by eating the forbidden fruit; that, they being the root of all mankind, their guilt was imputed and their sinful and corrupted nature was conveyed to all their posterity; that as a result we are 'utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good;' that from the race thus lost and ruined in the Fall, 'by the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others are foreordained to everlasting death;' that those not effectually called, God was pleased, 'for the glory of his sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice;' and that those 'not elected, altho they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come to Christ, and therefore cannot be saved.'

"Specifically, and clause by clause, I disown that statement. . . . . This doctrine is inconsistent with the character of a righteous God. I might fear such a God; I might tremble before such a God; I might, because I was a coward, obey such a God; but I could not reverence such a God. It is inconsistent with the faith that Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh, for it was not His nature to pass any by or to ordain any to dishonor and wrath. It is inconsistent with the Scripture; inconsistent with the parable of the prodigal son, which is Christ's epitome of the Gospel; inconsistent with the declaration of Paul that 'every knee should bow and every tongue confess Jesus Christ to be the Lord, to the glory of God the Father'; inconsistent with the very chapters of Romans on which it is supposed to be founded, for they close with the declaration that *'God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all;'* inconsistent with the splendid picture John paints, of the time when every creature that is in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, shall give praise and glory to the God of their salvation."

These noble words and logical arguments surely appeal to all God-loving and God-honoring hearts and heads; and we are glad so to think: it is a sign of heart enlargement which should be admired, even tho the speaker (like other great men of our times) has swerved far from the Bible under the influence of Evolution and Higher Criticism, and is no longer trusting in the great sacrifice for sins "finished" at Calvary for salvation. But Dr. Abbott said some more good things in that discourse. In telling his Universalist audience why he does not believe in universal salvation, he displayed excellent logic. In reasoning that "the ultimate fact in human life is the freedom of the human will," he said:—

"I know that I can choose the good, and therefore I can choose the evil. What I find true in myself I believe to be true in every other man; he can choose the good, and therefore he can choose the evil. And while I wistfully desire—yea, and sometimes devoutly hope—that when the great drama of life here and hereafter is ended, all God's creatures will have chosen the good—I do not know. If I were a Calvinist, I should be a Universalist. If I believed that God could make all men righteous, I should be sure that he would make all men righteous; otherwise he would not be a righteous God. But I start from the other pole. I begin with my own absolute freedom. I recognize as a fact, in my life, in my philosophy and in my preaching, that, in the last analysis, the destiny of every man is in his own hands. Father may persuade, mother may entice, influences may environ, God himself may surround with all possible persuasions, but in the last analysis the destiny of every man is in his own hands. And what he will do with it I do not know.

"Why, if God be good, has he made a world in which there is sin? Why has he not made a world sinless? Could he not? Certainly; he not only could, he has. The birds are sinless. But he could not make a world in which are free moral agents able to choose the good without giving them at the same time power to choose the evil. Power to choose the one is power to choose the other; and a world in which there are some men who choose shame, dishonor, sin and death, is a better world, I dare to say, than a world made of machines that could choose neither the good nor the evil."

We fully concur with the foregoing, reminding our readers nevertheless of the necessity for remembering the two opposite views of *free agency* which may properly be taken from different standpoints, as shown in our issue of Dec. 1, 1899, page 264.

But two queries naturally arise:

(1) How does Dr. Abbott harmonize his two propositions, *(a)* that the *decision* respecting his harmony or disharmony with God lies with *man* himself, individually; (*b*) that God has made no provision for the eternal torture of any? The logical mind will surely inquire, What then will become of the wicked who are *unwilling* to be saved on divine terms and hence *unfit* for the rewards of eternal bliss, if the time is to come when "every creature that is in heaven and on earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea shall give praise and glory to the God of their salvation"?

Is it possible that so fine a logician as Dr. Abbott has overlooked the logic of his own expressions? Oh no! We answer, The connecting link in the Doctor's logic is clear to his own mind, but he does not care to make it very public because it is not very popular yet—the same is true of many others of the ablest ministers in all denominations. The connecting link of his logic will be seen at once when it is stated,—he believes in the *utter destruction* of the incorrigibly wicked, as we do, and as we teach publicly.

But public teachers who keep silence on this subject and put their light under a bushel, do so at a great *cost*—the cost of further guidance of the Lord into the "all truth" promised. Oh, how many ministers in seeking to avoid the senseless charge, "Annihilationist," have suffered God's character to be blasphemed and his people to be deluded by the doctrine of an *eternal torment* of the unsaintly;—preferring numbers and popularity and honor among men and the financial emoluments of these rather than the truth! Alas! they seek to be wise and prudent according to this world's standards, entirely overlooking the fact that the Lord declares he will not reveal his secrets to such. Our Lord pointed this out, saying, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast *hidden these things from the wise and prudent* and hast revealed them unto babes"—who will utter the truth regardless of consequences.—Matt. 11:25.

(2) Some one will say then, If Dr. Abbott believes thus in the final reign of righteousness and the destruction of the incorrigibly wicked, is he not very close to the truth and a very hopeful subject?

We answer, No. At one time, so far as we might judge of any man's heart by his writings, Dr. Abbott was very close to the truth—a believer not only as above but also in the Atonement and in the second coming of him who made the atonement with his own precious blood. But the Doctor seems to have permitted himself to become one of the "wise and prudent" who prefer honor one of another rather than that which cometh from God only. (John 5:44) At any rate, instead of coming out more and more boldly for the truth on these unpopular subjects, he seems to have put the light he had under a bushel until it has gone out. For according to Dr. Abbott's present teachings he undoubtedly is now an Evolutionist with all that implies of rejection of the Bible doctrine of a fall by our first parents (and we in them) from perfection and harmony with God—into sin and its mental, moral and physical degeneration and death. And the rejection of this implies a rejection of the Atonement; for if man did not fall he needed no redemption from the fall—no Redeemer. And if the "ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:6) is denied, then logically "times of *restitution*" to a former estate (Acts

3:19-21; Ezek. 16:55, 61) must be denied also. And accordingly there would be no object in establishing the Millennial kingdom—for Evolutionists argue the world is progressing splendidly under Evolution and needs Christ's kingdom no more than it needed a sin-offering when it had committed no sin and was under no condemnation.

Thus nearly all the great and wise prudent according to the course of this world, *professing* themselves to be wise, have by leaving the truth of God's revelation, the teachings of the Bible, become foolish, and their foolish hearts have become darkened. Indeed we believe this to be the secret of the greater blindness and more rapid falling away of ministers than other Christians from the very hub of revealed truth, the ransom, and hence from all truth. With greater advantages for learning the truth than others they have not *loved* truth so as to search for it, especially when they perceived that their search would not only cost time and energy; but the truth being now as ever unpopular would cost them *popularity* with all classes wedded to errors.

In consequence many ministers have so trifled with truth and with their own consciences that they not only have lost love and relish for truth as truth, but have even lost much of that keen perception for truth which always accompanies a tender and trained conscience. This is well attested by the frequent confessions of prominent ministers appearing lately in the public press. They confess to systematic deception practiced for years respecting their beliefs versus their confessions. And the fact that this is done without even an apology or any manifestation of shame for so ignoble a course demonstrates that these gentlemen either never had much conscience to hurt, or, as we prefer to think, that they have so long and so persistently trodden it in the mire of self-interest and "prudence" that it has lost its life, its power. It is for this reason that the ministers of all denominations are much less amenable to the truth than the consecrated "sheep" of their flocks:—just as it was in the end of the Jewish age. Not only so, but they are the greatest enemies of the truth—and now as eighteen centuries ago many of them do not hesitate to say all manner of evil falsely, openly and by insinuation, to stir up the evil passions of their deluded followers to reject and to *crucify the truth!* Woe is surely coming upon all such hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, who will neither enter the kingdom themselves nor permit those who would be so inclined to enter.—Compare Matt. 23:13.

LOWER ANIMALS SUFFER LESS THAN MAN

Infidelity's hyper-criticism has charged the Bible and the Bible's God with unsympathetic brutality in commanding Israel to sacrifice sheep, oxen, goats and doves by the tens of thousands—causing these innocent creatures intense pain merely to *typify* something future. Moreover, it is claimed that the method commanded by Moses' law for the killing of animals for food—namely by bleeding to death—is barbarous, causing needless prolongation of the animal's sufferings: and the Hindus of India are pointed to as examples for Christians, because they will not taste animal food even if starving whereas the founder of Christianity, while giving his followers the law of love, not only neglected to mention the lower animals but ate thereof himself.

Our answer has been that it is a mere supposition quite unproven, that the lower animals suffer pain in anything like the degree known to man:—especially such as under the Jewish law were prescribed as food for man. In our opinion the cutting of the throat, while it does not exhaust life instantly, does render those animals unconscious so that they suffer no pain whatever. The horse and the dog, not permitted the Jews as food, give many instances of greater nerve-sensitiveness than do the ox, sheep, etc., and more than any other animals, tho very much less than man. Doubtless the sensitiveness of these two is designed to make them more tractable to man's control and therefore more useful and companionable to him.

We clip from the *Pittsburg Press* an article corroborative of the above that may be both interesting and profitable reading, as follows:—

Animals Which Have no Pain—Recent Experiments Show That Lower Orders are not Sensitive

"The old writers, according to science, assumed that an insect has sensations and feelings resembling our own—that it sees what we see and suffers as we would suffer if treated in the same way. Recently the pendulum has swung in the other direction, and high authorities practically deny that the lowest organisms feel anything that can properly be called pain.

"Thus the late Prof. W. W. Norman, of the University of Texas, maintained as the result of experiments on the flounder and lower species, that the reactions of these creatures against injury do not indicate pain sensations at all.

"Certain motions are said to express pain, because they always accompany injury. Since they do accompany injury they are said to indicate that the injury causes the animal to suffer. This, the professor says, is a mere argument in a circle. He regards movements as the immediate consequence of physical stimulation. To prove his position he made a considerable number of experiments.

"The most striking and classic of these experiments were made on the common earth worm. If such a low animal be divided at its middle transversely, only the posterior half shows those squirming and jerking movements which, anthropomorphically viewed, seem to indicate pain; the anterior half (containing the brain) crawls, as ordinarily, away. Now, if each of these halves be halved again, the posterior segment of each squirms while the anterior halves crawl away. This same process may be continued with precisely like result until the pieces are no longer large enough to crawl independently.

"This striking phenomenon is explained in part by the two sets of muscular fibers in the worm, one longitudinal, causing the squirming and jerking, and the other circular, which produce the crawling. Why in the posterior segments the former set should be initially stimulated and in the anterior the latter set, Professor Norman says he does not know.

"The abdomen of a hermit crab may be cut in two without any 'but a very slight response' from any remaining movable organ. 'Limulus' stops a few seconds when four or five abdominal segments are cut away, then proceeds quickly breathing as before.

"'Geophilus' cut in two in the middle continues its crawling, the front half going forward and the rear half backward. Millipedes divided while walking do not hasten nor stop nor jerk. Dragon flies lose part of their abdomens without any appreciable change in position. Eels continue to eat when their abdomens are cut away during the process.

"Lastly, sharks and flounders, provided a current of water circulates through their gills, will allow the most tedious and deep-going operations on their heads without the slightest appreciable movement indicative of pain."

* * *

Many friends of the truth have queried whether or not God's plan reveals any provision for the lower animals. They query whether or not there will be deaths among the lower animals during the Millennium and if so, if that would not cause pain to their human friends, etc.

Scripture promises are addressed only to man and refer to the lower animals only as they stand related to man's welfare. For instance, the promise that the lion shall eat straw like the ox and lie down peaceably with the lamb, is for man's comfort and assurance, and by no means implies everlasting life to the lamb. Altho all animals have suffered by the fall of man, it is indirectly, in that their ruler, their king, lost his balance, his full sanity, and hence has been unable to regulate and govern properly his subjects. Restitution times therefore will bring its blessings chiefly to man, who because of his much higher and finer organism has suffered by his degradation and death sentence immeasurably more than the brutes.

We may expect death among the lower animals during the Millennium as they shall live out their periods of usefulness; and by reason of the contrast the everlasting life provided for man (made in God's image) will be the more appreciated. Since summer and winter are to continue (Gen. 8:22) we may know that the flowers and all vegetation will likewise die and revive perennially, reminding restored and perfected man of the blessed change that came to him by divine grace through Jesus, his Redeemer and Lord.

These conditions prevailing in the animal and vegetable worlds will bring no pain, neither sorrow nor crying (Rev. 21:4) because *all* of the former things will have passed away. Amongst these will be present *misconceptions* by which we are inclined to attribute to the lower animals human feelings and sentiments—some even carrying these mistaken notions to flowers—loving and talking to their flowers as others do to a pet dog—imagining reciprocal feelings and sentiments.

Restitution will not only bring to men greater knowledge but also sounder minds, in harmony with the divine mind,—so that their loves and hopes, like the divine promises, will measurably pass by the lower creatures and think and plan for and be absorbed in uplifting man—"the groaning creation." And already those who receive a knowledge of the divine plan and with it the spirit of the Lord, find themselves no

longer disposed to *waste* valuable time and affection upon dogs, flowers, etc., while the Lord's "brethren" *need* sympathy and aid and counsel in the narrow way, and while mankind in general are in so deplorable a condition as at present—mental, moral and physical. And such a change of sentiment is an evidence of their attaining more of "the spirit of a sound mind."—See 2 Tim. 1:7.

THE WAR SPIRIT GROWING

For years Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Russia have had military fever, as is well known; and now the same has spread in virulent form to Great Britain and her colonies and to the United States. Just what bearing this may have on the great time of trouble impending is somewhat difficult to prognosticate, but it forcefully reminds us of the Prophet's pronouncement respecting our day: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men. let all the men of war draw near; let them come up [to battle]: beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong." The context following clearly describes the great day of trouble in which the symbolic sun and moon shall be darkened and the voice of the Lord shall be heard in rebuke of evil and the present symbolic heavens and earth shall be shaken.—Joel 3:9-16; Heb. 23:26-29.

In the light of the Boer war and the resistance shown to be possible for a weak nation when well armed with modern weapons, we need not wonder if some of the small, weak nations now feel themselves comparatively strong, and if they will be proportionately independent—even to arrogance. Belgium for instance and Switzerland are amongst the weak nations now feeling themselves strong: and it is said that the latter is now spending on its military forces and armaments (pro rata to its population) more than any other nation of Europe.

Of course this war spirit may quiet down: but while it lasts—while every boy's heart is throbbing with military enthusiasm and every schoolyard is a drill-ground—when even the Sunday School scholars are organized into "Boys' Brigades" —when professed Christians are so infected with the fever as to be blinded to justice and love and pity,—things are not favorable to peace. It looks very much as tho the International Peace Congress cried Peace! Peace! when there is no peace—because the spirit of avarice controls the world and not the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love and benevolence. However, we who look from the Watch Tower can note these things with equanimity. In the world but not of it, we can sympathize with all the contestants, realizing that each nation is more or less blinded and misled by the spirit of pride which forgets or has never learned that only "righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."—Prov. 14:34.

Every evil course amongst men seems to be the result of the misdirection or perversion of a *good* quality; and so it is in this war spirit: it is the misdirection of *combativeness* and *destructiveness*,—two qualities absolutely indispensible to progress. But very few even of Christians have learned of the Lord's Word and spirit how to use these faculties properly—in fighting the good fight, in overcoming and destroying the forces of *sin in themselves* and in opposing error with truth, the darkness with the light—"Speaking the truth in love."

We pray that as the spirit of warfare rises in others it may be fully awakened also in the Lord's consecrated soldiers of the cross, that they may become valiant for righteousness, courageous for the truth as "good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ," and be zealous to the extent of enduring hardness—shame, contempt, evil speaking and general opposition from the world, the flesh, the devil and the nominal church which, blinded by false doctrines, Satan is so grievously misleading.

This thought respecting the Lord's soldiers, and the true nobility of character, and deadness to the world, and aliveness to God necessary to victory over self and the world, much impressed us recently on the occasion of our visit to the Washington City church. We found that, out of a total of twenty-seven professing full consecration to the Lord, three-fourths were "volunteers," and the other fourth desirous of being such and only hindered by circumstances they could not so far control. The Editor had the pleasure of joining these soldiers of the Lord in their campaign against error and for the liberation of "brethren" still bound in Babylon:—a campaign, a warfare for a purpose, a noble purpose, a loving purpose; a warfare *for* God and truth and liberty, which injures none and can offend none except the great adversary or those whom he has blinded. The Editor has longed to join in this service in Allegheny, but thus far has been restrained by the fear that harm rather than good might result because of his being known to be closely identified with the publication. It would be credited to a desire to "blow his own horn" rather than as the blowing of the Jubilee Trumpet, proclaiming the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets.—Lev. 25:9, 10; Acts 3:10-21.

We are thankful that we can record that *this* war fever is spreading as well as the evil life-destroying one. The soldiers of the cross are becoming more and more courageous and coming more and more to realize that, if "we ought also to *lay down our lives* for the brethren," this would imply our willingness to lay down any and every lesser thing—time, influence, etc. The Boston church (numbering about seventy) we understand has enlisted in this "volunteer" work almost without an exception. We have sent them 13,800 of the "volunteer" TOWERS which they are hastening to distribute before the warm weather thins the congregations they would serve.

What a privilege is here for such as have prayed God for opportunity to serve him and his cause! Counting that each of these double TOWERS represents four sermons, and that each should reach and be read by at least three persons, can any one point out any other method for reaching this same desirable class of "brethren" at the same low cost? If we know of no other method of reaching this class *at any price*, and if we know of *no other* way by which we could preach to them the true gospel, why should not all of the Lord's consecrated people who enjoy the light of present truth avail themselves of the privilege? The fact that it is a *new* method of preaching is nothing. It is surely a successful method not only as respects the "brethren" we would aid, but also as respects those who have covenanted themselves as living sacrifices to the Lord and his cause. All who engage in this service as something done for and unto the Lord are sure to be correspondingly blessed. Let all who *can* secure a share in this blessing. See the item in our issue of April 15th, discussing the work, method, etc., Hearken to the joyful sound of the Jubilee Trumpet and become enthused with the spirit of this holy warfare.

PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION, JUNE 16-18

Short notice is not always a disadvantage, and we trust will not be in this instance. Arrangements for the Philadelphia convention had not been completed when our last issue went to press. The above date gives us the advantage of the low rates granted by all railroads to the Republican party convention—namely *one fare* for the round trip from all directions. The season of the year is very favorable and we anticipate a large attendance.

The convention will be held under the auspices of the *Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society*. The church at Philadelphia, our hosts or entertainers for the occasion, have made bountiful arrangements as follows:—

(1) St. George's Hall, corner of 13th and Arch streets, has been secured for the use of the convention. It is one of the finest halls in Philadelphia.

(2) The Lincoln Hotel, No. 1222 Locust street, has been engaged upon moderate terms for the class of accommodation, namely, one dollar a day each person for lodgings. Meals can be had at various restaurants in that vicinity at fifteen cents and upward. It will be safe for those of limited means to reckon expenses at two dollars per day, for the hotel and convention hall are very centrally located, near to depots and little street car fare need be expended.

(3) The convention will open Saturday morning, June 16. The forenoon will be devoted to meeting arriving friends, getting acquainted, etc. On that morning representatives of the Philadelphia church will be at the various railway depots to meet arriving friends, who will be expected to identify themselves by displaying conspicuously the front page of a WATCH TOWER. Should any fail to be identified they will have no difficulty in finding St. George's Hall as above and there a reception committee (recognizable by a silk badge) will look out for their welfare.

(4) Any of the friends who can attend, but who cannot afford more than one dollar a day expense during their stay, will be assisted by others more able, out of a fund already provided: and any who cannot afford the modest sum of one dollar per day, if they can arrange their railway fare, will be provided for *gratis*. Come, all who can, who have the Lord's spirit and who seek more of it. The assembling of ourselves together for the consideration of our Father's Word will surely bring a blessing as he has promised.

(5) When purchasing your ticket, ask for—"Excursion ticket to Republican Convention at Philadelphia." The railroad people assure us that such tickets will be satisfactory to them.

(6) Decide about your going as speedily as possible, and if you decide to attend, at once address: *"Reception Committee," P. O. Box No.* 3084, *Philadelphia, Pa.*, stating by what road you will travel, and if possible the hour of your train's arrival on Saturday morning or afternoon. The convention program will be announced at its first session and posted up for reference. We cannot now announce the speakers, but among them, D. V., will be Brother Randle (formerly a missionary in China) and the Editor of this journal.

(7) An opportunity will be afforded (Monday afternoon, June 18th) for any confessing baptism into Christ's death to symbolize this in water baptism. Robes and towels will be provided, and the service will be preceded by a discourse defining and explaining Baptism and its import.

(8) No collections will be taken up, nor other solicitations for money made. Our assemblings are for spiritual refreshment and for the acquirement of heavenly riches for all.

(9) Only Christians, who trust in Christ as the *"ransom* for all," are invited to this convention. It is hoped and earnestly requested that all such who come will seek preparation of heart for a blessing—hunger and thirst after righteousness, truth, purity, holiness; and all who come humbly in this condition will surely not only *get* a blessing, but also *bestow* blessings upon others. To these desirable ends let us each make the convention and our own association therein a subject of prayer. We bespeak for it also the prayers of all of the Lord's consecrated people who cannot attend: and thus they will no doubt participate in the blessings.

Other conventions for this season will be as follows: At Chicago, about September 1; at Dallas, Texas, September 29, 30 and October 1. Particulars respecting the last two will appear later.

FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH

PSALM 23:6.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Saint Paul speaks of the full assurance of hope and of full assurance of faith as being the proper conditions for the Lord's people. (Heb. 6:11; 10:22) And this is the thought expressed by the Prophet, in our text—full confidence that he who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. (Phil. 1:6) But how few Christians, comparatively, have this full assurance of faith; how few can say, Surely, undoubtedly, goodness and mercy shall follow me henceforth through life, and by God's grace I ultimately shall gain the heavenly kingdom and the glorious things which God has promised to them that love him! The few who can enter fully into sympathy with the Apostle and Prophet in these expressions have therein a great joy, a great blessing, a great rest of heart which others do not 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 the others, and how can those hindrances be removed, that a larger number of the Lord's people may enjoy their patrimony?

The hindrances are of two kinds: (1) Many who are on the Lord's side, and who have been greatly blessed of him, and who have made considerable progress in the knowledge of the truth, and who are trusting in the merit of the Lord Jesus' sacrifice as the only hope of a future life, and who are thus justified, have nevertheless failed to take the second step necessary to their full induction into sonship in God's family and into joint-heirship with Christ to all the exceeding great and precious promises which extend only to those who become his sons. This step, essential to becoming sons and joint-heirs, is the purpose of full consecration—the full surrender of our own wills, including all the aims and objects and purposes of life, and including also all that we have in the way of time, influence, means, reputation, etc. Not having taken this step, not having taken up the cross to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, this large class very properly feels that it is questionable to what extent the Lord's promises, either for the life that now is or for the life that is to come, belong to them. And in this they are right; for none of the promises, present or future, belong to them, nor to any, until they have come under the terms of a full self-surrender, consecration, presenting their bodies living sacrifices to God, holy, acceptable, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our advice to these, then, is that realizing the situation, they do not longer delay, but hasten at once to avail themselves of the greatest privilege that could possibly be offered, even by the Almighty. If they stand still they are, in the language of the Apostle, receiving the grace of God in vain—failing to use it. (2 Cor. 6:1) God's grace, as freely bestowed upon those who have come to a knowledge of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, is the grace of the forgiveness of sins, of justification through faith; and the very object of this grace is to *permit* or *qualify* us to become living sacrifices, acceptable to God's altar through the great sacrifice of our Redeemer.

Whoever, therefore, shall advance thus far and know of his privilege, and yet refuse to present his little all, has failed to be constrained by the love of Christ, has failed to appreciate the divine favor bestowed upon him, and manifests this failure by his neglect to use his opportunities, by his neglect to sacrifice the imperfect fragment of this present life, that he might obtain in exchange the great prize of glory, honor and immortality, and joint-heirship with Jesus in the kingdom: such receive God's grace in vain, profiting nothing by it over and above the world, which as yet lies in darkness and blindness.

What should such do? They should at once resolve that to render all they have to the Lord's service is not only a reasonable thing, but an offering far too small—far less than what they would like to render to him who has manifested such compassion and grace toward us. And we should feel thus, even if there were no rewards attached to such a consecration of ourselves. But inasmuch as God has attached great rewards and blessings, we should feel not only that a refusal to accept would be an indication of non-appreciation of divine mercy, but an indication also of a weakness of mind, of judgment, which is unable to balance the trifling and transitory pleasures of self-will for a few short years, with an eternity of joy and blessing and glory, in harmony with the Lord.

And more than this, the consecrated are the only ones who really fully and truly enjoy this present life, for they indeed have a peace of heart which the world can neither give nor take away—a condition which all the world is coveting and seeking after, but finding not because they seek it not in the Lord's way of full self-surrender to him. We urge, then, upon the class now addressed that they promptly make their covenant with the Lord, and thus become heirs of his good promises pertaining to the life that now is, and also of that which is to come, and that thus they lay the *foundation* for entering into "full assurance of the faith" and full assurance of the hope that God's mercy and goodness shall follow them all the days of the present life, and that they shall dwell in the heavenly home forever.

(2) But amongst those who are real Christians, and who have made a full covenant of sacrifice unto the Lord, we find many who say, and more who think it without saying—"O that I could feel sure that God's goodness and mercy would continue with me all the days of my life, and that I should attain unto his kingdom! O that I might have a full assurance of faith, a full assurance that I am accepted of the Lord, and that by his grace I shall ultimately be an overcomer!" What is the difficulty with this class? Why is it that these do not possess this full assurance of faith? We answer, that their difficulty is a lack of faith in God, and such a lack of faith is not pleasing to God, for "without faith it is impossible to please God." Such lack of faith, moreover, is a constant hindrance to their overcoming, as it is written, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." The Christian who has not the shield of faith, and a large one, is continually at disadvantage before the adversary.—Heb. 11:6; 1 John 5:4.

What must be done to overcome this lack of faith, and to have an increase of faith? We answer, that like the apostles of old he should pray, "Lord, increase our faith." And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, each should *cultivate* faith in his own heart: (*a*) By refreshing his memory continually with the divine promises, becoming very familiar with these in the Father's Word. (*b*) He should seek more and more to remember that having made his covenant with the Lord these promises are his, and in his heart and with his lips he should claim them as his before the Lord in prayer with thanksgiving. He should claim them as his in his own thoughts, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren.

When trials or difficulties or perplexities arise, he should think of these promises, remembering that they *belong* to him —because God has promised them to such as love him—who have made a covenant by self-sacrifice. (Psa. 50:5; Mal. 3:17) He should resolve henceforth to trust the word of the heavenly Father implicitly. Thus, if some seeming accident befall him, let him call to his mind the promise that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose," and assure himself that the seeming accident would not have occurred had God not seen a way to make it the channel of a needed lesson or blessing. Let him refresh his mind with the thought that he comes under the provisions of this promise because he loves the Lord, and so loved him as to make a full consecration of himself to him; thus he is assured that this promise was intended for him.

Let such also remember the language of the Apostle, that if God loved us while we were yet sinners, so that he provided for us the great salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, much more does he love us now, since we have been justified through faith in the great atonement, and have made a full consecration of ourselves to him, and thus come under the terms of adoption into his family. Let him remember, too, that he who has begun the good work changes never, and that if our hearts are still in harmony with him, if our faith is still clear and firm in the great atonement, if our consecration is still full and complete, so that we seek not our own wills but his will to be done in our affairs, then we may indeed have the full assurance of faith, because knowing that God is unchangeable, and knowing that we are still in line with his promises and arrangements, we know that all of his gracious providences are still being exercised on our behalf. This is full assurance of faith—full confidence in the Lord.

(3) It is possible, however, for the true Christian who has taken the step of justification and the step of consecration and adoption into God's family, and who has had the blessing of full assurance of faith—it is possible for such to lose this, if he become overcharged with the cares of this life, cold and indifferent as respects the Lord, his kingdom, his brethren, his cause, etc. Such, of course, should not have a full assurance of faith: God does not intend it for them, but rather intends that if we leave the proper consecrated attitude we should also lose the joys and consolations which belong to it. And this is not merely as a retribution or punishment, but designed specially to awaken us to a realization of what we are losing, to the intent that such as have "lost their first love" may be revived, may renew their consecration vows, and thus return to the Lord, who will abundantly pardon and restore unto them the joys of his salvation.

So then, reviewing our text, we say that this assurance of faith that God's goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our lives, and that we shall ultimately by his grace attain to the kingdom, is for the class mentioned in this Psalm, viz., the Lord's sheep—those who are following him, and who are having the experiences outlined in this Psalm. One of these experiences is that following the Shepherd they are not left to hunger and thirst, but are bountifully supplied in the green pastures and by the still waters of the truth. Moreover, it applies to those who experience the Shepherd's care, his rod and staff, correcting, reproving or guiding them. Such sheep as learn to love and have confidence in the Shepherd and in his guidance, and to take comfort and blessing out of all the afflictions and trials of life which may be permitted to come upon them, realizing that they are providential, and for their blessing—such continue to follow the Shepherd, continue to have the experiences of sheep, and may rejoice with full assurance of faith that he who began the good work of shepherding them and leading them out from the byways of sin and of selfishness into the full blessing of the heavenly Father, will continue this work and complete it, if they abide in him.—John 15:4-6.

"GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD"

MATT. 6:11; JOHN 6:5-14.—JUNE 17.

Jesus and the apostles, entering a boat, sailed across the northerly end of Lake Galilee. The boat was in full view of the shore for probably all of this distance, and the multitudes, not only of those who had heard Jesus, but other multitudes on their way to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of the Passover, going by slow journey afoot, saw the boat and judged of its objective point, and many, desirous of seeing the great Prophet Jesus, of whom they had heard many things, deviated their course toward the point of the boat's landing. And so it was that after Jesus and the disciples had reached their destination (and he had been for some time instructing them in things pertaining to the kingdom) looking up they beheld a vast concourse of people approaching the spot.

Jesus of course knew that with the vast majority at least the object in coming was merely curiosity, not faith nor desire for instruction. Nevertheless, as always, his generous heart was full of sympathy. He beheld them as sheep having no shepherd, as following Moses and the Doctors of the Law in a blind, almost irrational manner, and having comparatively little capacity or hearing for the good tidings which he had to give. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the fact that they were not in a condition to receive spiritual truths such as he could give to his disciples, he proposed to give them a general object lesson which might do them good physically at the time, and which might be a channel for blessing in the future, as they would look back and remember the event. He proposed to feed the multitude with natural food, and to do it in such a manner as would impress them favorably, and besides, teach a great lesson of faith and trust to his apostles, who would need in future times the faith and confidence inspired by the miracle which he intended to work.

Philip, one of the apostles, resided in a city not far from where they were; hence it was with special appropriateness that our Lord addressed to him the question of supplies—where sufficiency of bread could be obtained, etc.; not, as the Apostle explains, that Jesus was in any question on this subject, but that he wished to stimulate the thought of Philip and the other apostles, and thus to prove or test them and develop their faith in him. Philip, however, took the question in a purely practical form, and replied that it would require two hundred pennyworth ($34) of bread to satisfy even partially so large a company. But Andrew, apparently thinking of our Lord's power, but scarcely able to realize so great a miracle, suggested that there was a beginning of the supply at least, in the five barley loaves and two small fishes possessed by one of the company.

Combining the testimonies of the different Evangelists we might suppose the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples to have been about as follows:

Jesus.—"Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"

Philip.—"Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little"

All the apostles.—"Send the multitude away that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge and get victuals." (*Luke.*)

Jesus.—"Give *ye* them to eat." (*Luke.*)

All the apostles.—"Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread and give them to eat?" (*Mark.*)

Jesus.—"How many loaves have ye? Go and see." (*Mark.*)

Andrew.—"There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?"

Thus did our Lord prepare the minds of his disciples to appreciate the miracle he was about to perform, and then instructed them to seat the people for the proposed meal. This was a comparatively easy task, because it was a grassy country, we are told, and the people were accustomed to a certain method of arranging themselves in groups of fifties and hundreds for general feasts.

The fact that our Lord Jesus gave thanks for the bread and fish should be an important lesson to all who seek in any degree to be his followers. If it was appropriate that he should render thanks to the heavenly Father for some plain barley bread (the poorest and cheapest sort), and for some dried fish, how appropriate it is that we who by nature are sinners and under condemnation, and only permitted to call God our Father through the reconciliation that is in Christ Jesus—how appropriate that we should lift our hearts and voices in thankfulness to the heavenly Father as the author of every good blessing and gift which we enjoy!

We cannot understand how any Christian dare neglect to render thanks for his daily food, and we thoroughly believe that those who do neglect this propriety are great losers thereby. God, of course, loses nothing, for giving does not impoverish him, neither would withholding make him rich; but the Christian who has learned in everything to give thanks, and to make acknowledgment to the heavenly Father, has learned to appreciate and to enjoy his blessing more than

others. To such thankful hearts the plainest of food will be more appreciated, more happifying, more satisfying than to others. And it is undoubtedly a fact that a peaceful, thankful, happy mind is not only a blessing of itself, but additionally an aid to digestion and to the obtaining of good benefits from the food which we eat. How many dyspeptics know that it is possible to eat without satisfying, and to have plenty, and yet be unable to derive therefrom comfort and proper nourishment! And perhaps there is no better antidote to dyspepsia than a thankful, grateful heart, which acknowledges divine blessings and seeks to use them, not only with thankfulness, but with contentment, and thus has great gain.

True, God does not resent failures to acknowledge him in all our ways, but continues to cause the sun to shine upon the evil and upon the good, and to send the rain alike upon the just and the unjust, and to permit many of the blessings of this present life to continue with those who make no proper acknowledgment of them. Nevertheless, such cannot hope to grow in divine favor, as they might if in all their ways they acknowledged God and sought to see in all the affairs of life his providential care.

These remarks, however, apply not to the world in general, nor to mere nominal believers, but only to those who have become the Lord's people by entering into a covenant with him through Christ. As for the world in general, who are not seeking to be the Lord's people and to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, it would seem that their offering of thanks, or prayers of any kind, would be inappropriate, as we read: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing that thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee." (Psalm 50:16, 17) In a word, then, there is just one right way to begin to be the Lord's followers, and those who do not wish to begin according to the Lord's direction, in self-consecration, have no right to suppose that outward acts of formalistic piety are acceptable or pleasing to God. We must first become the Lord's before we can hope that any worship or service from us will be acceptable to him through Jesus.

The faith of the apostles is well demonstrated in the fact that they proceeded to seat the people, according to the Lord's instructions, and then proceeded to divide to them the, at first, very limited quantity of food. Without faith in the Lord they would undoubtedly have refused to take any part in the proceedings, fearing that it would bring reproach and ridicule upon themselves. The lesson which they learned in this connection no doubt went with them through subsequent years, teaching them that they could do all things by the power of Christ, if laboring under his command. And the same lesson comes forcefully to us all. Neither our duties nor our privileges are wholly measured by our own abilities. A proper faith in the Lord permits us to realize his omnipotent power, and that if he be with us, for instance in the distribution of spiritual food to the hungry, the little of means and ability and opportunity at our disposal may be so blessed as to accomplish marvelous things. Indeed, have we not this very experience today in connection with the spread of the harvest message? Out of the little of means and talent, opportunity and ability, what God hath wrought! How many have been fed and are being fed!

The miracle was all the Lord's, and yet a great blessing came to the apostles, in that they were privileged to be co-workers with the Lord. And similarly here, in the dissemination of the harvest message, we recognize that it is all of our Lord, the present Bridegroom, King, Reaper, and yet that he is pleased to use as disseminators of the truth all those who have faith in him and who gladly accept his service. As our Lord could have performed the miracle of feeding the five thousand without the instrumentality of his disciples, so now he could feed the hungry Israelites indeed—who are famished, not for bread and not for water, but for the hearing of the Word of the Lord (Amos 8:11)—without our aid. Let us gratefully thank him for the privilege of being co-workers in any capacity, and let us the more zealously do with our might whatsoever our hands find to do.

Another great lesson taught by this miracle was that of economy; for the apostles who distributed the food were required to gather up for their own future use the suitable fragments which remained, and each one accordingly filled his basket or haversack, which they were accustomed to carry in their journeys. The miracle would have had only half its weight without this closing lesson of economy. The disciples and the multitude might have learned to think of God's powers in an improper light, and to have expected such provision as would compensate for their carelessness and prodigality. But the gathering of the fragments showed, first of all, the immensity of the miracle, and, secondly, it taught the lesson that we are to use the means which God has put into our hands, and not to expect unnecessary miracles.

How many of the Lord's dear people need to learn this lesson of economy? How many are wasteful of the daily food which the Lord provides? How many would be the more blessed by learning to practice careful economy, not only that they might have in the future, but also that they might in emergency supply to others spiritual or natural food as opportunity afforded? Let all who are disposed to be extravagant and wasteful well consider this lesson from the great Teacher, that nothing is to be wasted, that we have a responsibility in respect to all that God has provided for us, either directly or indirectly, and that after asking divine blessing upon our affairs, and thus signifying our appreciation of them, we are to seek to wisely use them, as we think would be pleasing in his sight, and frugally, economically.

The same lesson might be applied also to our spiritual food. The fact that the Lord has given us bountifully "things new and old" does not mean that we are to treat those blessed truths carelessly, when we have eaten thereof and found satisfaction to our souls; rather, we are to be careful of all the fragments, and are to gather and preserve them for further and future use, esteeming them none the less the Lord's provision than when first we received them from his hands.

REVIEW OF THE QUARTER'S STUDIES

"Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

Reviewing the studies of the quarter we find that nearly all of them are closely related to our Golden Text.

(1) We had the beatitudes—the conditions of heart and character essential to our participation in this kingdom class that God has declared he is selecting from the world, and which by and by he will glorify with the King Emmanuel in his Millennial kingdom.

(2) We had certain precepts, promises and warnings respecting how this kingdom class must make development, not in sitting in judgment upon others now, but rather by judging nothing before the time, when they shall be granted the powers of judgment in such glorious measure as will permit their judging to be a blessing to the world, and that thus this kingdom class must seek the narrow way to glory, honor and immortality.

(3) We had the miracle of the awakening of the daughter of Jairus, an illustration of the great work of the kingdom when it shall be set up, and when all mankind shall be released from the prison-house of death.

(4) We had the healing of the centurion's servant, another picture of restitution blessings which are to be general at the time that our Lord's prayer, in our Golden Text, is realized, and God's kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

(5) We saw how the faith of John the Baptist was tested by reason of the fact that the kingdom work did not come in his day just as he had expected it would, and we saw how carefully our Lord explained to him wherein his expectations had been partly erroneous, and indicated how events as they were in progress were in full accord with the testimony of the prophets. And so we have learned in respect to the establishing of the spiritual kingdom now, to trust not to our own imaginations, but to go rather to the Word of the Lord, and to see what therein is written, and so doing we are able to note today what we would not otherwise be able to discern how that our Lord's great plan is grandly progressing in harmony with what was written aforetime.

(6) We saw, in our Lord's denunciation of Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida, how possible it is for some in our day to have great privileges, as those cities had great knowledge, great opportunities of coming into accord with the Lord's kingdom, and yet through lack of faith to fail utterly—to fail more miserably as respects pleasing God than did such heathen cities as Sodom and Tyre and Sidon. We saw, nevertheless, that the full number of the elect church or kingdom class would be found in God's due time, and that then will commence the great Judgment Day of the world, in which it will be tolerable for all, under the righteous judgment of the great

King, but more tolerable for such as Sodom and Gomorrah than for those who have had the greater privileges and knowledge and misused them.

(7) We found, in the case of Simon and the woman that was a sinner, that some who occupy important positions in the nominal church may be much further from the kingdom of God as respects their hearts than are some others who have outwardly been living a less correct life, and that some of the latter, reforming, may become more zealous toward the Lord and more acceptable with him, and hence more eligible to the kingdom.

(8) The parable of the sower showed us the importance of having our hearts in a correct attitude toward God, not full of worldly ambitions and cares, which as "thorns" would choke the very best seed, but freed from these that we should be ready to receive "the good seed of the kingdom" into our hearts, and to be exercised thereby into seeking first the kingdom of God.

(9) We saw various parables of the kingdom, illustrating to us the church's present experiences, while waiting for the completion of the elect number and the full inauguration then of the kingdom glory and power to bless the world. We saw the true Christians represented by the "wheat," the outgrowth of pure doctrine, the good seed of the kingdom. We saw false Christians represented by the "tares," and the false doctrines which produce such, which were sown by the adversary. We saw the growth of the nominal church represented as being very great, but as resulting in inviting into it the fowl—"every unclean and hateful bird." We saw that the spiritual food provided for the Lord's household had been corrupted by the "woman" everywhere predominant throughout the Scriptures, the wine-cup of whose abominations have made drunk all nations.—Rev. 18:2, 3.

(10) We have seen that the sending forth of the twelve apostles was with the same message, the same Gospel of the kingdom, that the Master declared, and that similarly whoever is sent out of the Lord today as a servant of the truth has the same message, the Gospel of the kingdom, under which, when it is established, God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

(11) The lesson of Herodias and her wicked ambition and sinful course, in which Herod shared, taught us that earthly ambitions lead downward and sinward, away from God and into degradation, but that the ambition set before the church, viz., to be God's kingdom, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, is the lawful ambition which leads upward and is elevating in its every influence and purifying as respects our hearts and lives.

(12) Finally, in the feeding of the multitude, we see illustrated our Lord's compassion for the people, which compassion during the Millennial kingdom will have fullest sway, when the bread of life shall be broken to all of the hungry, and when all shall be privileged to share in the blessings which the Lord's kingdom will bring, and that then those who have followed him in the present time shall be associated with him in the work of blessing the multitude under the glorious kingdom conditions.

We may well pray from the heart, in the language of our Golden Text, Lord, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

WHEN PERSECUTED, FLEE

Question.—How should we understand and apply Matt. 10:23—"When they persecute you in this city, flee ye to another; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cites of Israel till the Son of Man be come?"

Answer.—These instructions were given primarily to the twelve Apostles, and doubtless were understood by them to mean that their mission was not to stay long in a place, but that as persecution arose, and the people were unwilling to hear their message, they were to go to other cities and villages, full of the conviction that the time for their special testimony of the kingdom at hand was limited, and that they would not more than have accomplished their proclamation in all the cities of Israel before the Son of Man would be presented as King, and the testing of the nation reach its climax. This climax was reached when, at the end of his three and a half years' ministry, our Lord rode to them on the ass, as their King, and failing to be received (in harmony with the prophecy) declared their house henceforth left desolate.—Luke 13.35.

But while this was the primary signification of the Lord's words, we believe that like most of his teachings to Israel after the flesh it had a still larger meaning than was then due to be understood—an application to the parallel closing of this Gospel age. As there was a "harvest" in the end of the Jewish age, in which natural Israel was tested, so in the end of this age there is a "harvest" in which spiritual Israel will be tested. And as there was a proclamation of Jesus in the flesh, as King, so there must be correspondingly a proclamation of Jesus, the new creature, as King of Glory. And as in that "harvest" some were sent forth with the harvest message, and it was to reach all the Israelites within the borders of the promised land, so now we understand that in the present harvest the message is going forth, "Behold the bridegroom," and the further announcement to Zion, "Thy God reigneth." (Matt. 25:6; Isa. 52:7) This harvest message is also to be understood as limited in time, and the bearers of it are not to dally, but to exercise diligence, realizing that the time is short, and that they shall have time and no more to go over all the cities of spiritual Israel, before the grand consummation shall be reached, and the Son of Man shall have completed the first part of his work, the collection of his saints, the "jewels," the "little flock," and thus the kingdom be set up in power.

OF WHOM AND FOR WHOM DO WE SPEAK?

Question.—When in the WATCH TOWER and DAWNS and *Old Theology Tracts* we read "we believe," "our views," etc., are we to understand that a church or society or creed so teaches? If not, how shall we understand such expressions?

Answer.—No; we speak for no party or sect or creed or confession, but merely for ourself—the Editor. Long ago we adopted the plural pronoun in referring to our personal views as being much more modest than the frequest use of "*I* said," "*I* think," "*I* expect," "*I* believe," *I* find, etc. And this custom is followed in the ablest newspapers and journals of our land.

Of course, incidentally, we voice the sentiments of many of our readers when voicing our own; because they and we recognize the Bible as a divine revelation, the only standard of truth, and endeavor to keep close to its letter and spirit. But "we" will neither bind others to "our" convictions nor permit any to bind "us" to theirs. The only *fixed* creed we recognize is the simple and fundamental one—that God sent his Son, who died for our sins; and that through faith in this, and obedience to him, to the extent of our ability, we shall be saved. All who so confess are "Christians" and are to be treated as "brethren." They should be assisted to grow in knowledge and grace, but should be accorded fullest liberty—"The liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." Neither directly nor indirectly has any one a right to make a creed for them nor to otherwise speak for them and then imply their "disloyalty" and "heresy" if they attempt to resent misrepresentations.

WATCH TOWER readers are supposed to be, and urged to be, the Lord's freemen, and at the same time the Lord's bond-servants; and to call no man master; because one alone is their Master and Lord—Jesus. This liberty, however, does not hinder them from appreciating one another as "brethren"—

"Whose kind designs to serve and please
Through all their actions run."

Each is *free* to love and esteem each other for their work's sake, and to seek to note how the Master is pleased to use one and another in serving "the body of Christ." Each *free* one, loyal to the Lord, is pleased to recognize as special servants of "the body" those whom the Lords specially uses. Those who are not *free* with the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, are enslaved to decisions of men and to customs and theories, and are not at liberty to follow the leadings of divine providence and the testimonies of the divine Word.

WHEN WILL SATAN BE BOUND?

Question—In the DAWNS you have intimated that the binding of Satan in the end of this age will be accomplished by the increase of general intelligence—light, etc. Is this the only sense in which you consider that he will be found?

Answer.—By no means. The binding of Satan with the great chain, and the putting of him into the abyss mentioned in Rev. 20·1-3, is all figurative; but the figures are all meaningful. To us they signify a *complete restraint* of Satan and all his powers of evil. The great chain represents restraint. The word abyss, in our common version rendered "bottomless pit," represents oblivion. The seal upon it represents divine care that none shall interfere with God's arrangement, but that it shall all be carried out strictly in accordance with the divine prearrangement. Our suggestion respecting the influence of the increased light of the present time is that a pre-

liminary restraint of evil results from turning on the light of present truth, which makes the evil the more manifest and the less able to deceive. But this is not all, by any means. The thought is that the great King, who is now about to take full control of the world, has full power to bind, to restrain Satan and every evil power and influence, that nothing may hurt or injure that which is good throughout the Millennial age, as has been the case during the present age, when the kingdom of heaven (the church in its incipient state) suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force, misusing the members of the body of Christ, even as they misused also the Head of the body—our Lord.

Whether Satan and his associates, the fallen angels, will remain associated with this earth we do not know, but it is quite sufficient for us to have the Lord's assurance that they will no longer be prince and powers of the air, able to misrepresent and deceive mankind, as at present. Some have surmised that Satan and his angels would be deported during the Millennial period, but while there is no Scripture that we are aware of which would settle this point, our view is to the contrary of this. We believe that they will not be deported but remain, powerless to deceive. Our reason for so supposing is two-fold:

(1) This earth has been the scene of their original transgressions and subsequent misdeeds, and it would seem proper that they should *witness* the marvelous transformation which will ensue after the Prince of Light, the Prince of Peace, Emmanuel, shall assume the reins of power, and bring blessings to all the families of the earth.

(2) The Scriptures assure us that the work of the glorified church will not only be to give trial to or "judge the world" of mankind during the Millennial age, but that it will include also the judgment or trial of these fallen angels: and if both mankind and the angels are to be judged, during the same period, it would seem entirely reasonable that both should be associated with the earth and its atmosphere.—1 Cor. 6:3; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6.

"I THAT SPEAK AM HE"

JOHN 4:26; 9:37.

She came, the thirsty one, to fill her pitcher,
And found a stranger sitting on the brink:
And while she poured for him the well's refreshment,
He gave the precious cup of life to drink.
And when she wondered at her life's revealing,
And if Messiah deeper depths could see,
He graciously her rising faith encouraged.—
"I that speak to thee am He!"

And so when we, blest Master, come, all empty,
To fountains, we but drink, and drink in vain;
Be thou with satisfying waters waiting,
That we may drink, and never thirst again.
Our wayward hearts' true inwardness disclosing,
Constrain our timid faith to hope in thee,
And let us hear again the gracious message—
"I that speak to thee am He!"

They turned him from the synagogue accursed,
Whose gift of sight the Savior had bestowed;
And, burning under grief and indignation,
He sought again the well-remembered road.
And while he mused upon his kindly patron,
And if he could indeed Messiah be,
Lo, One with beaming countenance addressed him
"I that speak to thee am He!"

And so, dear Lord, when our dim eyes are opened,
And one-time friends thy healing power desspise,
Be thou anear with words of cheer and comfort,
To grant our saddest hour a glad surprise.
And when life's subtle mysteries perplex us,
Unlock to us with faith's unfailing key,
That we may hear from out the open portals,
"I that speak to thee am He!"

The proud and haughty still a sign requiring,
In vain the zenith and horizon scan,
While walks among them One with vesture girded,
To wield the purging and discerning fan.
But he who humbly treads the path of duty,
With eyes unsealed shall his Deliv'rer see;
His trial hour shall brighten with this token—
"I that speak to thee am He!"

R. B. HENNINGES.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THOUGHTFUL WORDS OF AN ABLE MAN

An exchange quotes epigrammatic statements from various addresses delivered before the "Ecumenical Mission Conference," held recently in New York City, and among them all none impressed us so much as the following by Mr. Benjamin Harrison, ex-President of the United States:

"The natural man lives to be ministered unto—he lays his imposts upon others. He buys slaves that they may fan him to sleep, bring him the jeweled cup, dance before him, and die in the arena for his sport. Into such a world there came a King, 'not to be minister unto, but to minister.' The rough winds fanned his sleep; he drank of the mountain brook and made not the water wine for himself; would not use his power to stay his own hunger, but had compassion on the multitude. He called them he had bought with a great price no more servants but friends. He entered the bloody arena alone, and, dying, broke all chains and brought life and immortality to light."

THE ANOMALIES OF "ORTHODOXY"

The "Ecumenical Conference" on missions recently in session in New York City, considering ways and means for preaching the gospel to Brahmins, Buddhists, Confucians, Greek Catholics and Roman Catholics—in its very name ignoring Romanism as anti-Christian, since its missions were not recognized or included under the comprehensive term *Ecumenical*—was of course "orthodox." At the same time there was in session in the city of Boston another and quite different convention or Religious Congress, which being under the lead of the famous "orthodox" preacher, Heber Newton, supported by many other notable reverend gentlemen and Doctors of Divinity, also "orthodox," must be considered equally as "orthodox" a conference as the one which met in New York City. Yet note the wide difference in these applications of the term "orthodox;" for the Boston Convention accepted and heard all religions—Christian, anti-Christian, Buddhist and Brahmin, Confucian on a common level.

As a matter of fact this word *orthodox*, which signifies "*correct* or *sound* doctrine," is claimed by everybody; for no one could conscientiously hold to anything he considered unsound or incorrect. But in applying the term to others is the difficulty: how for instance can a Methodist agree that Presbyterian doctrine of foreordination and predestination is correct or "orthodox" and still refuse to accept it? Or how can a Presbyterian agree that Methodist doctrine is "orthodox" when it differs so radically from his own? And how can "Disciples" and "Baptists" recognize as "*orthodox*" or *correct* and *sound* other doctrines which ignore water immersion, which Baptists and Disciples strenuously claim is absolutely essential to a membership in the church of Christ, and to the salvation which they claim is provided *only for the church?*

The fact is that the various sects were much more consistent when they each denied that the other was "orthodox" and each claimed that itself alone was the "orthodox," the *correct* and doctrinally sound church.

What brought about this change? We answer. Two things conspired to produce the present inconsistent condition.

(1) Religious doctrinal *convictions* have softened, though the *professions* continue as hard and stout as ever. Instead of

conviction has come uncertainty, doubt, skepticism and the general feeling that "nobody knows—*we* may be right, *you* may be right or *all* may be wrong."

(2) Not knowing who is right we will simply stick to *our own church* [not to Christ's one, true church, "whose names are written in heaven"] as being as good as any other man-made church, and merely recognize all others claiming the name of Christ and having influence, wealth and numbers as being also "orthodox," correct also—for all we know to the contrary. But in preventing any advanced thought being known as "orthodox" all are agreed—they have already sufficient confusion unavoidably covered by that term—*unavoidably*, because to deny the term "orthodox" to any popular system would be to invite it to denounce yours as "unorthodox," and thus to raise a doctrinal discussion which neither cares to risk before the people, lest the weaknesses and fallacies of all be disclosed to those now "at ease in Zion," dozing, if not sound asleep, on all such subjects.

This is the meaning of the general opposition of all denominations to what we are presenting from the Scriptures as present truth: they see that it is a *positive* doctrine and that those who receive it have *convictions:* they see, too, that these appeal to the Bible and apply its statements in a manner that brings order out of the hitherto confusion and babel of the sects: they perceive, too, that it is *reasonable* (which they know none of the others are) and they each individually and all collectively fear that if heard upon its merits it would sweep all theories before it into oblivion. It is therefore "Self-preservation, the first law of nature," which incites the so-called "orthodox" against the glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. For just the same reasons the various sects and parties of the Jews, however diverse, united against the true light as God revealed it in the close of the Jewish age.

We of course claim that the WATCH TOWER presentations are orthodox, correct, sound doctrinally—otherwise we would not promulgate them. And we go farther and deny that the various inconsistent, unreasonable and unscriptural doctrines of Babylon are orthodox. We claim that although almost all the creeds of Christendom contain some grains of truth, they contain much more error, which quite beclouds and nullifies their elements of truth.

Nevertheless, we claim that our standard of "orthodoxy" is not narrow when applied to Christian people, though it is so exclusive as respects all the creeds of Christendom. It is just as broad as the Bible will permit; and who that acknowledges its authority has a right to ask for more or to accept less?

Our standard of orthodoxy as applied not to sects but to Christians, personally, recognizes as *correct* and *sound* in doctrine all who acknowledge the following points: (1) That he is by nature a member of the fallen, condemned race and hence a child of wrath even as others, and justly under the divine sentence of condemnation. (2) That Christ died for the ungodly, for Adam and all his condemned race; and hence God can now be just in justifying him and all who believe in Jesus. (3) That his justification is the basis of his call to full consecration in self-sacrifice, and that he has thus devoted his *all* to the Lord, in exchange for the share in the Millennial kingdom which the Lord has promised to all such "overcomers."—Rev. 2:26; 3:12, 21.

All the above described class are properly recognized as "orthodox" and "brethren," however they may differ on minor details in the correct knowledge of which they may be expected to grow under the Lord's guidance; building one another up in [the details of] their most holy faith, as revealed in the Word of the Lord, which, as they come more and more to understand it, will make them wiser and wiser respecting the good and acceptable and perfect will of God—unto salvation—until salvation actual, the "crown of life," with glory, honor and immortality, shall be the grand outcome of the finished race.

Who knows any fault to find with this Bible standard of "orthodoxy?" No one! But this is the chief ground of objection to it in the eyes of churchianity: it antagonizes and would speedily destroy not only one but all sects: hence all oppose it—the far-seeing preachers leading their ever-confiding flocks into the battle against the Lord and his truth, in which through temporary success they eventually are the sad losers.

METHODISM AND HIGHER CRITICISM

It was expected that the General M. E. Conference would be asked to take some stand for or against "higher criticism;" but so far we have seen no mention of it. The expectation was based upon the protest made by a few students against "Higher Crticism," Evolution, etc., being taught at the M. E. Boston Theological Seminary. The students resigned, intending to go to other M. E. colleges presumed to be *sound* on the Scriptures; but to their surprise they found a solid denominational front against them, which conspired so successfully that they were refused admittance to any. This means that infidelity to the Bible, under the name of "higher criticism," is being impressed upon every M. E. minister now issuing from these seminaries. And it means that the greatest power of Methodism, its ministry, scattered all over the land, is to be exerted to the gradual undermining of the faith of Methodists. And, "like priest like people," it means that Methodism will soon be fighting God's Word stealthily, covertly, from the inside—inside the house of its *professed* friends. However, this will only awaken some of the Lord's true saints in that house and show them that it is high time for them to come out from Babylon—and from its confusion of false doctrines.

Zion's Herald publishes the results of an investigation respecting the number of "*conversions*" made by two hundred M. E. ministers, educated in the Boston Seminary since Higher Criticism and Evolution began to be taught there fifteen years ago. The results are reported with great satisfaction as giving evidence that Methodism is prospering exceedingly under the diet which repudiates the doctrine of the ransom and makes void the Word of God. These two hundred ministers report 6,023 "*conversions*" during the six months preceding March 1, 1900. The argument drawn from this is that M. E. prosperity lies in that direction, and that the sooner the old fogy believers in the Bible and the Cross wake up and abandon these the more rapidly will Methodism prosper. Hence it was taken as beyond question that the General Conference would certainly not raise its voice to interrupt successful procedure.

But to *what* were these 6,023 persons "converted?" To Methodism! Possibly a very few of them may have been converted to the Lord. Yet when one remembers that nearly all such so-called converts are children of from eight to fifteen years, it seems amusing to credit their "conversion" to either truth or error or to call them "conversions" at all.

Principle seems to be disappearing in respect to religious matters. Churchianity of all denominations seems to be getting to be a *business* governed by "rules of trade" and "laws of supply and demand." What do the people want? What will draw the crowd, add to the church list and treasury? Evidently these are the queries which cause preachers most of their anxious thoughts rather than—What message does the Lord's Word give me for his people? What is the Truth and how can I best make it plain to the Lord's sheep?

But then again, how could we expect these wise "higher critics" to lay much emphasis on the words of our Lord and the apostles and prophets when they have concluded themselves to be wiser than they—claiming that our Lord and the apostles made numerous and grievous mistakes in quoting from Moses, David, Isaiah and other prophets, words which these modern wise men declare were never uttered by these prophets. The conclusion is that if the Lord and the apostles erred in these matters they were not infallibly inspired respecting others: and if they, the "higher critics," could correct them on these points they could give them general instruction, and are surely more competent authorities themselves.

Alas for the poor sheep! How many may be expected to follow the pernicious ways of these false shepherds! None too extravagant is the prophetic declaration, "A thousand shall fall at thy side"—only the sanctified in Christ Jesus, copies of God's dear Son, will be able to stand complete in him. These will be the "very elect," and it will not be possible for them to be deceived and ensnared; for God will give his messengers a charge [a message] for them [present truth] and thus these "feet" of the body of Christ shall be upheld that they stumble not.—Psa. 91:1, 7, 11, 12.

EDUCATED WHITE SAVAGES

That education is valuable no one will dispute, nor is it to be denied that it frequently puts a refined polish upon the actions and words of men and women who are therefore known as *gentle*-men and *gentle*-women. It is a mistake, however, to confound this kind of surface polishing with the "begetting of the spirit," "a new heart." The one is a gilding of the surface manners, the other a transformation of the entire being affecting the sentiment as well as the conduct.

As a painful lesson on this subject, proving that fine education may leave men still savage at heart and only needing opportunity to develop it, we quote below an article from the *Literary Digest*. It relates specially to college bred men of two nations, both of which combine religious and secular education—Protestant Germany and Roman Catholic Belgium: the representatives of the former probably were three-fourths

Protestants and one-fourth Catholics and of the latter all Catholics, corresponding to the populations of those countries. Both *claim* to be "Christian nations," kingdoms of God, and their coins declare that their rulers reign "by the grace of God." We are glad that we hope for a very much better kingdom for which all the more we pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be *done on earth even as it is done in heaven.*" The article follows:

"The White Man's Savagery in Africa"

"While it is customary to speak of the African natives as 'savages,' and to deplore the cruelty of the Sultan of Turkey, who permits the slave trade to flourish between his dominions and the east coast of Africa, late revelations prove that men of more civilized nationalities can be quite as cruel. The Brussels *Petit Bleue* relates the following:

"'The rise of the Bundja tribes against the Kongo authorities was caused by Belgian tyranny. Hundreds of men died with Lothaire and other Kongo agents in defense of the cruel practices there. The agent Moray says: 'The rebellion of the Mongalla region is due solely to the cruelty with which the natives are treated. Rubber is the booty of the white invader now. If, in a village of 100 male inhabitants able to work, only fifty appear with the required amount of rubber, soldiers are sent to kill the other fifty. The 'loyal' natives are used to fight against the 'disloyal,' and as all are man-eaters, it is easy to reward the loyalists by promises of feasts on the corpses of the slain.'

"The following statement which appears in the continental papers speaks for itself:

"CONGO STATE, DISTRICT BENGALA:—Before me, Agent of the Antwerp Trading Society, appeared at Mandika, the sergeants Massamboko and Mulanda, and the privates Mutuana and Ponga, all of the Station of Mandika, who swore as follows:

"'White Man! We have returned from the war. We marched thirty hours' distance with the white man Imela (Van Eyken). He ordered us to enter the villages, to see if the inhabitants had gathered enough rubber. If they had not, we were to kill them. In one village we told him we had fulfilled his orders. He told us we had not done enough. He told us to cut up the men, placing the pieces on poles; the bodies of the women and children we were to put in a big scaffold in the shape of a cross. Returning through N'Dobe we found all the natives treated like that. We swear that this is true. Follow marks and agent's name: Moray.'

"According to other reports hundreds of natives have had their hands chopped off because they did not furnish the required quantity of rubber. Similar cruelties are reported from the French Sudan. Several high officials formerly in the German employ have also been punished as offenders of this kind. The Dutch papers remark that the French, English and Spaniards have a great advantage in the patriotic discipline of their newspapers, for while the Dutch and German papers will report an outrage of their countrymen immediately, Frenchmen and Englishmen will exercise patriotic prudence."

"KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD"

JUDE 21.

We cannot keep ourselves in this love unless we have gotten into it. And that all men do not possess it, or are not in this condition of heart, is not only manifested to our senses through the experiences of life, but testified to by our Lord Jesus, who said to some of the holiness people of his day, "I know that ye have not the love of God in you."—John 5:42.

We are to distinguish then between natural love and the love of God. All mankind has some share at least of natural love—self-love, love for family, love of friends. Our Lord, speaking of this kind of love, implies that it is not the love of God, saying, "If ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also do even the same." (Luke 6:32) The love of God, therefore, is a different kind of love to that which is common to the natural man, and we need to be directed into it, and to grow or develop in it, as the Apostle testifies, saying, "The Lord *direct* your hearts into the love of God." (2 Thess. 3:5) We are directed into this love through the divine Word which brings to our attention the peculiarity of God's love as distinguished from that of the natural fallen man. While love in the natural man is more or less selfish, even in our very best exercise of it, on behalf of friends, God commendeth his love toward us as being of a superior kind, in that while we were yet sinners, aliens, strangers, enemies through wicked works, under his gracious, loving plan Christ died for us. This kind of unmerited, sacrificing love is wholly different from anything that is known to fallen humanity. As our Lord Jesus said, the greatest love amongst men would be that a man should lay down his life for his *friends*, but to lay down his life for his enemies is certainly a much higher type of love—unselfish, gracious, heavenly—John 15:13; Rom. 5:7.

The first blessing that comes to us, as the eyes of our understanding open and we come to some knowledge of the divine character and love, is that we perceive or discern or come to realize this higher type of love—the love of God. As the Apostle says, "Hereby *perceive* we the love of God, because he [Christ] laid down his life for us." "Herein was *manifested* the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him."—1 John 3:16; 4:9.

It is after we have thus perceived the love of God that it begins to operate upon us, if we are in a favorable condition—if our hearts are good ground, prepared under divine providence for this knowledge. Of such the Apostle says, "The love of Christ constraineth us"—draws us, awakens a reciprocating love in our hearts, so that in turn we love God. Not that we first loved God, but that his love attracted and developed ours. (1 John 4:19) The effect of this love upon the good-ground heart is that very shortly it decides that it could do nothing less than love similarly in return, and thus be willing to lay down life itself in God's service. It esteems that this would be but a reasonable service, a reasonable recompense for divine favors.

The Apostle Paul sums up this transformation from selfishness to the love of God in a few words, saying, "We ourselves also were at one time foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another; but when the goodness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared he saved us [delivered us from this evil condition of heart], not on account of works of righteousness which we had done, but according to his own mercy, he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the holy Spirit, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Saviour."—Titus 3:3-6.—See *Diaglott*.

This newness of spirit, this new mind, this mind in accord with the love of God, the Apostle assures us is not received except by those who receive the holy Spirit. Those who merely take the step of justification may to some extent experience a reformation of life, so that instead of living an openly evil course they will seek to live at least moral lives. But none can expect to receive the begetting of the holy Spirit of love, and thus to become possessed of "the love of God," a self-sacrificing love, unless he takes the step of consecration to the Lord, which brings him into the condition in which he may indeed have the holy Spirit, the spirit of divine love, shed abroad in his heart. Let none then hope to obtain the love of God in any other way than the way which God has provided. Undoubtedly in the Millennial age it will be made possible for the natural man to come into "the love of God" through a process of restitution; as he shall more and more attain to the perfection of human nature in that time he may to that extent more and more become possessed of the love of God until, when finally perfected, he may possess this love of God in full measure—because humanity, in its perfect condition, is a fleshly image of the invisible God. But now, while we still have these mortal bodies that are imperfect, and while restitution has not commenced, there is only the one way of attaining the love of God—by obedience to the call of this age, to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, through Jesus our Lord.

The new creature is to grow and to be more and more filled with the holy Spirit—more and more filled with the love of God; hence we may expect that there will be differences of attainment in this matter, and we should know what to look for as evidences of our growth in grace and of our attainment of this love of God The Apostle John declares, "This is [proof of our possession of] the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and *do not find them grievous.*" (1 John 5:3) He who keeps the Lord's commandments, but who finds them grievous, has thus an evidence that he is not in heart-harmony with them, that he has not made a full consecration of himself to the Lord—the obedience of such an one would be no proof whatever of the possession of "the love of God." But whoever of the Lord's people is so in harmony with him that they delight to do his will, have in this an evidence that the

love of God is dwelling in them richly and abounding. This is the same thought which the Apostle again expresses, saying, "Whosoever keepeth his word [loves the word of God, and takes pleasure not in turning, twisting and endeavoring to avoid the force of that Word, but who keepeth or cherisheth it, loveth it, and seeketh to conform thereto] in him verily is the love of God perfected."—1 John 2:5.

This reminds us of our dear Redeemer, in whom verily the love of the Father was perfected, and who is represented by the Prophet as saying, "I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psalm 40:8) And our Lord marked out the same spirit, as being essential to those who would be his disciples, saying, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." (John 15:10) There is no suggestion in any of these or in other Scriptures that mere outward formalistic obedience and piety count anything with the Lord. The Lord "seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth"—such as have the spirit of righteousness, love for righteousness, love for truth, love for all the qualities of the divine character, and a desire to conform thereto in thought, word and deed.

Nor are we to make the mistake that some have made, of supposing that the commandments referred to by our Lord are the Ten Commandments upon which hung the covenant which God made with the Jews. We are not Jews, and hence have nothing whatever to do with their covenant, given through Moses, its mediator, at Sinai, nor with the Law upon which it was based. We are Christians, and have to do with a better covenant, sealed with the precious blood of Christ our *Mediator, and based upon a still higher law than the Decalogue —a law which instead of saying, "Thou shalt not" do this, "Thou shalt not" do that, is positive, and declares what we shall do, saying, *"Thou shalt love* the Lord thy God with all heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength; and *thou shalt love* thy neighbor as thyself." This is a higher law, of which our Law-giver, Jesus, said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love," and of which the Apostle said, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The Apostle John says, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God; he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love."—1 John 4:8, 16.

Altho the first evidence of the possession of "the love of God" is a love for God, nevertheless the Scriptures distinctly point out to us that an additional requirement is specified, viz., love for the brethren—for those who have the spirit of God, especially, but in a general way at least a sympathetic love for all mankind. Thus the Apostle says, "If we love one another, [it is an evidence that] God dwelleth in us, and [that] his love is perfected in us." (1 John 4:12) The same Apostles emphasizes this same point, saying, "Whosoever hath this world's goods [interests, affairs], and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:17) The intimation is that such a lack of love and sympathy, and such a restraint of assistance from a brother in need, would imply that the love of God either did not at all dwell in such an one, or that it was but slightly developed—far from being perfected.

Nor does this love merely exercise itself toward the brethren in matters of temporal necessities; rather, it affects all the affairs of life, leading the one who enjoys it to "walk in love," "forbearing one another in love." (Eph. 5:2; 4:2) And even were it necessary to speak an unpalatable truth, the spirit of the Lord, "the love of God," will dictate the speaking of the truth in love, which the Apostle assures us is essential to our growth in Christ.—Eph. 4:15.

Knowledge is valuable, but only incidentally; of itself the Apostle assures us knowledge would be inclined to puff us up, make us vain and boastful, and thus quite out of harmony with the spirit of God, the spirit of love, meekness, gentleness. Knowledge might make us merely tinkling cymbals, giving out a sound, but possessing no real merit in the Lord's sight. But knowledge, when it serves its proper purpose, brings us to the appreciation of "the love [that is] of God" and to a realization of the wisdom of copying his character, that we should seek so far as possible to be like our Father which is in heaven, copies of his dear Son, our Lord. The Apostle brings this position clearly to our attention when he says, "That ye being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know [appreciate] the love of Christ . . . and be filled with all the fulness of God."—Eph. 3:17-19.

Undoubtedly love is the principal thing to be studied, to be appreciated, to be copied and practiced in our lives. We trust that a large proportion of the WATCH TOWER readers have already become partakers of this "love of God," and that all such are seeking to have it perfected in them, and to be rooted and grounded in it. We have the Apostle's assurance that only those who take this standpoint can make permanent and thorough progress in grace and knowledge. Those who have entered the school of Christ, and who refuse to progress in it toward perfection, may assuredly expect that sooner or later their knowledge of the divine plan will slip from them; while those who do make progress in this proper direction may expect that the lengths and breadths of the divine plan will continue opening before them, and that their growth in knowledge will keep pace with their growth in love.

Finally, in harmony with our text, let us remember that this is not a matter that God attends to, but a matter which requires our own attention. God has made all the provisions whereby we may know of his love, and may be constrained by it, and may be accepted into it, but it devolves upon us to keep ourselves in the love of God: and we can only thus *keep ourselves in his love* by seeking to practice in the daily affairs of life the principles of his love: permitting the love of God to constrain us daily to sacrifice ourselves in the Lord's service, for his honor and for the spread of his truth; permitting the love of the brethren to so fill our hearts that, as the Apostle expresses it, we may be glad to "lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16); permitting a sympathetic love for mankind in general, the "groaning creation," in all of its trials and difficulties, to exercise our hearts so that we shall more and more feel kindly and generously toward all with whom we have contact and to make us helpful to them as we have opportunity; permitting this love even to extend to the brute creation under our care, so that we will not be negligent of their interests; all this seems essential to our keeping ourselves in this love of God. Let us more and more practice, and thus become more and more perfected in this love, which is the spirit of our Father, the spirit of our Lord, and the spirit of all who are truly members of the body of Christ.

* See issue July 15, 1916, "Mediator and Advocate Contrasted"

JESUS WALKING ON THE SEA

MATT. 14:22-33.—JULY 1.

"Of a truth thou art the Son of God."

Our last lesson, respecting the feeding of above five thousand persons with five barley loaves and two small fish, and the twelve haversacks of fragments gathered, and the illustration this afforded of divine ability to care for the Lord's people, and at the same time the propriety of frugality on their part, was followed that same night by another miracle and another lesson. After the multitudes had been fed, toward the close of the day, they evidently were loth to leave the company of one so able and willing to care for their necessities, and probably it was to expedite their dispersion that our Lord urged the apostles to start in their boat for Capernaum.

Our Lord, after dispersing the multitudes, sought the solitude of the mountain in prayer. Though he sometimes prayed with his disciples in their hearing, so that they recorded the words of his prayer, it is evident that he was not content with merely these opportunities, but frequently sought the Father alone, as he has counseled his disciples to do, saying, "Enter into thy closet [private apartment] and pray to thy Father in secret." (Matt. 6:6) All Christians of experience have realized the value of such secret personal communion with the heavenly Father, nor are we surprised that our Lord Jesus felt the need of a similar communion. His knowledge of the Father, and his fellowship with him before the world was made, so far from satisfying him and rendering prayer unnecessary, rather stimulated his desire for further fellowship and communion, especially as he was alone in the world —even his beloved disciples, not having yet been begotten of the Spirit (John 7:39), could not enter into fellowship with him in respect to spiritual things, nor appreciate the trials which came to him as a perfect man, in a way in which they do not come to fallen humanity. He needed such fellowship with the heavenly Father for the refreshment of his own zeal, for the keeping warm of his own love and devotion, which was the basis of his consecration and his daily sacrificing of himself as a man, even unto death.

There is no intimation given that our Lord spent much

time at prayer, morning and evening, yet we may reasonably suppose that he never neglected to seek the Father's face; but these brief seasons of worship and prayer daily were evidently supplemented by occasions like the one mentioned in this lesson, in which our Lord spent, apparently, considerable of the night in prayer and communion with the Father. There is a lesson in this for the Lord's people. The duties of life, pressing upon us daily, are not to be neglected; each is to feel, as our Lord expressed it, "I must be about my Father's business," and this would imply, ordinarily, short prayers, which our Lord commended, saying, "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think they shall be heard for their *much* speaking. Be ye not therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." (Matt. 6:7, 8) And the example of a prayer, given his disciples, is brief. Nevertheless, in proportion as we feel the importance of the great work in which, by the Lord's favor, we are privileged to be co-laborers with him, our hearts should be and will be drawn to seasons of spiritual communion; not necessarily a prayer in the sense of making *requests* of the Father, for much of such seasons will doubtless be devoted to thanksgiving for the mercies and favors already experienced, and for the gracious promises upon which we base our faith for the future, and communion with the Lord, in the sense of pondering his will respecting us, and how we may most acceptably serve and please him.

While our Lord was thus holding communion with the Father, the apostles rowing the boat were having difficulty to make headway, a strong head-wind having arisen, which made the lake very rough, boisterous, billowy. John, who was one of those in the boat, tells us that they had only gotten about twenty-five or thirty furlongs (two and a half to three miles) from the shore, in the several hours they had been rowing. This was what is termed the fourth watch of the night, viz., between three and six o'clock in the morning. While thus rowing hard, worn and sleepy, they saw the figure of a man near them, walking on the water, and apparently intending to pass their boat. (Mark 6:48-50) Some of them cried out in fear, thinking that they had seen a supernatural being, and that it foreboded some calamity, but it was Jesus who spoke to them, and set at rest their fears.

The boldness of Peter's faith was then most strikingly illustrated by his request that the Lord should bid him walk on the water; and having received the permission, his faith was so strong that he did walk for a few steps, until seemingly appalled by his own temerity and the boisterousness of the water, he began to sink, and cried to the Lord for help, which may impede and weary us are amenable to his control. miracle of the loaves attested the superhuman authority of our Lord, so likewise did this manifestation of his power attest the same; and if the former illustrated his power to protect his people from want and to supply all their necessities, this last manifested that divine power is unlimited and able to preserve his people in all the storms and difficulties and trials of life.

This is a good lesson for us to apply individually, realizing, as we all must, that our Lord has supernaturally fed us with spiritual food, and that during the darkness of the night-time which precedes the Millennial dawn and sunlight there will be storms and difficulties arising which would overwhelm us without the Lord's aid. We are to remember that not only the natural winds and waves obey his power and command, but that all the storms and billows of trouble and persecution which may impede and weary us are amenable to his control. The more we are able to realize this, the more of joy and peace we will experience, because the stronger will be our faith in him who is able to succor us and who has promised eventually to do so, and that meantime all things shall be overruled for our highest welfare, if we abide in him.

But the boat and the twelve toiling rowers, and the storm and darkness of the night, all picture still more perfectly the experiences of the Lord's people as a whole—not the experiences of a sectarian church, but the experiences of the one true church, of which the Lord is the Head, the "church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23) This true church has indeed had a stormy time since parting with her Lord who ascended to the Father. The darkness came down upon them—darkness of error and superstition; and the great adversary, through the anti-Christ and many less anti-Christs, has aroused all through this Gospel age a great storm against the Lord's faithful few. The difficulties of their position have caused them to bend every effort to make progress against such fearful opposition, of which one of the apostles declares, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood [merely], but against principalities, and against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against wicked spirits in high positions." (Eph. 6:12) This battle against adverse influences has continued throughout the night-time of this Gospel age, and yet the church has not reached the harbor nor has the storm abated.

As our Lord came to the disciples in the midst of the storm, in the fourth watch of the night (that is, in the early morning), so his second coming in the Millennial dawn is to the church and to "help her," rescue her from her toil and weariness and peril, as the Prophet says, "The Lord shall help her early in the morning." (Psa. 46:5) And as the manner of our Lord's coming to his disciples was different from that they had expected, so the manner of his second advent differs from what has been expected, and Peter would seem to represent a class living now, in the end of the age, who being fully convinced of the Lord's presence are privileged to walk to him by faith. But as Peter's faith was unequal to the occasion, except as the Lord came to his rescue, so all of the faithful now will need the Master's hand stretched to their relief, otherwise they would sink in discouragement, because of the lack of faith.

Is there not a good lesson here for all who have been faithfully laboring in self-control, and in the Lord's service, to bring all their thoughts and words and doings into full accord with the will of God in Christ, and who experience from the world and the flesh and the adversary serious opposition as the Lord's people? The lesson here, in harmony with its presentations elsewhere in the Scriptures, is that little progress can be made by the Lord's people until the Master himself shall join them; and that then their blessedness and privileges will be proportioned to the measure of their faith. How strongly this speaks to us, then, of continued faithfulness and of growth in faith, not in ourselves but in the Lord, and of his ultimate deliverance of all who put their trust in him.

In John's account we learn that as soon as the Lord and Peter got into the boat, immediately the wind and storm ceased and the ship was at the harbor. So it will be with the Lord's people, the "little flock;" so soon as their faith has been fully tested at the Lord's second presence, he will join their number, and immediately the trials and storms, difficulties and oppositions will be at an end, and the desired haven of heavenly condition will have been reached, the kingdom will have come. Courage, then, dear brother mariners, on the sea of experience, seeking to make your calling and election sure! Let us note carefully the Master's words to Peter as especially applicable to ourselves, viz., that all that will hinder us from walking out to meet the Lord is lack of faith. "O thou of little faith; wherefore didst thou doubt?"

Let us learn to trust the Lord, not only in the matters which pertain to his church and all of its interests and affairs, but also in all of the matters and interests of ourselves and families. The lessons will be profitable to us, and prepare us for larger measures of divine favor, and for the joys of the kingdom. And all this faith is based upon a clear realization of our Golden Text, viz., that our Lord Jesus is truly the Son of God. If the Son of God, he is true, and if he is true then all the exceeding great and precious promises which he left for us may be relied upon, built upon, anchored into; and such reliance in them will give us the faith requisite for the overcoming of all the difficulties and obstacles of life, that we may come off more than conquerors through him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood.

Thy ship is toss'd by wind and wave.
But there is one whose power can save;
Across the sea he hastes to bring
Both rest and peace.—the Lord is King.

Yes, Jesus walks upon the sea,
And in the storm he comes to thee;
Then trust in him, rejoice and sing:
He calms the waves.—the Lord is King.

He stretches out his hand to thee,
And from thy fears he sets thee free;
Beneath the shadow of his wing
He keeps thee safe.—the Lord is King.

"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE"

JOHN 6:22-40.—JULY 8.

Some of the multitude who dined on the five loaves and two fish were evidently very deeply impressed with the miracle, and inspired with great respect for Jesus. A number of them (we cannot suppose very many) concluded that they would follow this great Teacher, possessed of such wonderful powers, feeling assured that becoming his disciples would at least safeguard them from want; and this, to a people of their kind and under those conditions, was evidently quite an inducement. However, when they found the Lord on the other side of the lake, at Capernaum, and expressed to him their interest, and how it had led them to follow him, he told them plainly that theirs was a selfish or mercenary interest, and not the kind that he desired to cultivate, namely, an interest in the truth.

Taking advantage of the situation, our Lord gave, not only to these but also to his disciples and to us through them, a most valuable lesson on the proper things to be sought after; pointing out that the chief aim and desire and object of life should not be the meat that perisheth, earthly food, earthly comforts, earthly pleasures, which at very most can be but transitory, but that on the contrary the chief aim of all should be to attain life eternal, beyond the present dying condition. He points out that God's provision for his creatures is not merely earthly for the sustenance of our natural bodies for a little time, but much more important, a spiritual nourishment, of which, if we partake, we shall attain eternal life.

He would have them see that the miracle which he had performed, and whose blessing they had shared, was merely an illustration of a greater gift, of a more valuable bread of life, that he, the Son of God, was alone able to give them—and the same is true of us and of all. By way of assuring them that he was able to provide the bread of eternal life as he had shown himself able to provide the natural food, he declared himself to be the Son of God; and that the heavenly Father had sealed him, marked him, granted him the evidences and proofs of sonship in the powers conferred upon him. The seal was the holy spirit, the holy power of God, which acting upon our Lord Jesus enabled him to turn the water into wine and to increase the broken barley loaves and two little fish so as to feed the multitude. These powers were the evidences or outward manfestations to men that God's holy spirit was with him, the mark or seal of his relationship to God as an honored representative, a Son. On the strength of these evidences, the witnesses having the right condition of heart should have been prepared to heed our Lord's testimony, as a message from the Father.

The discourse was not without its effect: the hearers felt the force of the suggestion that the important food to be sought after was that which would give the life eternal, and as Jews they had before their minds the further thought that God had made a covenant of works with their nation, with promises of eternal life attached thereto—the Mosaic Law Covenant. Hence their inquiry, What works shall we do that would be pleasing to God, and that thereby we might have eternal life? Give us whatever message you have that will help us in this matter.

Our Lord's answer may at first seem to us a peculiar one, in that he declares that to believe on him would be a *"work"*—the work most acceptable before God—the only work that could possibly make them acceptable to God. What is meant by this we will consider further along. His hearers evidently understood exactly what he meant, *viz.*, that the thing most pleasing in God's sight would be that they should acknowledge him as the Son of God, the Messiah, coming into the world according to divine promise, to establish the kingdom of God, and to begin the blessing of all the families of the earth. But now they asked a *sign* of his Messiahship, instead of realizing that they had already seen the sign or signet or seal of God upon the Lord Jesus, as manifested not only in his spirit of love, kindness, generosity, goodness, purity and truth, as well as in his doctrines, but additionally that they had seen outward manifestations and evidences of the divine power upon him, as shown, for instance, in the miracle of the day before. This was because they were hard-hearted, as the Scriptures elsewhere express the matter (Mark 3:5; John 12:40), that is to say, they were in a faithless attitude, not readily impressionable but rather inclined to be skeptical: hence these signs or evidences of the seal of God upon Jesus were not sufficient for them.

We can readily see, however, that if sign upon sign had been given, the same "evil heart of unbelief" could reject ten signs as well as it could reject one. Just so it was in the case of Pharoah: he was really more impressed with the first sign given by Moses than by the succeeding ones, each of which being received in an improper spirit tended to make his heart the harder, until the last. Just so, it is with some today in respect to the Lord's promises. They incline to ask, Did the Apostle say this, that is contrary to my prejudices? And if convinced of the fact they would want to know whether any other Apostle had said it, and thirdly, whether the Lord himself had said it, and fourthly, whether any of the prophets had said it,—seeking not so much to believe as for an *excuse* for disbelieving. Such persons usually, if they had all of these evidences, would be no more convinced by the multiplicity of testimony. On the contrary, he who really believes the Bible to be God's Word believes its every authentic testimony, whether by the Lord or an apostle or prophet, and whether stated once or many times reiterated.

The working of skepticism in the minds of our Lord's auditors is evidenced by their statement. In substance they said, "We cannot acknowledge that your miracle was so great or so wonderful as necessarily to imply that you are the Son of God, for we remember that Moses exercised a power something of this kind; in fact, he provided bread enough for our forefathers, the whole nation of Israel, for quite a long time in the wilderness, and that without any loaves and fish to begin with,—we refer to the manna."

Our Lord's response is that the manna was not produced by Moses, that he had nothing whatever to do with sending it; that it came directly as a provision of the heavenly Father, Moses not being even an agent in the matter. And then our Lord pointed out that the manna given in the wilderness was typical of the true Manna, the true bread of eternal life—himself and the truth he proclaimed—which he now desired them to receive at his hands.

They did not yet get the thought that he referred to himself, but rather were getting a crude and natural thought, that as God had given manna from heaven that sustained their fathers in the wilderness, so now this great Teacher, Jesus, was telling them of a still higher class of manna, the partaking of which would yield eternal life, and hence they exclaimed, "Lord, evermore give us this bread!" Our Lord then explained the figure or parable, declaring, in the language of our Golden Text, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

It is evident that in the words "cometh to me" our Lord did not mean to approach him as his hearers had done, coming across the lake. The expression "cometh to me" must be understood, therefore, as coming to the Lord with hunger and thirst for righteousness, with a desire for the life eternal, and hence for the bread of life by which it might be attained. All who would thus come to Jesus, in this proper attitude of heart, would find him to be indeed a satisfying portion. Likewise the expession, "He that believeth on me shall never thirst," must be understood to mean more than merely believing that such a person lived, for it is written that "devils also believe and tremble:" to "believe," therefore, must be understood to signify accepting the Lord, not merely intellectually, but with the heart, as it is written, "With the heart man *believeth unto righteousness*" [to a change of heart which aspires to righteousness.] He who thus believes in the Lord from the heart, recognizing him as the Son of God, through whom are to be fulfilled all the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word, receives such a refreshment, such a slacking of thirst, such a satisfaction, as will never end so long as he maintains this faith. (Rom. 10:10) Such find the divine provision in Christ so abundant that they could not ask for more, and exclaim,—"It satisfies my longings, as nothing else could do."

And now we see the meaning of our Lord's words of verse 29, "This is the *work* of God [the work which God would be pleased with], that we *believe* on him whom he hath sent." There is a *work* connected with believing;—not a work with our hands, but a work with our heads and our hearts: and no work that we could do with our hands would be as acceptable in the Lord's sight as this. Indeed, when we realize that in our fallen and imperfect condition it is impossible for us to do anything perfectly, when we remember also that God is perfect, that all his work is perfect, and that he cannot therefore be in sympathy with imperfection, or any degree of sin, we can readily see that the very best works we could offer him aside from *faith* would be unacceptable.

But God has proposed to do a great work for us—he has done that great work in that he has provided the Redeemer, through whom the ransom-price has been paid for our race: and now God can be just and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Hence, while no work that we can do could be accepted of the Lord so long as we are under condemnation, yet he can, by his own provision, accept our *faith*

in Christ, and justify us through that faith: this, our first work possible, is therefore what God calls for. He will accept no other work, except it is preceded by this one and based upon this one. O that all could realize the importance of faith in the Lord's sight! "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and the more faith we exercise the more do we please him: not credulity, not a belief of something which God has not said; not a belief in our own imaginings or those of other men; but a belief in what God has said, and a firm, confident trust therein: this is acceptable with God, and becomes to all who exercise it the ground or base of justification, that "*being justified by faith* we might have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. 5:1.

The Lord did not here discuss the further step to the high calling of this Gospel age; hence we will not discuss it now. He is dealing merely with our first necessary step in approaching God,—justification. The thing necessary, in order to justification, is the acceptance of Christ as the Bread of Life —which must be preceded by the realization that we have no life in ourselves, death having passed upon all of our race through father Adam's transgression; and that the Lord Jesus was made flesh in order that he might meet the penalty that was upon father Adam, and thus upon the race; and that *now*, therefore, whoever accepts this free grace of God in Christ, whoever appropriates to himself the merit of Christ's sacrifice is thereby eating, partaking of the great benefits and blessings provided by God in the Anointed one, who gave his life for the life of the world, a ransom price. Whoever mentally accepts this fact, and feeds upon it in his heart, is represented as feeding upon the flesh of the Son of Man—partaking of the human rights, privileges and blessings of restitution [or in this age justification] provided in him.

Our Lord pointed out to his hearers the fact that their slowness to receive him, and the slowness of the people of Israel in general, was not an evidence that he was not the Messiah, but rather was an evidence that they were not in a condition to receive the Messiah. And further, that it was not God's purpose that he should attract the whole Jewish people, but merely that he should draw to himself, by the gracious words which should proceed out of his mouth, and by the miracles or evidences of power of the Lord in him, such as the Father had "given" him—such as were pleasing to the Father, such as were ready to receive a further blessing through this channel which the Father had provided. And he assured them that while not expecting all to be thus drawn to him, nevertheless all who would be drawn thus of the Father he would most gladly welcome, because he was not in the world on a mission of his own merely, but to fufil the Father's purposes,—with which he was in full harmony.

TWO CLASSES OF SAVED ONES

In the two verses following, our Lord seems to distinguish between the two classes of saved ones, verse 39 referring to the elect class of this Gospel age, and verse 40 to the general blessing upon mankind to follow this age, during the Millennium—and to the opportunity that will then be afforded to every creature to be blessed with this great gift of eternal life, purchased by our Lord at such high cost as his own life.

The elect are frequently, as here, spoken of as specially *given* to Jesus, while the whole of mankind are referred to as his because *bought* with his own precious blood. The Father draws to the Son during this age a special class, and gives such a class to him to be companions, joint-heirs in his Millennial kingdom—these are sometimes called his "brethren," as when it is said that Jesus was "the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8-29); and again, they are designated his bride and joint-heir, in contradistinction to the saved of the world of mankind, who will be recognized as the children of Christ, and of whom he will be the "Everlasting Father."—Rev. 21:9; 22:17; Rom. 8:17; Isa. 9:6.

Our Lord declares it to be the Father's will that all whom he has "given" him shall be saved, shall be raised up—not one of this class shall be lost. Who, then, are these thus sure of salvation? We answer that the Apostle Paul adds a word of explanation along this line, informing us of the class whom the Father has elected and predestinated: they are such as receive the Lord Jesus now by faith, and who hearing the invitation of this Gospel age, the "high calling," are so impressed with it that they lay aside every weight and run with patience the race set before them in the gospel;—and so doing, under divine providence and direction they are molded and fashioned as respects their characters so that they become "copies of God's dear Son."—Rom. 8:29.—*Diaglott.*

The heavenly Father fixed the marks and conditions of his predestination of this class, not so much in respect to all who shall *hear* the good tidings (altho he has to do with sending the message); not so much in respect to who all shall be *drawn* by the message of his grace in Christ (tho he has to do with the drawing, and in the present time is drawing only a particular class); not so much with reference to the *call* that goes forth to all who accept Jesus, inviting them to run the race of self-sacrifice in his footsteps (tho he is interested in this call, and supervises the affairs of those who accept this call, causing that all things shall work together for their good); but especially he has predestinated in respect to the *number* who shall constitute the bride of Christ, and to the *character* of all who shall be in that company: that it shall be composed of such and such only as shall during this Gospel age, while in the school of Christ, learn thoroughly the lessons of faith and obedience, developing characters of like pattern to that so gloriously manifested in Jesus, whom the Father sent forth to be not only our Redeemer, but also our Pattern.

It is the Father's will that every one who thus obeys the leadings of divine providence, and attains to the likeness of the Lord Jesus in his heart, his will, his intention (not perfection of the *flesh*), shall everyone of them be saved in this great salvation, and be sharers with Jesus in the "first resurrection," and in the glory, honor and immortality to which it leads. Not one of these shall be lost; every one of them shall be raised up to that glorious station at the appointed time—"the last day," the seventh of the great week of thousand-year days,—the Millennial day. And as the Prophet declares, it will be early in that day for "God shall help her [Zion] and that right early [in the morning]."

MILLENNIAL AGE DRAWING TO YIELD LARGE RESULTS

The 40th verse does not refer to those whom the Father specially gives to the Son to be companions and joint-heirs in the kingdom, and whom he draws through his providences during this age: it refers to the remainder of mankind whose ransom price our Lord Jesus has paid, and who, according to the Father's program, our Lord Jesus himself is to draw unto himself, during the Millennial age; as it is written, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." But even as the Father's drawing is not a compulsory drawing, so likewise the drawing of the Son will not be compulsory. But since we may assume that the majority of those who now resist the Father's drawing do so because of blindness, ignorance, etc., because the prince of this world is now reigning and deceiving, we may reasonably suppose that when our dear Redeemer's Millennial kingdom shall have been established, and when Satan, the prince of this world, has been "bound" (Rev. 20:2), and when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth,—then the drawing influence upon the world of mankind exerted by the Redeemer himself and by the church, his body, associated with him in glory, will be a drawing which will yield much larger results, so that many will yield to it and come to the Lord truly and heartily, and receive of the blessings which God has provided in him;—all except those who wilfully love sin and refuse the terms of the kingdom, faith and obedience.

Of this class our Lord declares (verse 40), that it is his Father's will that all such shall see the Son (their blinded eyes being opened in that Millennial day, as the Lord has promised through the prophets.—Zech. 12:10) Their eyes of understanding being then opened, they will be able to appreciate, as they cannot now appreciate, the Lord and the covenant of eternal life which he offers to all who obey him. They will not thus see him, however, until the god of this world, who now blinds the eyes of their understaning, shall be bound for the thousand years, and his baneful influence offset with the light of the knowledge of God which will then shine out to the world from the great Sun of Righteousness — the Lord and the glorified church, his body.

It is God's will that all who shall accept Christ then shall have everlasting life too; and that they shall be raised up by the Lord Jesus to perfection also,—tho theirs will be an earthly, and not like the others a heavenly, perfection; and their raising up will also be "at the last day," but not at its beginning as with the "elect" of the "first resurrection." The overcomers of this Gospel age, the body of Christ, will be perfected in his likeness in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and then subsequently, throughout that age, the work of raising up the world of mankind out of sin and depravity and degradation will go gradually and grandly forward until by the close of the Millennial age all the willing and obedient shall have eaten to their fill of the bread from heaven and shall be fully raised up, out of sin and death, to life eternal—in the image and likeness of God as was Adam before sin, but with characters perfected and tested in righteousness by their Millennial experiences.

ATTENTION, WATCH TOWER READERS!

We have learned recently of some readers of this journal who have not read the MILLENNIAL DAWN volumes entire. This is a great mistake. None can rightly understand or appreciate the precious truths presented herein unless he first have a clearly outlined view of the great divine plan of the ages: and hence we urge upon all that they begin this study *at once.*

All on our list are supplied the DAWNS at wholesale rates (to assist in their wide circulation through loaning, etc.) and any too poor to pay even this small sum will be supplied *gratis* for their own reading if they will let us know, requesting under this offer.

In view of the fact that our "earthen vessels" are so leaky we all need to replenish our stock of grace and truth continually; and hence we advise repeated readings of the DAWNS. When reading them you are really reading the Bible; for they are merely an arranged and systematized Bible. It is for this reason that like the Bible they do not grow old to the truth-hungry.

"LORD, HELP ME!"—MATT. 15:25

MARK 7:24-30.—JULY 15.

After our Lord's discourse on the bread from heaven (we know not how long after) he and his disciples went westward to the border of Phœnicia. There, entering into a house with the evident design of secluding himself from general notice, and possibly to gain quiet and rest, the Lord was quickly discovered by a Syro-Phœnician mother, whose daughter was possessed of a demon, and who availed herself of this opportunity to importune the Lord for her daughter's deliverance. The fame of Jesus and his miracles, in healing of the sick, etc., had evidently extended throughout that region, yet it must also have been known that Jesus was a Jew, and that his miracles and favors were confined to his own race.

We can readily see that there were numerous obstacles to the woman's faith, and the strength of faith which surmounted them compels admiration.

(1) She was a foreigner, a heathen, for whom God had manifested no favors, "without God and having no hope in the world." (Eph. 2:12) Hence, coming to Jesus she not only had to overcome the prejudices of her own heathen ideas and instruction from infancy but had also to overcome everything akin to pride and the fear of being despised and rejected as one unworthy of the favor she sought.

(2) As a poor and uneducated woman she would naturally have great diffidence in approaching a learned man, especially one so notable as this great Prophet of Israel, of whom no doubt she had heard much.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, her love for her daughter, and her confidence in Jesus, were so great that she sought him out; and after the manner of that time and place, in a loud voice and probably with weeping, "cried" to the Lord for compassion and assistance, in her trouble, saying, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, thou son of David: my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." She met with a rebuff at the very start, for according to Matthew's account (15:23) our Lord ignored her entirely, not answering her a word. To many this would have been sufficient to have discouraged faith, and sent them away weeping; but not so with this woman; she kept up her cries and importunities. She was confident that the Lord had the power to assist her, and had not yet refused to do so, and hence her faith continued to cling.

The disciples seem to have been annoyed with her cries, which probably kept up for some time, and Jesus and the disciples had evidently left the house in which they were lodging and proceeded on their journey, the woman still following and crying out for assistance. The disciples came and besought him, saying, "Send her away, for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Our Lord's answer to the disciples would seem to indicate that the meaning of the apostles' words was that he should grant her request and send her away; and his answer shows why he delayed so doing. The blessings he had to give were for God's covenanted people, the typical seed of Abraham, and this woman was not of that nation to which God had granted much favors every way; she was of a heathen nation, with whom God had not entered into any covenant relationship whatever, and for whom as yet he had done nothing. Our Lord explained this to the disciples, and in the hearing of the woman, not merely for their benefit and hers, but also, we may presume, for our admonition.

Altho our Lord would seem to have been resisting the woman and unwilling to grant her favor, we consider it not unreasonable to suppose that he thoroughly understood the case from the beginning, and that he adopted the method he did to draw out her faith, preparatory to the giving of the blessing desired.

And herein we have a lesson respecting persistency in entreating the Lord for relief from the power of the devil, however exercised, whether in our friends or in ourselves. As the woman knew that the case was a hopeless one as respected relief from any other quarter, so we know to hope for relief from the adversary only through the Lord's interposition. Like this woman, therefore, our faith should be equal to the emergency, and should persistently hold on to the Lord for the blessing which, with a greater knowledge than she, we may be sure he will be pleased to grant in his own due time and way. "Shall not the Lord avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, tho he bear long with them?" (Luke 18:7) If in our case the Lord shall not see best to grant a prompt response to our prayer, "Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (Matt. 6:13), we may be sure that it is not from lack of interest in our welfare, for has he not manifested his interest by redeeming us, and by calling us to joint-heirship in the heavenly kingdom? If then the response shall not come in the way or at the time we had inclined to hope, let faith still hold her anchorage in the divine goodness and power, and in the exceeding great and precious promises, and let us remember that according to these the time, at very farthest, will not be long, until the Millennial kingdom, when the great adversary shall be bound, and deliverance full and complete from his power shall be granted, not only to ourselves and those immediately dependent, but also to all of the "groaning creation" now under his baneful influence.

The hearing of the reason why she had been ignored, so far from discouraging the poor woman seemingly convinced her the more that Jesus had the power to help her, and, quite probably in front of him, she prostrated herself at his feet, after the custom of the East, so expressive of humility, dependence and entreaty, accompanying this with the plea, "Lord, help me!" (Matt. 15:23-25) When finally our Lord addressed the poor woman prostrate at his feet, importuning his assistance, his words were again a rebuff, calculated to dishearten one of little faith, but correspondingly to strengthen a great faith His answer to her was not one of disdain and contempt, nor of indifference to her woe; for indeed we well know that our dear Lord had no such feelings toward any. It implied interest and sympathy, but explained to her a reason why she was not a proper subject, namely, that as the children of a household would be provided for first, before the dogs, so it was proper that the Lord's covenant people, the Jews, should be ministered unto, healed, taught and blessed, first,—before these blessings should in any manner or degree be extended to the Gentiles, who in comparison were as the dogs of the household. And, by the way, we should notice here that altho dogs amongst the Jews were spoken of frequently with great disrespect, as for instance, in Rev. 29:15, "Without are dogs," etc., referring to the wild dogs which roamed the country and were pests, yet the Jews were in the habit of having house dogs which were esteemed and petted by the family, and the word that is here used by our Lord and also by the woman, signifies these house dogs or little dogs, pet dogs, and not the objectionable kind.

The woman triumphed over the obstacle of the Lord's argument, and with wonderful keenness and humility she acknowledged that she was not one of the children who had a right to the Father's blessing, but was merely one of the dogs under the table, desiring a stray crumb of divine favor. Then our Lord, appreciating such great faith and earnestness, said, "For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter," and that the woman's faith was of the proper kind was demonstrated by the fact that she believed the Lord's word, ceased her importunings, and went to her home, to find the matter even as Jesus had said.

How different is our case in many respects from that of this poor woman! So far from resisting us the Lord has graciously called us to a knowledge of himself and of his gracious plan, and we who were once aliens and strangers and foreigners have not only been redeemed with the precious blood, but upon making a covenant with the Lord have been adopted into his family, have been privileged to surround his table, and he has set before us as "meat in due season" in great abundance, all the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word We need not to importune for these; they are ours for the taking. We simply need by faith to accept them and to use them. And if the poor woman of this narrative could exercise such faith in the Lord, and could get so great

a blessing, it evidences to our minds what is abundantly stated elsewhere in Scripture, that nothing that we have or could offer to the Lord would be more acceptable in his sight than faith—faith in him, in his power, in his love and in his promises. Whoever will not exercise faith in these things cannot grow in knowledge of the Lord, cannot make development, cannot be overcomers, gaining the desired victory, for, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," and "Without faith it is impossible to please God."—1 John 5:4; Heb. 11:6.

There is little that any of us possess that we could reasonably hope would be acceptable to God outside those mercies which he has bestowed upon us through Christ—faith, trust in God, is one of those heart-qualities which we can bring to the Lord, that he will not despise; honesty of heart is another, humility, realizing our utter dependence upon him, and confessing it, is another. These various sentiments were expressed by the woman in the narrative, by her actions and by her words, and as these brought to her divine favor, even before it was due to come to the Gentiles, much more should our humility, faith and candor prevail and make us endeavor to do that which is pleasing to God, who has already accepted us in the Beloved, and with whom he is well-pleased in proportion to the measure of our accepting through the Lord all the exceeding riches of his grace, which he has promised to them that love, reverence, trust and obey him.

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"THE SERVANT OF THE LORD MUST NOT STRIVE, BUT BE GENTLE UNTO ALL"

2 TIMOTHY 2:24-26.

We commend this text and its context to the careful consideration of all—especially do the "Volunteers" need to remember it in connection with the service they are seeking to render to the Lord's true sheep still in Babylon. All thus engaged are "ministers" and "teachers" and hence amenable to the same instructions as Timothy.

Some have exposed themselves to rebuke and criticism *justly*, by intruding into church property uninvited. It is usually best to keep off the pavement fronting a church where there is any reason to think the service would give offence;—and to apologize if asked to move off it. If possible it is desirable to keep at such a distance from the building as to avoid *seeming* to want to serve its attendants more than other passers-by.

Especially make sure that your heart is so full of the love of the Lord and his brethren that it will shine out in your face;—then it will not be necessary to urge your gift, but merely to say—Accept a *free* paper! Lay stress upon the word *free*, because some refuse thinking that either a *price* or *donation* will be expected in return.

"LOVE AS BRETHREN; BE SYMPATHETIC; BE COURTEOUS"

"Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and showeth favor to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

1 PETER 3:8; 5:5, 6.

The Apostle has been addressing the elders of the church, exhorting them to give attention to the feeding of God's flock, and pointing out what should be the constraining influence to such a service. That they may feel his sympathy with them he points out that he also is an elder, and then warns them against a tendency, natural to all fallen humanity in any place of influence, to misconstrue their position, and to think of themselves as lords of God's heritage rather than as servants of the flock.

In our day, the natural tendency in this direction is greatly accentuated by the long established custom of all denominations of Christians to regard the ministers or servants of the church as of a different class from the others of the flock,—a class vested with authority from God, and not amenable to the same regulations which govern all the members of the body. But how great a mistake this is! The Apostle distinctly points out that a servant is not a ruler, that a servant has no authority. Indeed, so far as the true church is concerned, the only authority in it is the Lord, the Head of the church, and his Word, and the words of those whom he specially chose to be his mouth-piece, the apostles.

Where these speak, all of the body of Christ are to give attention to hear. Where these are silent, no one has authority to speak.And while an elder should be chosen to the position of serving and feeding the flock because of special aptness to teach (to point out the instructions of our Lord and the apostles upon any subject), and while such an elder should, therefore, in this way be specially helpful to the body of Christ in drawing the attention of all to the inspired authority of the Word, nevertheless any member of the body of Christ has the same privilege—not of exercising authority, but of calling the attention of his fellows to the Word of authority. The Apostle exhorts the elders that so far from in any manner or degree exercising a lordly or authoritative position in the church, they should rather be *"ensamples* to the flock." They should be examples in the matter of meekness, in the matter of patience, in the matter of brotherly kindness, in the matter of courtesy, so that the more any of the brethren would copy these elders the more would the spirit of the Lord prevail in the flock, and the fruits and graces of the spirit be manifested. On the contrary, we know that if the elder or leader of a little company of the Lord's people be self-assertive, dogmatic, imperious in manner, tone or look, the effect upon the company under his influence is to produce bickerings, rivalries, ambitions, strifes as to who is greatest, etc.

Manifestly, whoever occupies the position of an elder amongst the Lord's people, however small the group may be, occupies a position fraught with responsibilities to the Lord and to the flock, as well as with besetments to himself. Great care should therefore be exercised by every company of the Lord's people, to so far as possible select for the position of leaders or elders in the church such persons as would not be likely to be injured by the privilege of service—such as occupying this post would indeed be ensamples of the flock in humility and in all of the graces of the Lord's spirit. It would seem to be with reference to the special trial of such as occupy this position of service in the church that the Apostle speaks, saying, "Be not many of you teachers, brethren, knowing that we [occupying such a position] shall receive, the severer testing."—James 3:1.

It may not be amiss that here we notice the fact that altho the word "Elder" has the significance of "older," yet amongst the Lord's brethren it is not merely years of natural life that is to be taken into consideration; in the Lord's family we sometimes see "babes" with gray hairs. Nor can we even count eldership according to the number of years that have elapsed since the begetting of the spirit, for some grow rapidly and mature quickly; others who receive the truth permit the "thorns" of cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches to choke the word, and hence never get beyond the position of "babes,"—never bring forth the ripe fruits of the spirit.

Nor can we reckon this matter of relationship merely according to the degree of knowledge of the divine plan attained; for, as the Apostle assures us, it is possible for some to have much knowledge and yet be but "tinkling cymbals" according to the Lord's standpoint of estimation. While therefore an elder, in order to be "apt to teach," must have attained to some considerable degree of knowledge of the divine plan, nevertheless the real evidence of his fitness for the service of an elder must not be determined by his knowledge *merely*, but additionally must be measured by his growth in grace. So then such of the brethren in any place as possess clear knowledge of the divine plan and are "apt to teach," and who additionally give unmistakable evidence that they have grown in grace and are bearing in daily life the fruits of the spirit of the Lord, in considerable measure of maturity,

may be considered qualified to be elders;—and such may properly be chosen to the eldership by their brethren, regardless of their age according to the flesh.

According to the flesh Peter and several others of the apostles of our Lord were his elders, but according to the spirit our Lord is the Elder Brother of all accepted to the family of God. According to the flesh both Timothy and Titus were young men—young in years—so that the Apostle needed to write to one of them, "Let no man despise thy youth." (1 Tim. 4:12) And yet these young men the Apostle recognized as elders in the church, who, because of their *spiritual development and knowledge* of the divine plan, *and aptness to* teach, were well qualified to feed the flock of God and to be overseers in it—but not lords, not rulers, not masters, and not vested with any *authority*—merely privileged to call to the attention of the flock the voice of the great Shepherd and his twelve chosen assistants, and to lead them to the green pastures and still waters of divine truth.

It was after specially enjoining modesty and humility upon the ones most advanced and most capable of the flock that the Apostle, in the language of our text, urges that each one of the Lord's sheep, so far from seeking to be a leader in the sense of a ruler or lord or master, should seek to be subject one to another—to hear gladly from the humblest of the flock, and to be willing to yield his own preference, so far as his judgment and conscience would permit. A church operating under this spirit would not be likely to be rent with contention, for each would be so anxious for the interests of the cause and so willing to condescend to the wishes of others, that even the will of the majority would not be considered satisfactory, but rather all would seek, if possible, to reach such a modified conclusion as would meet with nearly or quite unanimous approval.

The Apostle most distinctly points out that the quality essential to such proper conduct on the part of elders and on the part of all, is humility. How beautiful is his exhortation, "Be clothed with humility." The thought would seem to be that outside of every other adornment of character, and covering all others, should be this robe of humble-mindedness, the opposite disposition to pride.

By way of clinching his argument, the Apostle reminds us of the principle upon which our Lord deals with his flock and with all;—that he disapproves of pride, and that all who are actuated by pride may be sure that the Lord, so far from receiving them, fellowshiping them, leading them, blessing them, will resist them, push them from him. The natural inference is that thus resisted of the Lord, the tendency of such as come under the influence of a spirit of pride and ambition will be not toward the truth nor toward any of the fruits and graces of the spirit, but further and further from these. "The Lord resisteth the proud, but supplies his favor to the humble." Come then, dear brethren, says the Apostle, let us cultivate this humility which the Lord so loves and appreciates and promises to reward. Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time.

The Lord's mighty hand has not yet been stretched out to take hold of mankind in general and its affairs, to bring order out of confusion; but it is stretched out over his church, his flock. He has called us to be his "sheep," and we have responded and have put ourselves under his care, under his powerful hand for guidance, for direction, etc., that he may ultimately make us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," "joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

Seeing that we are under this mighty hand of God, and that too by our own volition, how shall we act? Shall we yield ourselves to his will, and permit him to "work in us both to will and to do his good pleasure" and our ultimate exaltation, or shall we resist the Lord's power, resist his Word of instruction, resist the example set us in the meek and lowly Lamb of God, and seek to exalt ourselves and to be somebodies, either in the world or in the church? Nay, let us remember that it would be folly to attempt to work against the divine arrangement; we might indeed to some extent seemingly succeed, and bring upon ourselves, and perhaps upon others also, more or less of separation from God through such resisting, on account of a wrong spirit; but in the end we should utterly fail of God's favors, both as respects the fellowship of the spirit now and the fellowship of glory by and by, for these he assures us will be bestowed only upon the humble. Every proper incentive and inducement speaks to us, saying,—Humble yourself: become more like a little child, forgetful of self, devoid of selfish ambition: be actuated merely by a desire to serve the Lord, to serve his flock, and to serve his cause, the truth; forget self entirely.

Perhaps, as a result, the Lord may increase our opportunities and responsibilities in service in the present life, and perhaps he may not; but no matter for this. It is not for the present life that we are seeking and striving, but for the glory, honor and immortality which the Lord has promised to them that love him;—that love him so much that they hearken to his Word and seek to develop those elements of character which are pleasing in his sight, seeking to become more and more copies of God's dear Son.

The Apostle adds, "Casting all your care upon him." All true saints of God are care-full. They have an interest in the Lord's work; they have a care in respect to it. They cannot be indifferent to the interests of Zion. Altho their hearts and affections and cares have been lifted from a sectarian channel, it is only that they should be placed upon true people of spiritual Zion, whose names are written in heaven. Of course, therefore, every elder in the church must feel such a care, especially for the flock in connection with which he has been appointed to service, "to feed the flock of Christ:"—not to shear them, not to frighten them, not to club them, not to exercise authority and lordship over them, but to *feed* them.

This care, affecting the chosen elders (and all the elders or advanced ones in the church), altho it is a right sentiment in itself, might easily be so perverted as to be dangerous. The elders, either individually or collectively, might become so nervously careful of the flock as to destroy their own peace and joy in the holy spirit; and it might also lead them to take various improper steps, as in their over-zealous judgment necessary for the welfare of the flock. Many in times past have been led, under the influence of such a care, to in various ways take away the liberties of the flock in this or that or another matter: fearful that these liberties would be injurious to the cause. We see such a spirit of carefulness and over-solicitude marked prominently in the past by the various creeds and regulations and restraints put upon the Lord's flock, contrary to the Scriptures and to the liberty wherewith Christ makes free his people. The motive undoubtedly was in some respects a good one; the difficulty was that some Elders, some advanced sheep, caring for the interests of the flock, forgot that they were only *its servants*, and that they were not authorized to make any laws or restraints whatsoever for the flock. They forgot that the Lord himself is the Good Shepherd of his flock still, that he has not given over his care of it, nor his authority to anyone, to permit such to exercise lordship or to make laws of any kind for it, he having made all the laws and regulations necessary, and desiring that his sheep shall be free, with the liberty wherewith he made them free, in the fullest sense of the word.

The remedy for all such unauthorized over-carefulness for the interests of Zion is pointed out by the Apostle, saying,—"Casting all your care upon him [the Shepherd of the flock], for he careth for you [all]." Each sheep is to remember that the Shepherd's mighty hand (mighty power) is still in the midst of his people, and that because of his care we do not need to *overburden* ourselves with care, nor to feel that we must make *changes in his plans* and arrangements to meet what we might fancy to be new exigencies in the case. All such over-carefulness leads to fear, and fear indicates a lack of faith, a lack of confidence in the Shepherd; and is generally used by the great adversary as one of his most powerful levers to lead the Lord's people into a wrong course.

Let us all, then (all of the advanced or elder class), have a care for the flock; yea, a deep solicitude; but let us cast the weight of this care upon the Lord, and let our faith trust him that he who has been working out so grand and glorious a plan as his Word reveals to us now, "the plan of the ages," has made full provision for every feature, every circumstance, every condition; and let us thus be ready to co-operate with him in harmony with his Word, but not to run where we are not sent, nor in any manner to take our Lord's place, nor attempt to do his work. But only the humble-minded are likely to receive any lasting blessing, present or future, at the hands of our Lord; for he resisteth the proud and showeth favor to the humble.

PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION ECHOES

All will rejoice to know that the Philadelphia Convention, June 16-18, was a blessed success; so far as we have heard all who attended got a blessing, as we had hoped. Indeed, quite a few expressed themselves as so much refreshed and profited that, the Lord permitting, they would also attend the next Convention, at Chicago.

The attendance was about two hundred, except on Sunday, when it ran up to about four hundred. The three cities which have been leading in the "Volunteer" work were best represented at the Convention:—Boston 19, Washington City 13, Scranton 13. Thus it is always those most awake to note and use opportunities for serving the truth are the most blest of the Lord every way,—warmer in their love and service, they are less exposed to the besetments of the adversary: laying down their lives in the Lord's service in fulfilment of their covenant they are in the way which leads not only to fellowship in the sufferings of Christ but also in the glories to follow.

Nineteen states were represented—Maine, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, Wisconsin, Nevada, California and District of Columbia:—and Great Britain was represented by Brother Randle, who, after doing a little further "Pilgrim" work here, will for a time make England his home and laborfield.

At the baptism service thirty-nine adults, after making a good public confession, symbolized their consecration to the Lord, even unto death, by immersion in water. It was an impressive service to us all, and the entire congregation gave hearty thanks to God for the privilege of witnessing and participating. The janitor of the Baptist church remarked that not only had there never been such baptism service in that old church, but that never before had it contained a congregation all of whose faces were so happy looking. We were glad that the inner light of truth and its spirit of love was manifest to others. We trust that they took knowledge of us that we had been with Jesus and been "illuminated" by his holy spirit.

We cannot present the subjects discussed, but in a word would say,—It was the old, old story of God's love exhibited in Jesus, and the coming glory of the church and blessing of the world: the story that is as fresh as ever to all in heart-harmony with the Lord, and which daily becomes more precious in the light of present truth;—things new and old.

None, we believe, were more blessed than the Philadelphia brethren who so kindly and efficiently and generously entertained us. They provided a splendid hall for the meetings, paid for the use of the baptistry, looked after the arriving friends and saw to their comfort, and provided free entertainment for those of the visitors too poor to pay their own way. May rich blessings of spiritual kind be their reward for all their services to the Lord's body. By an oversight we neglected to call for a united vote of thanks from the convention; and as this was owing chiefly to the fact that the last meeting was a Question Meeting, we think to remedy the matter by having the closing service of future conventions a "Love Feast."

A USEFUL STONE VERSUS A STUMBLING STONE

MATT. 16:13-26.—JULY 22.

"If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

Peter, the apostle, was a grand character, as this lesson well illustrates; yet, like all strong characters, he had proportionate opportunities and liabilities to misuse his strength for evil. This lesson, relating considerably to him, points a moral respecting the necessity for meekness, humility, and wise direction of those who possess strength of character.

The incidents of this lesson transpired toward the close of our Lord's ministry, probably about six months before his crucifixion. For about three years the Lord had, with his disciples, been proclaiming the kingdom near at hand and working miracles which testified that he was Jehovah's Anointed One. Meantime, his fame had of course spread in every direction. Herod, who had beheaded John the Baptist, seems to have started the suggestion that Jesus was John risen from the dead—probably having little information respecting Jesus while he had considerable knowledge of John. Others wishing to properly credit our Lord's wonderful works and mighty acts, claimed that he was the Elijah prophesied to precede Messiah's coming. Others thought of him as Jeremiah or some of the great prophets risen from the dead; but very few seemed to have thought of him as the Messiah,—expecting Messiah, when he would come, to be very kingly, very great, and of very high standing with the nation and the ruling class. They no doubt thought they greatly honored Jesus in crediting him with being the forerunner of the Messiah. And apparently our Lord had not particularly expressed the matter of his Messiahship during these years, leaving it rather to be recognized by those who should obtain the opening of the eyes of their understanding. He spoke of himself as the Son of God; he spoke of his relationship to the Father, and testified that his mighty works were done in the Father's name and power, but he said little, if anything, respecting his being the Messiah until now.

Now the proper time had come that the disciples should recognize definitely his office, and his question regarding what people in general said of him was merely to introduce the matter to the disciples, and give the opportunity to ask them, "Whom say ye that I am?" Then it was that Peter displayed not only the strength of his faith in the Lord, but also his own strength of character and his zeal, answering promptly, "Thou art the Christ [Hebrew, the Messiah], the Son of God— the Living." And altho we may safely assume that Peter spoke for all of the apostles, in harmony with our Lord's question, nevertheless, the fact that he was the spokesman would imply that he was the most thoroughly imbued with the sentiment that he expressed. His statement is quite comprehensive, too: not only did he recognize Jesus as the Messiah, but he recognized his divine authority and paternity, and while it is possible that Peter meant to say "the Son of the living God"— the Son of the God who is the author of all life—yet it is probable that he meant more than this. It is probable that he meant, Thou art the Messiah, the Son of God, the Living One,—the one who has a right to life according to the law, while all others, being imperfect, are under condemnation of the law and under sentence of death

Evidently it was a refreshment of heart to our Lord to have this full and frank statement from Peter. One, at least, of his disciples had profited by the lessons of the preceding three years, and had come to the point of full assurance of faith in him: and the others, while less expressive, were probably making progress nevertheless, and would be greatly helped and strengthened and built up by this good confession.

PETER A USEFUL STONE IN GOD'S HOUSE

Our Lord's response, "Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jona," does not so much signify, I wish or will grant a blessing upon you because of this confession, but rather, You have been blessed of God greatly in that you have been enabled to discern this great truth, hidden from so many. Flesh and blood (mankind in general) do not so believe, and could not have so taught you nor convinced you; you have been drawn of my Father in heaven, and through responding to the leadings of his providence the eyes of your understanding have been opened that you are thus able to see and appreciate this great truth.

Then followed a blessing, a prophecy of coming usefulness, partly, at least, the result of this good confession, as it was the result of a proper condition of heart;—"Thou art Peter [*petros*, a stone, a rock] and upon this rock [*petra*—this great stone or rocky mass—the great truth which you have confessed, namely, my Messiahship] will I build my church."

The Lord did not propose to build his church upon Peter, but upon the great truth which the Father had laid as a foundation for his plan and had revealed to Peter and which Peter had so nobly expressed. But Peter, indeed, might be one of the living stones of the spiritual temple erected upon this great foundation-fact. Peter himself gives us this interpretation of the matter in his Epistle (1 Pet. 2:4-7), assuring us that the whole church as a building of God is growing more and more complete through the addition of each member, who, as a living stone, is built up into and under the headship of Christ, the great chief corner-stone and capstone of the whole—the figure being that of a pyramid.—See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., Chap. v.; VOL. III., Chap. x.

The same thought is given in the description of the New Jerusalem, in which Peter is represented by one of the Twelve Foundation Stones, the other apostles being equally foundation stones, and all the faithful in Christ being built upon the foundation of the divine plan, and upon the testimony of these twelve apostles. Rev. 21, see verse 12.

This was probably the first intimation the Lord had given of his intention to *build* a church, or that any period of time would elapse between the work he was then doing and the establishment of the kingdom. This was a gradual way of bringing great matters to the attention of the apostles,—matters which necessarily would conflict with many of the ideas and hopes that already had taken possession of their hearts.

It cannot be claimed that our Lord referred to any of the Christian sects when thus speaking of his church: all are forced to admit that these earthly systems are entirely ignored, not only in this statement, but in every other statement which our Lord ever made respecting his church. He never recognized more than one, nor did the apostles; and both Jesus and the apostles reckoned that every true sheep, every true grain, every wise virgin, and every faithful servant of this Gospel age would belong to the *one* church of Christ, of which the Apostle says that "their names are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23) They need no earthly record, and such of them as are rightly informed will want no sectarian name, but will be thoroughly satisfied with the name of their Lord; and they will want no earthly creed-fences to separate them from each other, but will desire more and more to be one in *fact* and in *theory*.

The church of Rome, as being the oldest of all human church systems, claims the name of Christ, and holds that Peter was its founder, but it can produce no evidence to this effect, for there was no Roman Catholic church in existence until centuries after Peter's day. The primitive church, authorized by our Lord and built upon the testimony of the apostles and through their ministry, after the day of Pentecost, was a very different institution from any of the present-day man-made, creed-bound and clergy-lorded systems. We understand that the Lord is now calling his true people out of this Babylon or mixed condition of present-day "churchianity" into the light, the liberty, the fellowship, with him and with all who are his, which properly belongs to the one flock, which has but "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

Our Lord's declaration that "the gates of hell [hades, the death state] shall not prevail against" his church, is worthy of careful notice, especially in view of his words following this declaration, to the effect that all who would be his disciples must follow him in sacrifice into death. This must have been an astounding thought to the apostles, as they had, so far from expecting death, expected some kind of transformation to glory, honor and immortality. Our Lord's declaration, therefore, that the gates of hell, the gates of the grave, shall not prevail against his church, signified not that his followers should not enter those portals of death, but that eventually those prison-doors of death would open,—would not be permitted forever to prevail against the faithful. As a matter of fact, the gates of hades did close over our dear Redeemer himself for portions of three days, but they did not prevail. On the contrary, God's power prevailed and he arose from the dead, he left the prison-house, he came forth a victor. And so likewise throughout this Gospel age, the gates of death closed behind the apostles one after another, and after all the faithful of the Lord's people, as well as others, and our Lord's assurance then is still comforting to his followers, that the prisonhouse of death, with its strong bars and gates, the grave, shall not prevail, shall not in the end conquer, but that he who was raised from the dead by the power of the Father will raise us up also, making us also victors over death and over the grave, so that eventually we can say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" But we cannot say this so long as we are subject to death, nor so long as we are under death's power; but only when the deliverance shall come in the resurrection.

Altho our Lord does not here speak of others than the church prevailing against the gates and bars of the tomb, he does elsewhere give us the assurance that through his prevailing and our subsequent prevailing through his name and assistance, ultimately the whole world of mankind, or so many of them, at least, as will accept of the favor, will be delivered from the power of death into perfection of life: and then shall be brought to pass, in the fullest, most absolute sense of the word, the prophecy just referred to. (Isa. 61:1-3) Adamic death and its victory over the human family will then be completely annulled, through the atonement accomplished by our Lord, and the restitution which he, with his church, will accomplish as a result. And any who shall fail of eternal life shall not fail because of the present prevalence of so-called Adamic death, but will be the victims of their own wilful sin, and will experience its penalty, the second death, whose bars and gates will never open, and against which they can never prevail, for Christ dieth no more and will release none from the second death.—Rom. 6:9; 2 Thess. 1:9; Acts 3:23.

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

The apostles, of course, could not understand our Lord's words at the time, as they did afterward, and as we now understand them. (John 7:39) Nevertheless, these various declarations respecting the future immediately followed, our Lord declaring, "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." What a riddle this must have seemed to poor Peter and his associates! They would doubtless conclude that it meant that in view of Peter's confession he would make him grand treasurer of the kingdom, or something of that kind; and only in the light of their fulfilment in subsequent events can we judge accurately the meaning of these words But looking through the experiences of Peter and the church, we find that there were two doors which required to be opened, and that Peter was used of the Lord in opening both of them, and hence that it was properly stated of him that he had the keys, the power, the opportunity, the authority to do the work in both instances, and he did it.

Our Lord himself did not open the door into the kingdom, in the full sense of the word. He merely called out faithful laborers, who should afterward in his name open wide the doors. Indeed, the doors into the kingdom could not be opened to any until first of all the great transaction of Calvary had been accomplished. Our Lord came to give himself a *ransom* for mankind, because a ransom was necessary before mankind could be released from the Adamic condemnation, or have any part either in the kingdom proper or in the hoped for blessing promised through the kingdom to all the families of the earth. Hence the apostles (whom the Father had specially given to Jesus, and of whom none were lost save the son of perdition, whose place was subsequently filled, through the Lord's appointment, by the Apostle Paul—John 17:12; Rom. 1:1), did not and could not receive recognition from the Father until after our Lord Jesus had finished his sacrifice and had arisen from the dead and had ascended up on high to appear in the presence of God on their behalf,—and on behalf of all men for whom he died. So soon as the sacrifice for man's sin was presented to the Father, the evidence of its acceptance was indicated to mankind by God's acceptance of the faithful apostles and of all who then were in the proper condition of heart, to the plane of sonship and their begetting of the holy spirit to a new nature,—and this was marked or indicated by the outpouring of the holy spirit at Pentecost, accompanied by "gifts" of the spirit.

It was then that Christ's kingdom was established in those who had received him; and then began the work of declaring the good tidings of great joy, which must eventually be to all people but which at first was restricted for three and a half years to fleshly Israel, in fulfilment of God's covenant with them, that favor should continue to the full end of seventy weeks mentioned by the prophet.—Dan. 9:24. See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., Chap. III.

In this work of *opening the door* of the kingdom to Israel we find, according to the record, that Peter took the first, most prominent and initiatory part, as we read: "Peter, standing up with [the others of] the eleven, lifted up his voice and said." (Acts 2:14) Peter was the spokesman, Peter used the "*key*," Peter opened the door, the other apostles co-operating and assisting.

The other of the two "keys" was not used for three and a half years afterward, because not until then could the door of favor be opened to the Gentiles. But when the time came for opening the door, we find that it was Peter who was specially designated of the Lord to do it, being sent from Joppa to Cornelius, to tell him words which should be to the saving of his house—the opening to him of the privilege of membership in the kingdom of Christ, he being the first Gentile converted, the first one to whom the Lord authorized the preaching of the high calling of joint-heirship with Christ in his kingdom. And the Apostle Peter referred to this matter subsequently, saying, "Ye know how that a good while ago God made choice amongst us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel."—Acts 10; 15:7.

BINDING AND LOOSING IN HEAVEN AND EARTH

Our Lord further said to Peter, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." This statement has given rise to the claim amongst Romanists that Peter was the first pope, and that he had an authority superior to the other apostles; but we find that very nearly the

same words were used to all the apostles as recorded by the same Evangelist. (Matt. 18:18) Again, a very similar declaration was made to them all, as recorded by John, saying, "Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained." (John 20:23) We understand these declarations not to be general and applicable to all of the church, but chiefly to the apostles, on the strength of our Lord's words. (John 6:70; 15:16; Rev. 21:14) We deny that the popes of Rome, or any other persons, ever have been apostles, or ever have exercised apostolic authority. In a word, we deny the central claim of Romanism and Episcopacy, viz., "Apostolic Succession."

We understand this investment of Peter and the other apostles, with special authority to bind and to loose, to remit and to hold, to signify that God would specially control their utterances, so that their decisions and writings might properly be considered authoritative. Not that God bound himself to do and to decide according to the imperfect judgments of the apostles, but that he has guaranteed us that he would so guide and providentially overrule in the affairs and in the language of these chosen and faithful ones that his people might rely upon it that such things as the apostles fixed had the divine approval. For instance, it is at their mouth that we learn that we are justified from all sin through faith in the redemption; they did not make it so, but under divine direction they were guided in the stating of it so; and we may implicitly rely upon their statements, which, moreover, we find to be in full accord with the principles of righteousness and the various declarations of the divine Word.

They inform us also that certain sins can be remitted or forgiven— sins of weakness and of ignorance, traceable to our fallen nature, which we have received by heredity, and the penalty for which our Lord has already borne. They inform us also that other sins, viz., wilful sins, are not forgivable, and may be indeed sins unto death, unto the second death. And we see herein reasonableness also; for we perceive that Christ did not die for any except the Adamic transgression, and those sins which directly or indirectly may be traceable to it: and that wilful, deliberate transgressions cannot therefore be forgiven, but must be expiated—if committed with considerable light, but not full light, the expiating penalty may be "stripes," but if committed with full wilfulness and against full light the penalty could be nothing short of death —the second death.—1 John 5:16; Luke 12:47, 48; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26 27.

CAST NOT PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

Following this conversation with the disciples, our Lord charged them particularly not to make his Messiahship generally known to the people. This corroborates the thought that neither the disciples nor our Lord had previously been enunciating his Messiahship, but rather preaching that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, near at the door, without saying precisely who was to be the King. The command not to make the matter known was evidently because the result of such a program would have been to have aroused at least a party spirit amongst the people, some of whom accepted his miracles, etc., and would have espoused his cause, while others, with the Pharisees, would have opposed, and thus an insurrection would naturally have followed;—besides it would have interfered considerably with the program which our Lord saw marked out for him in the divine Word,—his death as the sin-offering. He did not need to proclaim his Messiahship, for he already knew, as he had stated, that whosoever the Father would draw would come, and that those not drawn of the Father, and not disposed to become his disciples, should not be specially drawn by the proclamation of his Messiahship and the prospects of the kingdom.

PETER A STUMBLING-STONE, AN ADVERSARY

Having prepared the minds of the disciples, by the foregoing declaration, that *hades*, death, would not be permitted to triumph over his church, etc., our Lord from that time forward began gradually to break to them information respecting his own decease and his resurrection from the dead. It was then that the same noble Peter forgot himself, as we would say, and undertook to correct the Lord and to outline for him other things. He was moved to this, not merely by selfish motives of prejudice and hopes of sharing in the kingdom, and avoiding the ignominy, but doubtless also by his love for the Lord and his desire to see him honored and exalted, rather than to be set at nought and killed. But, as on another occasion this noble Apostle said things "not knowing what he said," so now he evidently did not realize the import of his language, and how, if it were followed, it would mean to our Lord the rejection of the Father's plan and the substitution therefor of a plan more agreeable to the flesh.

The text says that "Peter took him," and this we may understand to signify that Peter took him apart from the others—it was a private interview and exhortation, and no doubt Peter intended to bring in various supporting arguments; for instance, that the disciples would be discouraged with such talk, etc. However, he only "began," and did not get to finish his argument, the Master being so full of the spirit of loyalty to the Father and his plan that he could not even endure a suggestion to the contrary, and must needs hasten to repudiate such a disloyal suggestion. His answer was a severe rebuke to Peter, yet doubtless was a blessing to him so long as he lived, and probably helped him afterward to be much more modest in the matter of opposing his plan to that of the Lord.

When our Lord said, "Get thee behind me, Satan," he did not mean that he considered Peter possessed by the adversary: rather, the word Satan in the original is "adversary," and was properly used in respect to any person taking a position adverse or in opposition to another. *The* adversary is called Satan, that word being used for him as a proper name. Our Lord turned from Peter at this time, and addressed his words so that all the apostles might hear him, that the matter might be the more impressive and all the more a valuable lesson to them: that they might all know that their Master never compromised his Father's will in any sense or degree. "Get behind me, adversary; thou savorest [partakest] not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men"—you are viewing matters not from God's standpoint, but from the standpoint of fallible, fallen men.

So it is to-day, and ever has been with the church, the body of Christ; if they are intent upon following the footsteps of the Lord they must expect adversaries to arise who will seek to turn them away from the path of sacrifice and duty: to make it seem too difficult, or to attract their attention to other plans or methods less costly—more in harmony with the fleshly mind. We should remember the Master's course and take a similar one, and point out to these, if they be friends, and in the truth (and such they frequently are, as was Peter), that their influence is being exercised in a wrong direction, against the truth, against our best interests, against the divine plan and hence that they are not only adversaries to us, but also adversaries to the Lord. We should thus seek to reclaim them and to help them to walk in the same way with us,—instead of leaving the narrow way to follow their kindly meant but pernicious influence.

The word here rendered "offence" would more properly be translated, as in the Revised Version, "a stumbling block," or a stone of stumbling. Thus we see that it was the same Peter whose noble confession had so refreshed the Lord and blessed the disciples and himself, and who on this account was designated a stone, indicative of strong character, that was now, by reason of the same strength of character, strong-mindedness, strong will, in danger of becoming, not a stone in the Lord's temple but a stumbling stone. And should some of the Lord's people, strong in character, become stumbling stones to us, we have here our Lord's illustration of our proper course—to turn from them, refusing to be stumbled, refusing to be lead away from the consecration which we have made.

Our Lord took this occasion to lay pointedly before his disciples the fact that if they loved the present life, with its advantages, etc., more than the future one, with its present disadvantages, they had no business amongst his disciples: that anyone who would be his disciple should reckon self-denial, self-negation, absolutely necessary to discipleship; and should be prepared, with no uncertainty of mind or purpose, to follow after Jesus with a cross,—not a literal cross, but the crossing of human self-will with the divine will.

Then come the terms of discipleship very clearly stated. All who become disciples, and who hope for life in the kingdom, must expect to sacrifice the present life, and whoever does not sacrifice the present life shall not find that glorious eternal life which God has in reservation only for the overcomers. But, our Lord reasons, what would a man be advantaged were he to gain all of this world, all of its advantages and riches (which none could hope to do) if thereby he should lose his own being, his own soul, his life, his existence: or what would a man not be willing to give in exchange for the perpetuation of his life eternally. (The word *soul*, in this verse, is *psuche*, the same Greek word rendered *life* in the preceding verse.) Surely anyone possessed of a sound mind and able, therefore, to rightly weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the present life, as compared

with the eternal life in God's kingdom of righteousness, must confess that it would be a bad bargain to gain the whole world in every sense and to lose his own being.

It is in view of the logic of this argument that our Lord and the apostles urge all true followers of Christ to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and their reasonable service;—to lay down their lives for the brethren, that by these means they may attest their devotion to the Lord and attain to his kingdom and life everlasting.—Rom. 12:1; 1 John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; Phil. 3:10, 11.

A VISION OF COMING GLORY

LUKE 9:28-36.—JULY 29.

"This is my beloved son—hear him."

Continuing his lessons to the apostles, showing them that his glory and kingdom could not come until after his suffering and death, our Lord declared, "There be some standing here who will not taste of death until they see the Son of Man coming in his royal majesty." (Matt. 16:28; 17:1) Then, six days later (or eight days, counting the one in which this was uttered and the one in which it was fulfilled) our Lord took Peter, James and John, the three apostles most advanced in faith and zeal, into a high mountain, and while praying with them the transfiguration scene of our lesson ensued.

It was a further lesson of instruction in harmony with what he had already explained, viz., that the Son of Man must be set at naught by the chief priests and the elders, and must be crucified, and must rise from the dead, ere he could enter into his glory;—the kingdom in which he had promised them a share. The transfiguration scene was therefore a picture or "vision" of the Lord's glory in his kingdom, and was intended to assure the apostles respecting the certainty of the kingdom, notwithstanding the apparent failure of all kingdom-hopes in our Lord's crucifixion. And this vision was doubtless essential as an assistant to the apostles' faith in Jesus as the promised Messiah, since the course of events which would follow in the next few months would be so different from everything that they had expected.

Peter, one of those present on this occasion, fully substantiates this view—that the transfiguration was a vision of Christ's dignity and glory in the kingdom—for writing respecting it he says: "We have not followed cunningly devised fables in making known to you the presence and power of our Lord Jesus, but were eye-witnesses of that majesty, for he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory—'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount."—2 Pet. 1:16-18.

The several accounts show that our Lord entered into the mountain to pray, and that the apostles fell asleep during the prayer, but subsequently awakened and beheld the vision, the Master's face shining like the sun, and his garments glitteringly white, and in his company two persons who, for some reason, they recognized as Moses and Elijah, altho of course they had never seen either of these men, and would not have known them without assistance. These they overheard talking with the Lord, the subject of the conversation no doubt being intended for the ears of the disciples—to convince them that the matters which would occur before long in Jerusalem and on Mount Calvary would all be features of the divine plan, harmoniously working out the blessed results promised and longed for, through the kingdom. "They spoke of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."

What is the interpretation of the picture? is a proper question. We reply, that it represented, first of all, that altho our Lord Jesus must suffer death, even the death of the cross, in harmony with the divine plan, "being made a curse for us" (Gal 3:13), nevertheless, he was still the Son of God, whose glorious majesty and kingly power would later on be fully shown forth. And Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the Prophets, illustrate how the death of Christ was fully attested beforehand. Moses spoke of the sufferings of Christ in all the arrangements of the Law, its sacrifices, etc., and the prophets declared not only the coming glories, but also the sufferings which must precede them. as our Lord subsequently pointed out to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, saying, "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Messiah to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"—Luke 24:25-27.

Again, this picture may be understood to represent the kingdom during this Gospel age—the kingdom as recognized by the Lord's people, but not recognized by the world. In this view of the vision, our Lord's race shining as the sun, and his garments glistening white, would represent him in his present condition, as no longer the man Christ Jesus, but the risen, glorified Son of the Highest, a spirit being. In this view of the matter, Moses might be understood to represent the faithful of the past ages, and Elijah the faithful of this Gospel age, the body of Christ in the flesh,* who are to be associated with him in the glory of the kingdom, and who meantime behold his glory with the eye of faith, and recognize the great transaction of Calvary as the basis for all kingdom hopes and blessings.

In harmony with this view is the fact that at the same time that this vision was taking place the other disciples of the twelve at the foot of the mountain were contending with the adversary, seeking to cast out the devil from the young man. Thus the Lord's people of the present time are still in the valley of conflict, still contending with the will of the flesh and the devil; yet their eyes of faith behold at the top of the mountain the glorious Lord, with all power in heaven and in earth, their Friend, their Teacher, and soon to be their deliverer, who will cause them to share in the glories of his kingdom into which he has already entered.

We have called this scene on the mountain a vision, and so indeed our Lord calls it, in the account given by Matthew (17:9): "As they came down from the mountain Jesus charged them saying, Tell the *vision* to no man until the Son of Man be risen from the dead." And indeed a vision was just as useful to the purpose as a reality could have been. Thus it was that the Lord showed many things later on to one of these three witnessing disciples on the Isle of Patmos. He showed him in vision, angels and thrones and crowns and multitudes and dragons, etc., in a manner which served the purpose equally as well as tho all those beasts, dragons, etc., had been actually created for the purpose. So in this vision: Our Lord's transfiguration was merely an *appearance—actually* he had undergone no change. He appeared like as spiritual beings are described, bright, shining like the sun, etc., yet he was not yet a spirit being, and did not become such until his resurrection from the dead; he was still "the man Christ Jesus." But in the "vision" his countenance and his garments were caused to *appear* to be bright, glistening, etc., and the *appearance* served every purpose. Likewise, Moses and Elijah appeared to be present, but they were not actually present, because it was merely a "vision." The Apostle distinctly informs us that Moses and Elijah and the others of the ancient worthies are not yet made perfect—and that they cannot be made perfect until after the church, the body of Christ, is complete and glorified with the Head, "God having provided some better thing for *us*, that *they* without *us* should not be made perfect."—Heb. 11:40; John 3:13; Acts 2:34.

As a part of the "vision" came a misty cloud of light, which enveloped the group, including the disciples, who were fearful as they entered the cloud. This cloud as a part of the vision, might properly be understood as saying to the apostles and to us, Altho the glory and majesty of the Lord Jesus are unquestionably his, as testified to by the Law and the Prophets, and as a result of his faithfulness unto death, nevertheless that glory will in a considerable measure be hidden, covered, obscured for a time, so that you will see your glorious Lord and King only with the eye of faith, which, altho more or less cloudy, will nevertheless be bright to those who look unto him. And the voice of God speaking in that cloud and testifying to Jesus as the Son of God, and instructing that we should hear and obey his word, would seem to represent how that all through this Gospel age, while the misty cloud surrounds the glory of the Lord, we will have great need to continually hearken to the Word of the Lord, and to repose faith in its declaration respecting the Son of God, our Redeemer.

After the vision the Lord and the apostles descended from the mount to engage in the duties of life—to complete the lessons of faith and obedience, battling against the world, the flesh and the devil; and yet, as the quotation from the Apostle Peter's letter clearly shows, the influence of this vision

* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, Chap. 8, "Elias Shall First Come."

continued with the apostles through coming days, as it still encourages us today. And may we not learn a lesson to the effect that as this vision was granted when Jesus and the disciples were at prayer, so all those who seek God in prayer may, to a large extent, with the eye of faith realize this same blessed vision of the kingdom—the glories to come—and may, to some extent, with the hearing of faith recognize the voice of God saying, "This is my beloved Son"—to some extent be enabled to realize that as members of the body of Christ their sacrifice must also be accomplished in actual death before they can enter into his glory, since it is written that "if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him."

We cannot build tabernacles on the mountain heights of faith and hope, and expect to dwell there in enraptured vision always. We must remember that the duties and trials of present experiences in conflicts with sin and with self and with the adversary are essential to our development and part of our covenant, but like the Master we should frequently seek the heavenly Father's blessing in prayer; and in proportion as we use this privilege will our hearts and our faces shine; and proportionately we will be enabled to "show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," and who has shined by his grace into our hearts, "to give the light of the knowledge of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.

LEAST AND GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM

MATT. 18:1-14.—AUGUST 5.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such [like] is the Kingdom of God."*

The Golden Text chosen for this lesson is most inappropriate and misleading. It was spoken respecting children, and as indicating our Lord's sympathy and love for them. Indeed, we cannot think of any truly great man or woman who would not look upon childhood with loving sympathy and interest; and viewing the blank pages of the life represented in them be awakened to tender feelings respecting the trials and difficulties and disappointments which must lie before them in the path of life, and with hopes and good wishes respecting their possible victories and attainments of desirable characters, as a result of these experiences and conflicts. That Jesus loved children, yea, loved everything guileless and pure, is not to be questioned, and our Golden Text substantiates this conviction.

The kingdom of God will not be composed either wholly or in part of infants who died without either knowledge, experience or character attainments. Had such been God's purpose it would not have required nearly nineteen centuries to complete the "little flock" of "one hundred and forty-four thousand," nor would it have been said that a good fight must be fought and victory achieved and graces of the spirit attained by "patient perseverance in well doing," and that all in all it must be through much tribulation to the flesh, voluntarily and joyfully accepted, that any can enter into the kingdom. Infants can have no share under this Gospel call; but they will surely share the great world-blessing that will speedily follow the completion of the Church and its glorification as God's kingdom.

This text is misleading, in connection with this lesson, because in the latter the expression "little ones" is used in a figurative sense, not literally;—the Lord referring to his humble and trustful disciples as God's little ones, God's children, whom he pities and cherishes as do earthly parents their little ones. Nor is this an exceptional case, for we find that repeatedly in the Scriptures the young Christian and the less developed are likened to babes, to children. Thus the Apostle Paul exhorts: "Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be ye men." And the Apostle Peter exhorts the brethren, "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby."—1 Cor. 14:20; 1 Peter 2:2.

It was apparently after the journey back from the Mount of Transfiguration to Capernaum that the discourse of this lesson occurred. Comparing the accounts as given by Mark and Luke, we gather that the apostles on the way had a discussion respecting who of their number were the greatest, and who would be the greatest or most honored in the kingdom which the Lord had promised and in which they hoped to share. This discussion quite probably was instigated by the fact that only three of their number had been specially favored by being with the Lord in the mount. The discussion between them, altho carried on probably in subdued tones, not intended for the ears of Jesus, had become animated as the various sides and claims were advocated. It was a little later that our Lord inquired of them what had been the subject of their earnest and animated converse as they followed him in the way. According to Luke's account they were reticent, not liking to answer his question and to tell of their dispute, no doubt feeling rather ashamed of it. But, realizing that they could not hide the matter from the Lord, and some of them evidently anxious to have his decisive word on the subject, they asked him to settle the question for them.

Our Lord desired just such an opportunity for presenting to his faithful ones a needed lesson along this line; and according to his usual custom he illustrated it. Calling a little child, and seating it in the midst, he made the astounding declaration that only such as would become childlike could enter the kingdom at all. As natural men, and most of them rather unlearned, the disciples had no doubt been aiming as far as possible from childlike simplicity, and striving rather to assume the dignity of mind and of bearing which would suggest itself to the natural man as being appropriate to those who hoped soon to share regal honors in the kingdom of God. What astonishment it must have caused them to learn that the Lord was looking rather for simplicity, meekness, teachableness, child-likeness, than for astuteness, wisdom, dignity, etc.!

Yet our Lord's words were not merely a condemnation of the spirit which they had been cultivating, but a lesson of instruction regarding a change in this respect, his words intimating not merely the possibility, but the necessity of a change of course on the part of those who desired a share in his kingdom. If, instead of reading our Lord's words as in the Common Version, "Except ye be converted," we read them as in the Revised Version, "Except ye turn," more will get the true thought our Lord wished his followers to learn, the word "convert" having lost its primary meaning to many by reason of misuse. They must turn their ideas on the subject, and study and practice lessons in the opposite direction—lessons of meekness, of humility, of child-likeness: and our Lord's declaration that those who attain to the greatest development in meekness and simplicity of heart will be greatest in the kingdom, implies that those who strive after simplicity and meekness will be granted a share in the kingdom, but that none who are self-seeking and boastful will have part or lot in this matter.

Having thus defined the humble-minded and unostentatious amongst his followers as those upon whom he would bestow the highest honors and dignities of the kingdom, Jesus proceeded to give a general lesson respecting such "little ones" of his followers, saying that all who receive such humble disciples in his name will be reckoned as having received him, and whoever stumbles or injures one of these humble or "little ones" will thereby commit a crime so serious that it would be better for him to have lost his life—better that a mill-stone were fastened to his neck and he be cast into the sea, and thus all hope of saving his life effectually destroyed—better that this great calamity should come upon one than that he should do an injury to one of the Lord's "little ones"—one of the humblest of the disciples, child-like, meek, following in the way of the Lord.

As we thus see how great a value the Lord places upon humility it should encourage all true disciples to cultivate this quality daily, that thus they might grow more and more guileless, honest, truly humble, and in the sight of the great King become more and more great, more and more fit for the high exaltations of the kingdom to come. Seeing that without this meekness none can enter into this kingdom, we need not wonder that the Scriptures everywhere exhort the Lord's people to humility—"Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God [now] that he may exalt you in due time" in the kingdom. Yet notwithstanding all these exhortations of the Scriptures the perversity of human nature seems to be such that those who become the Lord's people and who engage to run in his way seem to find more trouble, more to contend against, in this matter than in any other. And some who feel themselves to be little enough seem very anxious that others of the brethren shall esteem them very highly. Would to God that all of the Lord's dear people, and especially all who seem to be leaders, and who have some natural qualifica-

tions for leading, and helpfulness in the church, would study well this lesson, and learn from it how to advance themselves in the Lord's favor, and how to be truly great according to his standard, which alone shall prevail.

The word rendered "offend" in verse 6 and onward would be better rendered "stumbled," the thought being that of placing a stumbling-block in the path. The Lord intimates most distinctly that there will be plenty of such stumbling-blocks in the way of those who are truly his, and that, too, in proportion as they are "little"—humble. He declares it necessary that these difficulties, these trials, these "offences," shall come. It is necessary, because it is the divine will that all the elect church shall be thoroughly tested and developed in character, that thus they may become strong characters, copies of God's dear Son, willing to suffer for the truth's sake, and that gladly, joyfully, the loss of earthly things, that thereby they might please the Father which is in heaven, —thus developing humility and obedience, that by and by they may be ready for the exaltation which he has promised to those only who faithfully follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Yet however necessary that the stumbling-blocks shall be in the way, and that the church, the body of Christ, shall be tested thereby, this does not lighten the responsibility of those who, as the agents of the adversary, lend themselves to his influence in placing those stumbling-blocks before the feet of the saints; and our Lord's words, without indicating exactly the nature of their punishment, assure us positively that such evil-doers will have a reward from him who says, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay."

In all probability many today are putting stumbling-blocks before the Lord's little ones, his faithful little flock, who do not realize what they are doing,—just as Peter unconsciously became a stumbling stone, a rock of offence, to the Master, when he attempted to dissuade him from the performance of his consecration vow. Those who place stumbling-blocks before the Lord's "little ones" now similarly seek to lead them from the narrow path of full consecration and self-sacrifice—seeking to persuade them that another and an easier way, a way less humbling to the natural man, a way more politic, more crafty, more wise, according to the course of this world than the narrow way, is just as good as or a great deal better than the narrow way. Such testings are necessary, and it is also necessary that all who do not walk closely in the footprints of the Savior shall be sifted out, for the Lord seeketh only a little flock,—all of them copies of his dear Son. But there is a great responsibility upon those who aid in turning aside any of the flock—who to any extent are stumbling-blocks, causes of stumbling or "offence" in the pathway of the Lord's people.

Following this line of thought, that offences or trials and testings must come to all, our Lord urges that tho these tests mean the sacrifice of pleasure or hopes or aims or customs or privileges, precious to us as a right eye or a right hand, or useful to us as our foot, they must nevertheless be overcome, if we would enter into the kingdom. This is another way of saying what he at another time expressed in the words, "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the kingdom." Whoever has gotten the thought that the kingdom is to be granted merely on condition of *believing* in Jesus has gotten a wrong thought that is not imparted by the Scriptures. Faith is necessary to our justification, before we can do anything in the nature of self-sacrifice that God could accept; but whoever stops with the faith without the works, without the self-sacrifice, loses every hope and privilege in connection with the kingdom. To attain it we must "strive," must "fight the good fight," must "endure hardness as good soldiers," must be willing to cut off, not only sinful pleasures, but all things that would interfere with our full devotion to the Lord's service and our fulfillment of our covenant to be dead with him; must "work out our salvation with fear and trembling,"—assisted by divine grace sufficient for every time of need, and by the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

We are not to understand that any may be lacking a foot or a hand or an eye in the kingdom; but rather we should understand that as the offending eye represents besetments which appeal to our natural tastes as beautiful and likely to charm and attract us to earthly things, and as the offending hand would represent the doing of things that would be contrary to our highest spiritual interests, and as the offending foot would represent the going into forbidden paths of sin or self-gratification, so the lopping off of these would properly signify that it would be better that we should enter the life eternal and into the share in the kingdom without having enjoyed certain earthly privileges and gratifications, than that having enjoyed all the earthly gratifications we should thereby have missed our calling and failed to make our election sure.

The "everlasting fire" and the "hell-fire" mentioned are equally symbolical with the other parts of the figure, and undoubtedly refer to the destruction which is the wages of sin to be visited upon wilful sinners—"everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." That fire is used here and elsewhere in the Scriptures to represent not torture, but destruction, is clearly set forth in a pamphlet entitled, "What say the Scriptures About Hell."*

Branching out further along the same lines, our Lord gives the general caution to us all: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones"—these humble ones that belong to the Lord. They may seem humble and insignificant when viewed from the worldly standpoint, but they are God's friends; yea, they are God's children, for whom he cares; and hence whoever does injury to them is insulting and antagonizing their Father which is in heaven. Moreover, our Lord assures us that each of his little ones, his faithful, humble little flock, have a constant representation in the Father's presence. There is a guardian angel for each of the Lord's people, and we are to get the thought that there is no delay in the bringing of any and everything which pertains to their welfare and interest before the attention of the great King. What a thought is here for those who are inclined to be heady and to despise or in any manner override or mistreat the humble ones of the body of Christ! And what a lesson is here also for the humble ones—that they are the special objects of divine care and providence, for whom, therefore, all things must work well, because they belong to the Lord!

The remaining four verses seem not to be properly a part of this lesson, and inasmuch as they will come up in another lesson later on and in their proper connection, we omit the discussion of them here.

* We will supply these free to applicants who *so* request

BATTLING FOR THE TRUTH

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—At a recent meeting of the church here the 28th chapter of Isaiah was brought up, and it seemed plain to us that this is an exact description of the condition of the nominal church of the present time, from the prophets and seers, who err in vision, down to the tables which are full of vomit, the bed which has become too short and the covering which is too narrow.—See MILLENNIAL DAWN Index references.

Now in regard to that part of the chapter which refers to those who drive back the battle to the gate, the thought was expressed that possibly this might refer to the present "volunteer" work, and that the volunteers are pressing back the battle to the gate, and that the word "gate" might possibly be a symbol of dominion, representing Satan's stronghold, and that this stronghold is the doctrine of eternal torture, against which doctrine the present ammunition of the volunteers seems to be specially directed. Then again it was thought that this gate (or doctrine) might represent the restraint which the enemy has exercised over the race of mankind during all these centuries, lest the glorious light of the gospel should shine into their hearts.

Do you think the interpretation correct? And if so, do you not think that if the attention of the brethren were called to this chapter at the present time it would serve to strengthen those who are already in the volunteer service and encourage others to enlist, inasmuch as the same chapter promises strength to those who drive the battle back? With best wishes,

Yours in the service of the King,

CONRAD KUEHN —*Ohio.*

[In reply: We certainly do understand this chapter to portray events of our day; and while all true soldiers of the cross are now battling for the truth against error we concede that none are doing more valiant service than are the "volunteers." Nor do we know of any other service or method so likely to yield the desired results.

As to turning the battle at the gate it might be viewed

aggressively, as you suggest, or defensively. Really we are on the defensive—the stronghold Zion is attacked by enemies from without and within. The Bible is attacked by so-called Higher Critics, and the cross, the doctrine of the *ransom*, is attacked by Evolutionists and hosts of others, and the long entrenched errors of doctrine are now stumbling many who want to be on the Lord's side of this battle—the side of truth. The enemy of truth, Satan, and his deluded followers must be shown up and driven completely outside Zion's walls that now at last "wheat" may be distinguished from "tares." We know of no better aid in this conflict than the "Volunteer TOWER." It is an inspiring scene to see the Allegheny church volunteers going forth every Sunday morning, and it must be still more so to witness the larger company of the Boston church—about 80 per cent of the entire church, we understand, are "volunteers." The influence of such preachers and their message is bound to tell on the right class.—EDITOR.]

BIBLE READING INDISPENSABLE

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I can hardly appreciate the advice given by you in the last WATCH TOWER, under caption of "Attention, Watch Tower Readers!" inasmuch as I am always benefited by a re-reading of the DAWNS, but permit me to say that I believe there are some who may misconstrue the last two sentences of the above article and think into them a meaning it is not intended they should contain, viz., that you are advocating the reading of the DAWNS exclusive of God's Word. I have learned from observation that those who merely read the DAWNS without examining the context of Scriptures quoted do not become well established in the truth, so that when the fire that tries every man's faith becomes more intense, they are unable to endure the ordeal. It has further been my experience that those who state that "they" have the Bible to read, and that it is sufficient for them without reading the DAWNS, never come to a clear knowledge of the truth, because they thereby ignore the instrumentality that God has been pleased to honor in setting forth his truth in these last days. And in ignoring the instrumentality they ignore not man, but God, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;" and hence, as long as they maintain such an attitude, they cannot hope to be led into all truth. But happy are those who keep their minds in a receptive condition for truth, willing to receive it through whatever agency the Lord may be pleased to send it to them. May the Lord enable each one of us so to be.

Before closing I must tell you that I was greatly encouraged by the article, "Keep yourselves in the love of God." How it has refreshed me in spirit! I appreciate more fully now the fact that it is one thing to possess the "love of God" and another thing to maintain it to the end of our course. How much effort on our part is implied in the word "keep!" —continuous effort, yet ever mindful of the fact that the Lord is the "author" as well as the "finisher of our faith." It is to "pray without ceasing," to "quench not the spirit," to "despise not prophesying," to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good."

Some three years ago, when I began to appreciate the beauty of "present truth," I realized I had lost much precious time, and desiring to make the best of the little I had left, I thought over several plans and finally decided on this one, "Every day I will try to become a little more like Jesus, and then he will make plain to me those things I do not now understand." And I find that my knowledge of the "deep things of God" has ever been commensurate with my progress in becoming more and more like God's dear Son, but herein I became aware of the greatest struggle of my life, a struggle to the death of the old nature, and oh, what a struggle it is, only those who have tried to stem the current of a fallen and depraved nature know. I found arrayed against me the world, the flesh and the devil, but "thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" How appropriate are the words,—

"Keep striving: the winners are those who have striven
And fought for the prize that no idler has won;
To the hand of the stedfast alone it is given,
And before it is gained there is work to be done."

Enclosed find order for DAWNS. With much Christian love, I am,

Yours in our Redeemer.

E. J. COWARD.—*Texas.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

IS THE CHINA TROUBLE PROPHETICALLY SIGNIFICANT?

Apparently a serious crisis in the world's affairs is being reached in China. For the past sixty years Europeans have been intruding themselves upon the Chinese, ostensibly for the benevolent purpose of blessing the Chinese with European civilization, but really for commercial purposes,—supplying their needs for a money consideration. Subsequently, about forty years ago, under compulsory regulations forced upon the Chinese, Christian missionaries were permitted to enter the Flowery Empire to contradict its religious and moral ideas cherished for centuries. The new religion brought family strife—especially because it taught the people that their ancestors (whom the Chinese worship as demi-gods), not being believers in the only name wherein is salvation, were lost eternally—doomed to everlasting torments.

These missionaries, and all foreign merchants who lodged with them, were specially protected by treaty laws and regulations, and thus were exempted from Chinese laws and became a favored people, possessed of greater privileges and liberties than the natives. Moreover, the missionaries (especially the Romanists, from all accounts) attempted to extend these special treaty rights to such Chinese as professed conversion—the priests became the attorneys of their people, and by arguments and threats, etc., generally got their faithful free from charges brought against them.

Thus inch by inch the white man forcibly intruded upon the yellow man, until the war between China and Japan, which displayed to the civilized world the helplessness of China, the second greatest nation of the world numerically (400,000,000). Since then the white man's arrogance has increased, and the newspapers of the world have told the Chinese that it is only a question of time until their nation will no longer exist, being divided among the nations of Europe, who have grasped ports and whole districts, compelling a nominal acquiescence on the part of the Chinese.

The Chinese are a thrifty people and peaceably disposed and not specially patriotic,—else they would not have submitted to these intrusions so long as they have. Indeed, they are quite tolerant toward foreigners who will adopt their civilization, submit to their laws and mind their own business. Understanding the circumstances, we cannot so much wonder at the recent uprising against foreigners under the auspices of an athletic society called the "Boxers." It is worthy of note that the present outbreak, while it has extended to all missionaries and all foreigners, nevertheless began with Roman Catholics exclusively. Much as we must deprecate the killing of many missionaries and many native converts, we must admit that such an uprising would have occurred long ago among white men of any nationality. Lack of patriotic sentiment amongst the Chinese, and inferior armament, etc., accounts for the delay of this outbreak: the people have been kept so busy providing for life's necessities that love of money has crowded out love of country.

Europe is astounded at the late uprising, for two reasons. (1) It offers a suggestion that a patriotic feeling may yet take hold of the Chinese, which with their overwhelming numbers would make them a menace to Europe, for they could muster an army twice as numerous as could all Europe combined—an army accustomed to obedience, and very economical. (2) Even should the whites succeed in coercing the Chinese, and hold the kingdom as a vassal empire, or divide it amongst the "more civilized," the danger is that international jealousies over shares in the spoils, "spheres of influence," etc., would ultimately lead to great wars, far-reaching in their influence, and quite possibly involving all Europe.

It is from this standpoint that affairs in China are of special interest to those who know that we are living in the harvest time of the Gospel age, and who are instructed from the Word of God to expect this age to close with a great time of trouble—beginning with international complications,

and ending with anarchy. From this standpoint we examine the Scriptures and note the following as seemingly pertinent, indicating that every nation of earth will be involved in the trouble, but that "Christendom," "Babylon," "Sheshach," will be the *last* to drink the cup of wrath. We quote from Jeremiah 25:15-33, as follows:—

"Thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me: Take the wine-cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. . . . . All the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world which are upon the face of the earth: and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them.

"Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink ye and be drunken, and spue and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you.

"And it shall be if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Ye shall certainly drink. . . . . for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the Lord of hosts. . . . . The Lord hath a controversy with the nations: he will plead with all flesh: he will give them that are wicked to the sword, saith the Lord. . . . .

"Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts [boundaries] of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried."

It is not for us to prophecy, but to seek to interpret and apply prophecy: and even then we are to learn from the past that it is not the divine purpose that matters prophetically revealed shall be understood in *detail* until during or after fulfilment,—and then by those taught of God. We therefore merely suggest that, in harmony with the foregoing Scriptures it will not surprise us if the Chinese are entering now their share of the great day of wrath upon all nations;—about to drink their share of the cup of divine wrath, which is to bring all nations low, as an experience preparatory to the great blessing of all the world under the Millennial kingdom. And if it was appropriate that Israel, the natural seed of Abraham, upon rejection of Messiah should be punished and destroyed nationally, eighteen centuries ago, will it be strange if other nations also be compelled to drink of the same cup of wrath?—See verse 29.

India has already been severely scourged with famine and pestilence, yet these may be only the beginning of her share in the cup of wrath, which we understand will be to every nation, as it drinks thereof, a time of trouble without precedent. Probably the trouble will extend from nation to nation during the next few years, until finally, despite every effort to avert it (verse 28), great Babylon's turn will come—probably within ten years from now, when she must drink the very dregs of the cup, suffering more severely than the heathen nations, even as she has enjoyed greater privileges and sinned against greater light. "Babylon — Sheshach — shall drink *after* them"—Verse 26.

As the "Gospel of the kingdom" was circulated throughout Palestine before its trouble and overthrow, so we believe the same Gospel of the kingdom will be preached *for a witness* to each nation before its trouble comes. China probably contains but few fully consecrated Christians, and these chiefly among the missionaries, and hence the "harvest" message might quickly reach them all. In this connection it will be interesting to note, (1) that under divine providence our dear Brother H. A. Randle sent a special personal appeal to each Christian missionary in China, and later many tracts and DAWNS, about a year before this trouble broke out; (2) the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society sent tracts and booklets extensively to the same missionaries last year. True, we cannot say that many have received the truth, but we had no reason to expect that many would receive it. Yet the witness was given to all before their great time of trouble came. And who knows but what this interruption of mission work, backed by the truth, may set others to thinking in another direction —to looking and praying for God's kingdom to come, as the only hope of the world.

THE SHEPHERDS DISAPPOINTED AND CHAGRINED

Reverses in the mission fields of the world, one after another, will be very discouraging to ministers who have been preaching to themselves and others that a peaceful conversion of the world to Christ is near at hand: that thus the Millennial kingdom will be introduced. They will find that they have been uttering a false cry, saying, Peace, Peace, when there is no peace, and can be no peace satisfactory or lasting until the Prince of Peace, Immanuel, shall establish it through his kingdom, by breaking in pieces the nations as a potter's vessel, and establishing his kingdom on a different basis in their stead—on their ruins. Note now how the same prophecy refers to this despair of the pastors, etc., of nominal Christendom, at the spoliation of their pasture fields, as follows:—

"Howl, ye shepherds [pastors], and cry: and wallow yourselves in the ashes, ye principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersion are come: and ye shall fall [and be ruined] like a delicate vessel. And the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape. A voice of crying from the shepherds [pastors] and an howling from the principal of the flock shall be heard, for the Lord hath spoiled their pasture."—See Jer. 25:34-37.

* * *

Lord Salisbury, the British Prime Minister, addressing *The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, recently said:—

"Just look at this Chinese matter. You observe all the people who are slaughtered. Do you imagine that they are slaughtered simply because the Chinese dislike their religion? There is no nation in the world so indifferent on the subject of religion as the Chinese! It is because they and other nations have got the idea that missionary work is a mere instrument of the *secular government* to achieve the objects it has in view. In the East they have the proverb, 'First the Missionary, then the Consul, then the General.'"

* * *

The London Spectator, commenting on the general dislike of Europeans by Asiatics, now being exemplified in China, says:—

"There is in China no race hatred, or color hatred, or, as we believe, hatred of creed for Chinese Christians. They could be tolerated quite well as mere idiots, but that those who dislike their ideas fear them also, and believe that unless those who propagate them are extirpated the ideas will win. The Europeans, they say, are already convincing many; they have almost persuaded our Emperor; year by year their views are advancing among the people,—if they and their disciples are suffered to live, our religion, our civilization, our social system, all are lost together. As for our literati, they will be ruined first, for they are our officials. People wonder that the harmless missionaries should be the objects of such a passion, that they should be disemboweled instead of merely beheaded: but think of the treatment of the Christians by the Roman Judges and we shall begin to understand the Chinese movement. Add but a little fear to the feelings already generated, and who would answer for the lives of Jews in France, or Germany, or Russia, or for those of Anarchists in any part of Europe? Asiatics in all ages have believed the amalgam of beliefs and social ways which constitutes their civilization, to be divine and unimprovable, and regard those who despise it, and preach against it, and shake it, as the intrusive Europeans certainly do, with a horror which of itself extinguishes the feeling of a common humanity. They have no more sense that slaughtering such is wicked, than the Parisians had when they massacred the Huguenots, or than English sportsmen have when they organize a battue of birds."

* * *

General Lord Wolsley, of the British War Department, takes a very pessimistic view of the outlook in China, which is corroborated by the accumulating evidences that since the China-Japan war China has been quietly drilling her troops and arming them with modern weapons, machine guns, etc. He said recently:—

"China possesses every requisite for overrunning the world. She has a population of 400,000,000, all speaking the same language, or dialect, readily understood from one end of the empire to the other. She has enormously developed wealth, and still enormous natural wealth awaiting development. Her men, if properly drilled and led, are admirable soldiers. They are plucky, and able to live on next to nothing. Moreover, they are absolutely fearless of death. Begin with the foundation of millions upon millions of such soldiers as those men are capable of being made, and tell me, if you can, where the end will be."

A Chinese gentleman of education explains that the present trouble is occasioned by the Chinese lack of conscience: that

well-meaning missionaries are duped by many of those professing conversion. He says for instance,—

A Chinaman, an executor of a relative's will, may decide to cheat the orphans under his care. He arranges the matter readily with the Mandarin ruler by promising him one-half the booty. Later he concludes to give him but one-eighth, and to pave the way attends mission meetings, etc. Then he represents himself as terribly persecuted because of his new religion, and through the missionary secures consular protection which hinders him from being tried in a Chinese court. This step is taken months in advance of his refusal to give the Mandarin the promised one-half of his booty.

The missionary, unused to such duplicity, labors, as he supposes, for justice for the oppressed, but the result of his efforts may be summed up thus,—

"Net result: A misled missionary confirmed in his wrong-headedness; a would-be dishonest mandarin baffled and infuriated; two orphans robbed of their inheritance; food for nine days' gossip, and stirring up of hatred of 'foreign devils'; the whole a piece of rank injustice.

"Let me deliberately state that I am quite certain there is not one town in the whole length and breadth of China that has been visited by missionaries, in which you could not at this moment find indisputable evidence of a case similar in all essentials to the example I have given you."

We wonder how long it will require our dear friends interested in missions to learn that God is seeking as his "elect" not the lowest, but the highest types of man;—that now is not the Lord's time for judging the heathen—that as the Apostle declares, "God hath appointed a day [the Millennial day—2 Pet. 3:8] in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." (Acts 17:31) When they learn this they will see the un-wisdom of attempting to forestall Jehovah's plan, and will coöperate rather in his great and gracious arrangement of first calling and preparing an "elect" church, which by and by shall, as God's "royal priesthood," with their glorious Lord, Jesus, as fully competent missionaries, bless the heathen with the gracious opportunity of salvation promised. Perhaps a signal failure of present missions, and spoiling of pastures, may be God's method for awakening his true servants now deluded and blinded by false doctrines contrary to the Word.

PROGRESS OF THE CAUSE IN GREAT BRITAIN

The Lord's blessing attends the British branch. Four colporteurs are at work there with good success. Brother Henninges writes of their work thus,—"The results of their labors for the last two months show that any one of average intelligence and activity can, with the Lord's blessing, sustain himself in the work. Give a clarion call from the WATCH TOWER for more laborers for this great field, advising would-be laborers to write to the British branch for terms, territory, etc."

Respecting the "Volunteer" service Bro. H. says,—"The Volunteer work is progressing well; particularly in this city (London), where we have so far put out 14,000 copies. The work is going on in four sections of the city. Yesterday was the first day on "double turn" (A. M. and P. M.) and the total number of copies of the Volunteer TOWER distributed was 4,000. At this rate we shall soon be obliged to call on you for funds for another 100,000 edition."

Our Society has just rented a very desirable meeting place where Sunday meetings will be regularly held. It is a public hall opposite the Great Eastern Ry. station, and near Wansted Park station of Midland Ry. The entrance is No. 79 Woodgrange Road, Forest Gate, London E. All who trust in the precious blood of Christ will be cordially welcomed. Seats free. No collections.

THE COLPORTEUR WORK AT HOME

We have had many additions to this service lately, but still there is room for consecrated laborers. The harvest is great, the laborers few, comparatively, and the time is short —"the eleventh hour." Write us for particulars if you have the desire and the opportunity to thus "preach the Word" by printed page.

THE MINISTRY OF COMFORT

"The Lord hath anointed me . . . to comfort all that mourn; to appoint [promise] 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.

Our text is surely good tidings in a very broad and a very deep sense. Its message is one of "comfort," not only to Zion, the consecrated church, but to *all who mourn;* and as mentally we cast our eyes over the world we are deeply impressed with the thought that the vast majority of mankind are in mourning: as the Apostle expresses it, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." There are undoubtedly a few who are full, satisfied, and who mourn for nothing, and who, therefore, under these conditions, are excluded from any share in this promised blessing; but they are exceptions to the rule. Some of them are wealthy in this world's goods, and feel that they have need of nothing, and are kept busy with their efforts to enjoy themselves. There are others of the same full class who, tho not wealthy, have a very self-satisfied feeling as respects their moral status: they do not realize themselves as sinners; they do not realize their daily imperfections nor their need of a Savior; and are not mourning for anything, and not therefore in the way to be comforted with any of the comforting assurances and promises and provision which the Lord has made for those who mourn.

So far as the world is concerned, our Lord's ministry of comfort to them is chiefly a future work. We rejoice, however, that the time is sure to come when all that mourn, all the "groaning creation," shall be brought under the blessed influences and provisions of the Millennial kingdom, and shall there come to know the consolations which God has provided in Christ.—the balm for every trouble, every wound; the cure for every blight, every sin and every imperfection; and their privilege of profiting by these to the fullest measure by giving themselves unreservedly into the care of the Good Physician. But the poor world, blinded and deceived by the god of this world as respects the character and plan of Jehovah, can neither see, hear, nor appreciate now the wonderful provisions made for them, and hence they cannot receive the blessing, the consolation, the "comfort" now, but must wait for it until the establishment of the Lord's kingdom, the binding of Satan, and the opening of their understanding with the eye-salve of the truth.

But as respects Zion, the consecrated church, this comfort is now her privilege, and all children of Zion need to be comforted. First of all, they need the comforting knowledge that their sins are forgiven, and that they are no longer strangers and aliens and foreigners, but children of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, if so be that they suffer with him. They need to be comforted, too, with the assurances of the Lord's Word that our God is very sympathetic, "very pitiful," and that if anyone be overtaken in a fault he may be restored, and "not be utterly cast down." If the children of Zion had no such consolations as these they surely would be utterly discouraged, disheartened, and faint by the way; hence the Lord has provided these comforting assurances, pointing out to them that having begun a good work in them he is desirous of completing it, if they will permit him to do so, and that to this end they must abide in Christ by faith, coupled with obedience to the extent of their ability. What Christian is there who has not shared these consolations, these comforts, and what Christian has not needed them, and realized that without them he would long since have been undone?

The Scriptures point out to us that our comfort comes through fellowship with the heavenly Father and with our Lord Jesus: we are comforted, not by believing that they are ignorant of our weaknesses and shortcomings, nor that they have a low standard of righteousness and a sinful basis of fellowship, but quite to the contrary of all this, they comfort us with the assurance that altho our every imperfection is known to the Lord he is yet very sympathetic, very merci-

ful; and that having provided, in the great sacrifice at Calvary, a full propitiation (satisfaction) for all sins, the Lord is very pleased to apply, on behalf of each of his adopted children, in full measure, the riches of grace necessary to the covering and offsetting of every unintentional, unapproved error and failure. What comfort is here! What consolation! What privileges of fellowship with the Father and with the Son!

And this comfort, the Scriptures assure us, comes to us through the holy spirit—it is the channel, and, hence indeed, called the Comforter. (John 14:26) Those who have the holy spirit may have the comfort; those who do not have the holy spirit may not have this comfort, this consolation. It is only as we receive of the spirit of the Lord, the mind of the Lord, his disposition, that we are able to understand and appreciate the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of his love and compassion and provision for us, and to be comforted thereby.

Nevertheless, this comfort of the holy spirit (the channel of divine favor), reaches us through the Scriptures, for the Scriptures are the medium, or sub-channel through which the knowledge of God's grace and the comfort of all knowledge reach us; in the Apostle's language, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and *comfort of the Scriptures* might have hope."—Rom. 15:4.

Yet while this comfort is of the Father, through the Son, by the holy spirit, communicated through the Scriptures, we are informed that in great measure it is communicated by the members of the body of Christ one to another, as the Apostle, for instance, after relating certain features of the divine plan respecting the deliverance of the church, says, "Wherefore, *comfort one another* with these words." (1 Thess. 4:18) Similarly, the Apostle declares that he sent Timothy to the church at Ephesus, and again to the church at Colosse, that *he might comfort* their hearts. This, of course, signifies that he was to draw their attention to the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord's *Word*, and that thus they might drink in the holy *spirit* of all the promises, and that thus they might be comforted, not only with respect to the things promised, but with respect to the loving compassion and sympathy of him who promises them.

Writing to the Thessalonians, the Apostle says that he sent Timothy—"to establish you and to *comfort you* concerning your faith, that no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto: for verily, when we were with you we told you we should suffer tribulation, even as it came to pass and ye know. For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you." (1 Thess. 3:2-5) Here again it is evident that the comforting signifies and implies establishment in the faith once delivered to the saints, that all the terms and conditions of our covenant should be clearly held in mind, and that the promises of reward at the end of the journey might serve to comfort, strengthen and establish the children of Zion in their endurance of the tribulations as good soldiers. This comfort, again, was of the Lord, through the holy *spirit*, through the agency of Paul and Timothy. Again, the same Apostle, speaking in the same strain, says: "Wherefore, *comfort yourselves* together and edify one another, even as also ye do."—1 Thess. 5:11.

All of the Lord's people need to remember that in proportion as they are ambassadors of the Lord, and his representatives, it will be their privilege not only by and by in the kingdom to "comfort all that mourn," and to be the trees of righteousness, whose leaves will be for the healing of the nations (Rev. 22:2), but they should remember that in the present life they have a ministry of comfort to perform also, toward all who mourn *in Zion*—toward all of the Lord's people who are in any tribulation, physical or mental disquiet, dis-ease; and they should remember, too, that just in proportion as they are filled with this spirit now, it is their privilege to bind up the broken-hearted, and comfort the mourning ones. No one can have this spirit of helpfulness, this disposition to comfort and to strengthen, and to edify, and to upbuild the household of faith, except he have in considerable measure the spirit of the truth, the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love: and in proportion as each seeks to cultivate this privilege of brotherly helpfulness, in comforting and upbuilding and strengthening, in that same proportion he will find the spirit of love developing and abounding in his own heart, and that his likeness to the Lord Jesus, the Head of the body, is becoming more pronounced from day to day and from year to year.

Finally, in view of what we have seen respecting the Lord's goodness toward his people, and the methods by which he comforts them through the holy spirit, the Scriptures and the brethren, let us note one of the Apostle's expressions respecting the great comfort and consolation which God has provided for his consecrated, faithful people, saying:—

"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 Cor. 1:3, 4.

So then, all of our lessons and experiences in life in connection with trials and difficulties and tribulations, if we are rightly exercised by them, should bring us larger experiences in the Lord's comfort, through the gracious promises of his Word and the spirit of the same; and should make us the more capable and efficient agents and representatives of the Lord, his Word and his spirit, in communicating comfort to others about us in their trials and difficulties.

"FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS"

MATT. 18:21-35.—AUGUST 12.

Apparently this lesson grew out of the preceding one on the necessity for guarding against stumbling the least of the Lord's little ones. It would appear that Peter had immediately attempted to put into practice the instructions of the previous lesson, and it was his inquiry as to how often it would be his duty to exercise forgiveness toward a repentant brother, that gave our Lord the opportunity to inculcate a lesson upon the subject of forgiveness.

The teaching of the Jewish rabbis on the subject of forgiveness was, that if the wrong-doer repented of his evil words or actions and came to the aggrieved person, acknowledging his wrong and asking forgiveness, he should be granted forgiveness as often as three times. They based their teaching on this subject on the statements of Job 33:29—margin, and Amos 2:4. Our Lord's teaching on the subject was, in many respects, the reverse of this, and required the offended one to go to the offender to make inquiry respecting the matter, and to show him his fault. This would require great humility on the part of the one who felt himself aggrieved, for it is much easier to resent and avoid the injurer, than to go to him according to the rule which our Lord has laid down. Peter seems to have gotten the impression that the Lord's rule, being different from that of the rabbis in this respect, would also probably be more generous and require that forgiveness be granted a larger number of times; hence Peter adds together the three and the four times mentioned by Amos, making seven in all, and inquires whether the Lord would have his followers be generous and forgiving to those who trespassed against them to that extent—seven times. What must have been his astonishment, and that of all the apostles, to hear the Lord say that forgiveness should be accorded, practically, times without number—seventy times seven.

The thought would seem to be that those who become the Lord's people, partakers of his Spirit, the spirit of love, will, in proportion as they are filled with that spirit and led by that Spirit, be so generous, so magnanimous, so loving, that they would not only be willing but glad to forgive a repentant brother;—glad to be first to extend the olive branch and to make his way back to reconciliation and harmony as smooth as possible. From hearts full of pride, envy, malice and other elements of the spirit of selfishness and sin, and merely topped off with a coat of benevolence and generosity, it will be impossible to dip out very much of the spirit of forgiveness, without dipping out with it some of the bitterness and hatred; and even with this mixture forgiveness could not be granted very freely by an unregenerated heart. But with a heart emptied of malice, and hatred and envy, and filled with brotherly kindness, meekness, patience, gentleness, forbearance, love, we may dip a cup of forgiveness on every occasion and as oft as it may be applied for, and it will be without a mixture of evil, bitterness, sarcasm, etc., but pure and unadulterated, generous, loving forgiveness.

We are to remember, however, that this holy Spirit which we have in our earthen vessels did not abound there at first, but with all was merely a surface coating, as it were, to be-

gin with. Gradually, as the holy Spirit increased in our hearts and abounded, it displaced the wrong spirit: hence those who are able from their hearts to dip the cup of forgiveness repeatedly and without a mixture of evil thereby give evidence that they have been with Jesus and have learned of him, and that they have drunk deeply of his spirit, and that they have been purging out the old leaven of malice, and are being sanctified by the truth, being made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. We are to remember that this growth in grace, while it has a positive time of beginning, in our consecration vow, is nevertheless a gradual work, requiring patient perseverance in well-doing, requiring also that the old nature, with its evil disposition, be mortified continually—deadened —so that our minds may be be renewed under the transforming influence of the spirit of the truth, in which we are to grow daily.

The "seventy times seven," mentioned by our Lord, we would not understand to signify a limited number of times, but rather an unlimited number—that whoever has the Lord's spirit will be glad at any time to witness a repentance of evil-doers and to accord them forgiveness. This does not imply, however, that there may be no penalties attached with the forgiveness; as, for instance, in the dealing of a parent with a child, the moral obliquity of the misconduct may be forgiven, and the parent's indignation against the disobedience or misbehavior pass away immediately, and yet it may be proper at times to impose some penalty on the trespassing child. In every such case, however, it should be clearly understood by the child that this is not because of the parent's disfavor, which has ceased in the forgiveness, but that his peculiar parental duty requires that a lesson shall be taught which will be helpful to the child in the formation of character. In such a case the love of the parent will of necessity be generous, sympathetic, and careful that the punishment shall be only such as might properly be of benefit to the child —correction in righteousness, not in wrath. However, such corrections as this belong only to parents and guardians, and do not properly extend to brethren in the Lord's family, who are not commissioned to judge and to punish one another, but to assist one another.—the Master's words to such being most positive and emphatic, "Judge nothing before the time." "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath." "Remember him who hath said, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

"Heir of the same inheritance,
Child of the self-same God,
He hath but stumbled in the path
We have in weakness trod."

In the family of God, the saints, begotten of the holy spirit, are all to be recognized as brethren, and to be dealt with accordingly. It is the new creature, and not the old creature, that is the brother in Christ; hence we may love the new creature, and in some respects have very little love for the old, just as all have disrespect for certain blemishes in their own mortal flesh, as they realize its weakness and imperfection.—and the more so in proportion as they grow in the divine likeness as new creatures. If, therefore, a brother should trespass against us it should be our first thought that this wrong done us is not by the brother, the new creature in Christ, but by his mortal flesh, which for the moment has gotten the upper hand with him or to some extent blinded him. Accordingly, instead of feeling angry with the brother, we should feel sympathetic, and our hearts should go out to him, and our desire be strong to do him good and to help him to overcome the weaknesses of his earthen vessel.

It is in line with this thought that our Lord suggests that the proper course is for the aggrieved one to go quietly, without saying a word to anyone else, and have a kindly conference with the one who is doing him wrong, seeking to point out the merits and demerits of the question at issue, and if possible to gain the brother back to fellowship, righteousness, harmony with the Lord. If this shall be unavailing, the next step shall be still a secret one—the taking of two or three brethren of supposedly good heart and large experience, and that without attempting to prejudice their minds, and to ask these to hear the cause and to give counsel as to which one is in error. Whichever of the brethren is in error should be convinced by his fellow-pilgrims, whose arguments with him should be based upon the Scriptures and the spirit of love; but if differences still exist between them, and cannot be harmonized then, as a court of last resort, the matter should be taken before the church—the consecrated—and after being heard by the church, its decision should be considered final, and be accepted by all. If either of the brethren still have doubts as to his receiving justice in the matter he may console himself with the thought that he will surely obtain a blessing by giving full and hearty assent to the Lord's arrangements, even if he have so large a measure of self-conceit that he still believes his side of the question to be right, notwithstanding the judgment of all the brethren to the contrary.

Whoever will thus humble himself in obedience to the voice of the church will have a blessing, and as we understand the Lord, it will be reasonable for him to expect that the voice of the church in such a matter will be supernaturally guided, that truth and righteousness may triumph. But amongst the Lord's people, let us not forget that this is the highest tribunal, and that brother should not go to law with brother in the worldly courts, however much he may feel himself aggrieved: if he have the forgiving spirit he certainly will rest the matter where the Lord directs, and that too without harboring any unkind or ungenerous sentiments. This will be the certain effect of the indwelling of the spirit of holiness, the spirit of love.

In respect to dealings with those who are without, in the matter of forgiveness, believing husbands dealing with unbelieving wives or believing wives dealing with unbelieving husbands or believing persons in business relationship with unbelievers: the same spirit of love and generosity and forgiveness will apply in every case but not exactly the same way. The believer should be generous toward the unbeliever — he should expect in himself a larger measure of generosity than he would expect from the unbeliever because he has had lessons and experiences in the school of Christ which the unbeliever never had; he has received the new mind, which the unbeliever knows not of. He should not only, therefore, be just in his dealings, but additionally, in proportion as he may be able, he should be generous, forgiving, not too exacting.

However, if an unbelieving partner has attempted a fraud, the believing partner, while exercising a spirit of generosity toward him, if the matter appears to have been wilful, should deliver the offender to the world's courts, which he acknowledges, not prosecuting in a spirit of anger or malice or hatred, but as doing his duty toward society for the suppression of evil-doers in proportion as the laws and arrangements of the world are reasonable from a Christian standpoint. And even if he should fully forgive, concluding that there were extenuating circumstances which would not require that he should deliver the guilty one to the judges of earthly courts, he might properly enough esteem it to be his duty to have no further dealings with such a person, whom he could not trust. This would not imply any lack of forgivness, but merely a reasonable and commendable prudence.

Indeed, the consecrated people of God are admonished by the Apostle not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, and this might not unreasonably be applied, not only to marriage, but also to business engagements and alliances. Similarly the Apostle informs us that if the unbelieving husband or wife choose to depart from the believer, the latter may conclude that it is providential and for his deliverance from an unequal yoke, as the Apostle says, "Let the unbeliever depart"—permit *him* to cancel the marriage contract if he will.

THE PARABLE OF THE TWO DEBTORS

As was his custom, our Lord illustrated his teaching on this subject with a parable: the king, in the parable, first forgives one of his servants a very large indebtedness—that is, he permits him to go free, as tho he had no such indebtedness against him, that he might do what he could toward the payment of the debt. This servant in turn finds a fellow-servant who owes him a trifling sum, and who likewise promises its payment: but the unmerciful servant, not having the spirit of the king, is ungenerous and exacting, and refusing forgiveness attempts to exact it through force. The matter reaching the ears of the king, he is justly incensed at such conduct on the part of one who has himself been so generously treated, and, in consequence, he puts in operation the machinery of justice which will punish the unmerciful servant by now requesting of him the payment of his full debt; and our Lord followed the parable with the statement, "So likewise shall the heavenly Father do to you if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses."

Not only did our Lord address these words to the disciples and not to the multitude, but additionally he declared that the illustration was applicable to those reckoned members of his kingdom, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto" this parable. The parable, therefore, is not an illustration

of the Lord's dealings with the world of mankind, but rather an illustration of his dealings with those who have become separated from the world through the forgiveness of their sins, and who additionally have become heirs of the kingdom through consecration of themselves to the Lord Jesus, to suffer with him, if so be that they may also reign with him. The parable, therefore, is to the church, and suggests to us that our original sin was not blotted out, not forgiven in the absolute sense of the word forgiven, but in the language of the Scriptures, "covered." "Blessed is the man whose sin is covered, to whom the Lord doth not impute iniquity."—Psalm 32:1, 2; Acts 3:19.

Our sins were *covered* from the Lord's sight, and we were treated as tho we owed him nothing, by his grace, exercised toward us through Christ Jesus and his atoning sacrifice; and this reckoned forgiveness will be made actual by and by, and the debt entirely canceled, if, according to the *New Covenant we have made with the Lord, we shall prove faithful in cultivating his spirit of love and in becoming copies of his dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,—forgiving others as we would be forgiven by the Lord, loving, sympathizing with and helping others as we have been treated by the Lord, etc.

The parable is but an illustration of the Golden Text of our lesson, taken from the Lord's prayer: it is only so long as we are willing to forgive our debtors that we may pray with confidence to our heavenly Father and hope for his forgiveness of our trespasses. If we forgive not our fellow-creatures, and that not merely in word, but in deed and from the heart, neither will our heavenly Father forgive our trespasses, and although he has generously covered them from his sight, and treated us as justified by faith, he would immediately remember our trespasses against us, and thus our justification would lapse or be abrogated, by a failure on our part to exercise the holy spirit toward the brethren and toward all men as we have opportunity.

From this standpoint the question of forgiveness of the brethren and forgiveness of all others is a very serious one to the Lord's people. It means that if they do not in a reasonable time develop this spirit of forgiveness, the spirit of love, the Spirit of God, the holy Spirit, they cannot continue to be recognized as Christ's disciples, they cannot continue to be recognized as children of God, they cannot be recognized as having their sins covered, but, on the contrary, will be treated as even more responsible than the world of mankind in general, and have executed upon them severer punishments than will be exacted from others who knew not the Master's will, and who have never tasted of his grace, and who therefore would be less culpable in the exercise of a selfish, uncharitable, ungenerous, unforgiving spirit.

We cannot suppose, however, that the Lord would expect perfection in this matter at once, from those who are still but "babes" in Christ. But his expectations are reasonable, that we should grow in grace as we grow in knowledge of him, and as expressed in the lesson of the Vine and the Branches; every branch which in due time, after due opportunity, does not bring forth the fruitage of the vine, the grapes of love (including forgiveness), will be cut off by the great Husbandman,—no longer recognized as a branch. So in this parable, the one who had experienced such great blessing from the king, and who had been reckoned for the time an honored member of his kingdom-class, ceased to be so regarded and so treated, and, on the contrary, was treated by the king without favor.

The statement that the unmerciful servant would be delivered to the tormentors, until he should pay the uttermost farthing of his debt, might be understood in either of two ways. First, we might understand it to represent the original debt resting against every member of the human family —the penalty of death—a penalty from which our Lord Jesus redeemed all, and from which he proposes to set free all who will obey him. In this view of the matter the unmerciful servant's penalty would signify a delivery to the second death. Or if the debt be understood as representing, in whole or in part, the obligations of his covenant as a new creature, then the penalty upon him for failure to develop and manifest the characteristics of the new creature during the trial-time might be understood to signify that such an one, tho an accepted servant of the Lord, would be required to comply with the full details of his consecration vow, by going into the great time of trouble, and there meeting to the full the demands of his covenant, and learning effectually the lesson of love and sympathy, and to appreciate the grace of God in the forgiveness of sins, as he never before appreciated it. However, we are inclined to think of this matter from the first of these standpoints, that the exaction of the uttermost farthing would signify a hopeless case, in any of the Lord's people who, after experiencing divine favor in forgiveness of their own sins, should fail within a reasonable time to learn to exercise mercy and forgiveness toward the brethren,—that such would, as a result, suffer the second death.

The Lord's people very generally find themselves in considerable trouble along the line of justice. We all recognize justice as the very foundation of all order and righteousness, and when we feel that justice is on our side, it is proportionately the more difficult to freely forgive the person whom we believe to have been acting from the standpoint of injustice. There is a general tendency to require others to measure up to our standard of justice, by some sort of penance, before we forgive them. It is against this very spirit that our Lord was teaching, and to counteract which he gave this parable. We are to remember that the Lord will require us to live up to the standards we set for others. If our standard in dealing with others be one of exact *justice*, we may expect no mercy at the Lord's hands. (See James 2:13) And what would this mean as respects the sins that are past through the forbearance of God, and what would it mean as respects the obligations upon us every day and every hour, to whose full requirements we are unable to measure? As we cannot come to the Lord ourselves on the score of justice, so we are not to deal with others upon that standard. As we must ask of the Lord mercy, grace, forgiveness, so we must be willing to extend to others mercy, grace, forgiveness, when they trespass against us; and as heartily, quickly and freely as we ourselves hope for.

The Lord has not laid down this rule in an arbitrary fashion, as simply saying, If you do not forgive others I will not forgive you. There is a deeper reason for it than this. He wishes to develop in us his own spirit, his own character, a likeness or copy of which was exhibited to us in the person and life of his dear Son, our Lord Jesus. It is absolutely essential, therefore, that we shall have the character he desires, or else we can never attain to the joint-heirship in the kingdom which he is pleased to extend. Hence we are to understand that this requirement or command of forgiveness, etc., is with a view to develop us as copies of his dear Son, in order that he may bestow upon us, in due time, all the riches of his grace, contained in the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word.

* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants

"WHO DID SIN, THIS MAN OR HIS PARENTS?"

AUGUST 19.—JOHN 9:1-17.

Every traveler in eastern countries is sure to be impressed by the fact that blindness is much more common there than in Europe and America. Tabulated information on this subject, in *Encyclopedia Americana*, shows that in 1870 the proportion of blind in America was one in 1900 population; in Europe the proportion was larger, *viz.*, one in 1094; while in China the average was one in 400 population. According to no less an authority than Dr. Geikie, Egypt has one blind person to every 100 of population. Palestine lying near to Egypt, and having conditions very similar, especially amongst the lower classes, may be supposed to have had at least half as many, *viz.*, the terribly large proportion of one in every 200 of population.

Canon Tristan, writing on the subject, says:—

"Blindness is common in Palestine to a degree which we in western lands can scarcely realize. There is probably no country in the world, except Egypt, where this affliction is so prevalent. At Gaza, for instance, it is said that one-third of the population have lost one or both eyes; and from my own observation in that city I should unhesitatingly say that the statement is not exaggerated. But amongst these cases it is difficult to find any born blind."

This blindness is in great measure the result of the scarcity of water and the neglect of children, whose eyes are in consequence attacked by the flies. The miracle brought to our attention in this lesson differs from the five other instances of the healing of the blind by our Lord, mentioned in the Scriptures, in that this man was born blind. In our Lord's time the science of surgery had not advanced so far as at present, and consequently, as herein stated by the one healed,

the cure was a marvel, the like of which had never been heard of. Even yet we believe that there are only five cases on record of successful operations upon those born blind. Our Lord's cure of such blindness, with the simple prescription used, would therefore be a remarkable miracle today, and much more so was it in that day.

ORIENTALISM, MORMONISM, THEOSOPHY

The question of the disciples, whether it was this man's sin or the sin of his parents that caused him to be born blind, implies either an extreme simplicity on their part, not to see that the man could not have sinned before his birth, or quite possibly it implied that some of the absurd notions of the far East—of India—had reached the Jews: one of these was and still is that each child born into the world had a previous existence, in which it had done either good or evil, the rewards or punishments of which were represented in the conditions of the present life. This absurdity is being revived, even in Christian lands, by so-called Theosophists, and by two bodies of people known as "Mormons," in the United States. It is scarcely necessary to point out that such a theory finds no support whatever in any statement of the Scriptures. Quite to the contrary, it is most emphatically contradicted by the Scriptures, which declare man's creation to have been a direct creation from God—not a reincarnation of some being which had previously existed. This thought is consistently maintained throughout the Bible, in that we are distinctly told that the child receives its life from its father, and inherits good or evil according to his course of life, and not according to any course of life of its own in a previous condition or in another world. Thus the Lord declares that he visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation, and shows mercy unto thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments.—Exod. 20:5; Deut. 5:9, 10.

This heredity, we see, comes in the natural order of things. The tendency of sin is not only to break down the moral character, but also to vitiate and impair the physical system, while godliness, altho it cannot repair and make good the impairments of sin, can check these, and hold them measurably in restraint. The Scriptures again contradict this thought, in the declaration, "By one man's disobedience, sin entered into the world, and death as a result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men because [thus] all men became sinners"—by heredity. And if by heredity then not as Theosophy, Mormonism and Orientalism declare;—not in consequence of some previous existence and sin on the part of the child.

The whole matter is squared by the doctrine of the *ransom*, as all may readily see: for if our present blemishes, with which we are born into this world, were the results of sins committed in some previous condition of existence, the death of our Lord Jesus could not cancel them, and the doctrine of a ransom would be disproved. The doctrine of the ransom is unchangeably linked to the doctrine that Adam was a perfect human being in his creation, and that it was *his sin* and condemnation that passed to all of his posterity, through the channel of natural birth. The ransom (*"corresponding price"*) given by our Lord Jesus(was a man's life for a man's life: that, "as *by a man* came death, *by a man* also should come the resurrection of the dead." Our Lord's ransom sacrifice, being the complete and corresponding price and offset to father Adam's sin, was constituted thereby an offset to all the results of his sin as they appear in his posterity—and thus we all were redeemed by the one sacrifice of Christ, the just for the unjust.

IS ALL SICKNESS OF THE DEVIL?

An increasingly large number of Christian people—including those who refuse medicines—are reaching the conclusion that all sickness is the direct result of sin and the work of the devil; and therefore that godly living will prevent sickness: and that in the event of sickness, if it be punishment for sin, medicines should not be used, but, on the contrary, prayer should be made to God for the forgiveness of sin for which sickness is a punishment, and that the cure of the disease should be expected as a reward of repentance and faith exercised.

We wonder how these Christian friends view this lesson. Like the disciples, they evidently would conclude that a man born blind must have been so born on account of sin—if not his own sin, the sins of his parents—for they account for all disease from this standpoint. Unfortunately they feel so satisfied with their conclusions on the subject that they do not inquire of the Lord, as did the apostles. And they do not hear his answer here given—that it was neither sin on the part of the man, nor on the part of his parents, which occasioned his blindness.

If they were students of the Word they would note also the numerous statements of Scripture which clearly point out that calamities are not always punishments for sins: for instance, our Lord's declaration respecting the Galileans whose blood was mingled with the sacrifices, and those upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them. (Luke 13:1-5) Our Lord distinctly declares that these calamities did not indicate that the sufferers were sinners above other men. Likewise, in the case of the sickness and death of Lazarus. Our Lord declares, not that it was because of sin on the part of Lazarus, but that it was permitted in order to be for the glory of God. So in this lesson he declares that the fact that the man was born blind was not on account of sin, but on the contrary, "that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

We are not denying that sin frequently brings sickness; on the contrary, we affirm this, and confirm this view with our Lord's words to some of those whom he healed, "Go sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." There is a great difference, however, between claiming that all sickness is of sin and the devil, and admitting that much of it is produced or intensified by sin. We go even further than this, and admit that in a general way all the blemishes of the present time may be indirectly traced to our great adversary, Satan. For had it not been for his fall, and for the temptations which he presented to our first parents, we may suppose that there would have been no sin in the world; consequently no imperfection, no sighing, no crying, no dying. But it is thoroughly wrong to credit to Satan's power all the difficulties which we experience. We are glad indeed that he is limited and restrained; because under the weaknesses with which we are born we find quite sufficient of evil disposition and weakness received by heredity, and operating, not only between parent and child, but between neighbor and neighbor. We may be glad indeed that Satan's power to deceive is not permitted to vitiate our minds contrary to our wills, and not permitted to break down our wills, except as we give them over to sympathy and contact with evil things. We may be glad also that sickness and death working in man are not wholly subject to the prince of darkness, for altho the Scriptures declare that Satan's power is deathward, they also show us that he does not have this power unlimitedly, but can exercise it only under restraints and restrictions. This is most clearly indicated to us in the case of Job and his family. Rather, the Scriptures teach that Satan's power or influence is the result of the Adamic death operating in mankind and rendering all amenable to Satan's devices and deceptions.—Heb. 2:14.

And, by the way, Job's case is another illustration of sickness and calamities of various kinds which were not the punishments of sin; for have we not Job's own testimony of his love for God, his confidence in him, and his faithful reliance upon him? "Tho he slay me, yet will I trust in him!" And more, we have the Lord's testimony to the same effect, in favor of his servant, Job, and in reproof of his friends who wrongly represented that his sickness and calamities were punishments for sin.

We conclude, then, upon Scriptural grounds, that not all sickness is in the nature of sin penalties, but that some sicknesses are as penalties. Hence, when the Christian shall find himself overtaken with sickness or other disasters, he should first of all inquire of himself, before the Lord, whether or not his difficulties are the result of—

(1) A direct violation of the laws of his reason, as for instance, indiscretion in eating, gratification of the appetite in respect to food which he knows is not suited to his physical conditions: or violation of recognized principles of conduct, as, for instance, the endorsing of a note, contrary to the instruction of the Lord's Word (Prov. 6:1, 2), which has brought disaster to many. If he does not find his troubles to be the result of personal *indiscretion* he should look—

(2) To see whether or not *sin* lies at his door; whether or not he has been living inconsistently, and might properly recognize his sickness or trouble as a punishment for his sin, his inconsistency. If he finds it to be so, he should of course immediately rectify the wrong to the extent of his ability and seek forgiveness, mercy, at the throne of the heavenly grace, and expect that after suffering some chastisements he will be released.

(3) Should he fail to find a cause for his difficulties in either of the foregoing, he should consider that quite possibly his difficulty, whatever its nature, was one of the ordinary casualties of life from which God does not wholly fore-

fend his children—desiring them to walk by faith and not by sight: such casualties are necessary, that we may be very sympathetic with the world's troubles.

(4) In some instances, as in Job's case and the case before us in this lesson, troubles may ultimately be found to have been *permitted* by the Lord, to be channels of mercy and blessing, if rightly received, as in these cases.

(5) In all troubles, whether for discipline or for instruction in righteousness and the development of character, the children of God (and we are not considering others now) should forthwith begin to seek the blessing which they may be sure God has in store for them when he permits adversities. And this should not hinder their use of any means for relief upon which they can conscientiously ask the divine blessing: on the same principle that we labor for and eat the daily bread for which we pray, and which is none the less of divine provision.

The work of God made manifest in this blind man was not merely in the miracle performed upon his natural eyes. It extended beyond this, and testified to the beholders the power of God, operating in Messiah. And it extended still further, in the case of the man who was healed: leading to the opening of the eyes of his understanding, it inducted him into discipleship to Christ. Had he not been born blind, had he not passed through just the experiences through which he did pass, how can we judge that he would have been in a better condition of heart to receive the Messiah than the educated Pharisees, who, with good natural sight, were thoroughly blinded respecting Messiah, his teachings and his work, so that they crucified him?

And so it is in many instances with many who become the Lord's people. Looking back they can clearly see that things which at the time seemed to be adversities, disappointments, troubles, disadvantages, hardships, were really great blessings, in that they led to the opening of the eyes of their understanding,—were really providences and blessings in disguise. Those who do so realize the divine care, looking back can praise the way God has led them day by day.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MISBELIEFS

Amongst the various false doctrines of today none appears more inconsistent from the standpoint of science and Christianity, than the system which brazenly and defiantly, and in perversion of truth and conscience unites these two words as its name. It would be amusing, we may be sure, to hear one of the devotees of this theory explain this Scripture. For, notwithstanding the fact that their entire system is in opposition to the Scriptures, they make a cloak, a pretense, of believing the Scriptures, and of using them in support of their theory—chiefly with novices. We may be sure that they would attempt to twist and juggle it in some manner, and get it so far away from the truth and the subject as at least to confuse many people, who have very little knowledge of the Bible and shallow powers of reasoning, especially those "who have not their senses exercised by reason of use," in connection with Scriptural subjects.—Heb. 5:14.

Their theory is that there is no such thing as blindness, that it is simply a mistaken thought, a misbelief: since the parents of the blind man could not have misbelieved that their child would be born blind, the child itself, we presume they would say, got this misimpression before its birth. And then we have the inconsistency increased, for every one of intelligence knows that the infant at birth has no thought, correct or incorrect, on any subject. The fallacy of this theory is likewise proven, in the case of those born deaf and dumb. But argument and reason have no more force with "Christian Scientists" than have the Scriptures. Their infatuation with their delusion is so great that they are fully prepared to wrest facts, reason, and Scriptures—and then, in perversion of all truth and consistency, they call this "Christian Science."

We are not contending with them respecting their use of the word "Science," for the most stupid should be able to see that there is nothing scientific in connection with their theory: but we do contend respecting their use of the word "Christian," because many do not recognize that they have not the slightest right to the use of this term. Our contention is that a Christian Scientist of full development, cannot be a Christian in any Scriptural sense of the word.

(1) A Christian is one who believes in God the Father, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent to be a propitiation for our sins, our Redeemer, and ultimately the Deliverer of all these who obey him. But Christian Science denies the very existence of God, claiming to believe merely in a *principle* of Good. To whatever extent a man has a good principle, the God-quality is in him, say they; and to whatever extent a horse or a dog may have the good principles, to that extent these are Gods, and to be loved, etc., accordingly. Denying the Father, they of course deny also the Son whom he sent: and altho they acknowledge Jesus, it is not with a Christian acknowledgement. On the contrary, they hold that he was merely a member of the Adamic family, and that his preëminence above others was in respect to his character and teachings. And they claim that while, in these respects, he stood higher than other men of his day, yet he but feebly grasped at certain principles or truths which are today brought to the world by her distinguished highness, "Mrs Dr. Eddy," who thus poses as being greater than Jesus, as an elephant is greater than a mouse; tho there be certain resemblances.

(2) A Christian is one who believes in Christ as a Saviour from sin as well as from its consequences;—death and its concomitants of pain, etc. But Christian Scientists deny that there is any sin, and deny also, that there are any consequences of sin; hence, logically, they deny the ransom, for how could there be a *ransom* for sinners, if none are sinners? Thus do they deny and ignore the very *foundation* of Christian faith, without which no one is a Christian—Scripturally.

The absurdities of Christian Science commend themselves only to those who are either Scripturally ignorant, or mentally weak; and their chief attractions are therefore—

(1) The fact that they put on, as a garment of light, gentleness and kindness of word and manner. That these do not grow out of hearts thoroughly converted to the Lord, and begotten of his spirit of love, is manifest: for altho kindness and patience and gentleness are manifested, the true essence of these is lacking, namely, love. Instead of manifesting love to be the mainspring of their meekness, patience, gentleness, they manifest ambition and money-love as their inspiring motives—so far as we are able to judge the tree by its fruits. So far as we are able to learn, their efforts to promulgate their views are confined to those who are able and willing to *pay* for the instruction good round prices; and so far as we are able to discern, their care of the sick shows a love of money, and love of fame; and hence very few of the poor of this world have been injured by the doctrines of Christian Science, or cured of disease by its treatment.

(2) The cure of disease without medicine, and sometimes almost miraculously, is in the nature of things calculated to attract and interest the "groaning creation"—just as the advertisements of patent medicines attract them. We unhesitatingly assert our conviction, that this power, manifested through Christian Scientists, is not of God, but of the adversary, directly, or indirectly. He no doubt directs his servants into the use of channels and means of which humanity in general, and even many learned physicians, are comparatively ignorant—channels of human nature, which, possibly, in the future may be used by the Lord during the times of restitution of all things. Our justification in ascribing their cures to an evil source, instead of to a good source, lies in the fact that they utterly repudiate the principles of Christianity, and we may be sure God would not coöperate to assist with his power those who deny his very existence, and who make void the gospel of the redemption through the blood of Christ. The miracle-working power in them we believe to be the same as the miracle-working power in Spiritism and in Orientalism, and in the charms of other Occultists—namely, Satanic power.

If it be asked, How could Satan be interested in doing a good work? we answer: He does no such work amongst those who are thoroughly and stupidly ignorant: he is doing these works merely in the most civilized lands, and especially amongst the most enlightened of the people in the various denominations of Christendom. The adversary thus assumes the garment of an angel of light and mercy, not to lead to the Light of the world—not to lead to the cross of Christ—not to lead to the Bible—but to lead away from these, to another hope of salvation, and to another teacher: to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. And be it remembered that our Lord's words indicate that when matters come to this condition, where Satan will cast out Satan and heal disease, it is a marked evidence that his throne is tottering to its fall—that, so to speak, this is the last extremity of the adversary's efforts to deceive.

* * *

The Lord's method of giving sight to the blind man, we may reasonably suppose, was parabolic—that is to say, it contains a lesson under a figure. Since our Lord did not

explain the significance of his action in making a clay ointment out of dust with his spittle, and anointing the man's eyes with this, and sending him to wash them and receive sight at the Pool of Siloam, we may exercise our mental powers in thinking of what these different things would signify. But we are limited in our speculations, nevertheless, and may not run wild, but must restrain ourselves within the limits of plain statements of the Word of God respecting his plan of salvation.

In harmony with these plain statements we may interpret our Lord's symbolical act thus: The blind man would fitly represent the world of mankind in general, who during the present life are mentally blind—who cannot now see the goodness, mercy, and love of God as these may be recognized by others who are now able to see them. His being born blind would harmonize with this thought, for the blindness that is upon the world is, to a large extent at least, a matter of heredity. His blindness does not represent a blindness on the part of those who have once seen God's grace, represented in his Word and plan, and who have then become blind thereto, and who would represent the class mentioned by the Apostle as having once been enlightened, and who subsequently lose that enlightenment. (Heb. 6:4-6) If then the blind man represents the blind world (who do not see, in the sense that the church sees, of whom the Lord said, "Blessed are your eyes for they see"), the time of the healing of such blindness is in the Millennial age, as Scripturally pointed out, when "All the blind eyes shall be opened, and the deaf ears unstopped." (Isa. 35:5) And this agrees with the conditions of our Lord's miracle, because we are informed that this miracle took place on the Sabbath, or seventh day, which corresponds to, and typifies the Millennial day, the seventh-thousand year period.

Our Lord's words, nevertheless, seem to indicate that some part of this symbolical picture relates to the present age, for he said, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh wherein no man can work." In this statement the word "day" would seem to belong to the present time, and to be illustrated in the making of clay with our Lord's spittle, and the anointing of the blind man's eyes. The washing of his eyes and the cure would seem to belong to the next age, the Millennial age. The Lord's spittle, the secretions of his mouth, might represent the truth as fitly as would the words of his mouth—it is another figure, but seemingly of the same force and meaning. He uttered the truth, brought it in contact with the dust of the earth—not in contact with all the dust of the earth, but with a limited portion, an elect or select portion,—and of this he made the anointing clay. The Scriptures do inform us, in harmony with this, that the Word of God's grace, delivered through and by our Lord Jesus, is designed in the present age to act upon a small fragment of humanity, and to consecrate them and make them meet for the Master's use in the blessing of the world, in the anointing of the eyes of the blind. From this standpoint of view, the making of the clay would represent the formation of the elect church for the blessing of the poor, blind world. And, quite possibly, not only in this work of making the clay now in progress, but perhaps some portion of the anointing work is now being done, as is intimated by the Scripture which declares that the Gospel must first be *preached for a witness* in all the world, before the end of this age. The world must be witnessed to during this age, but the world will not have the eyes of its understanding opened during this age: it must wait until the great washing time of the Millennial age, of which the Scriptures declare, "In *that day* there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David for sin and for uncleanness." (Zech. 13:1) In full agreement with this is the significance of the word Siloam. It signifies "The sending forth," or "The fountain."

The Pharisee objected to the Lord's goodness, because, forsooth, it infracted some of their hypercritical dogmas and traditions. This is interesting, as showing to what extent religious forms and ceremonies may bind and blind intelligent and reverential people. And this should be a lesson to all the intelligent and reverent, leading them to great care in judging righteous judgment, according to the standard of the divine Word, and not according to their prejudices and revered creeds, and the traditions of the fathers.

Still another lesson may be found in the fact that the man who confessed our Lord Jesus, and who stood up in bold defence of righteousness, was greatly blessed, in that after he had thus demonstrated his loyalty to principle, and had suffered as a result excommunication from the church—*then the Lord found him.* Thus his faithfulness under trials and difficulties, and his willingness to suffer the loss of earthly fellowship and honor amongst men, led directly to a still greater blessing, even direct fellowship and communion with the Lord himself. How many are there whose mental eyes have been opened to the truth, who have been so loyal to the Lord and so appreciative of his goodness as to be faithful in declaring the facts? How many of these have found that such faithfulness means separation from the synagogue, from the church nominal? How many of these have feared to lose prestige and influence, through confessing the light of present truth? But all who have followed the noble course of thankfulness, loyalty, and obedience to God, have found that such obedience, while it led to a loss of fellowship in the nominal church, led also to a greater fellowship and communion, and a more intimate acquaintance with the Lord himself.

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"LET US DRAW NEAR"

"Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil, and our bodies sprinkled with pure water."—Heb. 10:22.

Not to sinners is this invitation addressed. The invitation to them is a very different one, *viz.*,—Repent, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus obtain the remission of your sins, and then you will be in the attitude to receive the invitation, Draw near to God. The Apostle is addressing those who have already believed unto justification, receiving to themselves the benefits of the Lord's promise, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Verse 17) The Apostle is addressing the brethren, and not sinners, and urges them, saying, "Having therefore, *brethren*, boldness [courage, confidence, privilege] to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, ... let us draw near."

The Apostle's words carry our attention to Israel's Tabernacle in the wilderness, and the spiritual things which it illustrated The Court, entered through the gate, signified the state or condition of the justified, who must pass the Altar representing Christ's sacrifice for sins; secondly, approach the Laver of water for cleansing from defilements; and then be ready to pass under the first Vail into the apartment of the Tabernacle called "The Holy." This "Holy" apartment represented the state or condition of God's *consecrated* people (typified by Israel's priests) while yet in the flesh, and had its Golden Candlestick for their enlightenment, its table of Shewbread, representing their privilege of fellowship with God,—drawing near to him in prayer, praise and communion. The next step beyond the "Holy" was the "Most Holy," representing heaven itself; but this could be entered only from the "Holy" and by passing under the Second Vail, which represented the actual death of the priest, even as the First Vail represented the reckoned death or consecration. The Apostle has this same thought in mind when elsewhere he mentions the consecrated Royal Priesthood as "seated together with Christ in heavenly places"'—in the heavenly condition, the condition represented by the first apartment or "Holy" of the Tabernacle and of the Temple.

PRIVILEGES OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

It is in reference to this proposition to advance from the "Court" condition of justification into the "Holy" or heavenly or spirit-begotten condition, reached through consecration (and the closest possible approach to God) that the Apostle urges, "Let us draw near." His language implies that there may properly be a diffidence on our part in respect to this privilege. We might properly hesitate to expect to have communion, fellowship, close approach to the great Creator, realizing that by nature we are imperfect, "children of wrath, even as others," and that in whatever degree we differ from others and are accounted worthy of such a privilege of drawing near to God, it is not on account of personal worth on our part, but on account of God's grace bestowed upon us through Jesus our Lord. The Apostle therefore speaks to believers in

an encouraging voice: "Let us draw near;" let us have courage to draw near; let us have faith in God, who has made us such gracious arrangements and promises.

The Apostle intimates that a close approach to God cannot be effected, except we have first a "full assurance of faith." Only those who trust the Lord implicitly, "as a little child" (Luke 18:17) would trust its earthly parent, can expect to progress and to have the courage, the confidence, necessary to approach God in this very intimate manner; and the desire to draw nearer and nearer to God must be in the justified believer's heart, else he will never go on and attain to this his privilege. And this desire to draw near to God is a manifestation of our hunger and thirst after righteousness, which the Lord expects to see before he fulfils to such his engagement that they shall be filled, satisfied.—Matt. 5:6.

Satisfaction will not be attained fully in the present life, tho the believer who progresses and draws nearer and nearer to God will have more and more of this satisfaction to the end of his journey in the present life, receiving the full measure of satisfaction in righteousness and perfection on the other side the vail. Similarly, in our drawing near to God, we may continue to draw nearer and nearer to him, as we obtain deeper experience in his grace, growing also in knowledge and love in the present life; but the full attainment of our privilege of drawing near to God will not be reached until we shall have passed the Second Vail—passed through death, and been changed from human to spirit beings, and have entered into heaven itself, the perfect heavenly condition. There and then we shall be fully at one with the heavenly Father and with our Lord Jesus, having drawn near to the full extent of the invitation and to the full of the opportunities granted us in the new and living way, the narrow way to life, consecrated for us, through the vail, by our Lord's death as our ransom price.

There are, however, certain conditions specified as necessary to progress along these lines. As no one can draw near to God except by attaining a "full assurance of faith," neither can he have a full assurance of faith unless he have his "heart sprinkled from a consciousness of evil," for, as the Apostle elsewhere declares, "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart." (1 John 3:20) We may be sure that if our course as new creatures is condemned by our own consciences it would also be condemned by God. Whoever, therefore, would make progress in drawing near to God must seek continually to have a "conscience void of offense toward God and man" (Acts 24:16):—a conscience that is clear, that can say, I am striving to do that which would be pleasing to God, in harmony with my covenant of self-sacrifice, and I am striving to do that which would be approved also by righteous men. Nothing short of this is at all permissible in those who have consecrated themselves to be royal priests, to offer themselves as living sacrifices in the Lord's service, and to draw near to him in the name and under the merit of the great High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

HAVING OUR HEARTS SPRINKLED

How very much is implied in this expression, "Having our hearts sprinkled from a consciousness of evil!" It not only means that we are to avoid sin, and to take heed that the words of our mouth and the meditations of our hearts are acceptable to the Lord, but it means additionally that our hearts, having covenanted self-sacrifice, shall be able to look up to the Lord confidently and realize his blessing and approval, because of the honest, earnest efforts on our part to comply with the terms of our consecration. But since we cannot fully comply with the terms ourselves, it is requisite that we shall apply to ourselves by faith the merit of the precious blood of Christ, the blood of sprinkling, the blood of consecration, and that we shall realize that our acceptance is only in the Beloved One.

WASHED WITH PURE WATER

The expression, "Having our bodies washed with pure water," figuratively represents the continued process of "cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord," elsewhere enjoined by the Apostle. (2 Cor. 7:1) By nature we are all imperfect, sullied, more or less depraved; and our devotion to the Lord is manfested, first, by our full acceptance and full assurance of faith in the merits of Christ's sacrifice; and secondly, by our earnest efforts to put away from our flesh, as we have already put away from our hearts, all things defiling and displeasing in the Lord's sight: that thus we may more and more become copies of his dear Son, our Lord. This "washing of water through the Word" is elsewhere represented (Eph. 5:26) in a similar manner as being a part of the duty and privilege of all of the Lord's people throughout the remainder of their earthly lives. And we can see how beautiful is the illustration here used, that the Word of God, like water, is purifying, cleansing; as the Apostle declares, speaking of the Christian's good hopes in the precious promises once delivered to the saints, "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [who called him] is pure."—1 John 3:3.

As it is necessary to a thorough cleansing of our natural bodies that we should wash with "*pure* water," so much the more is it necessary to this cleansing of which the Apostle speaks, the cleansing of our moral characters, that we should have the *pure* water of divine truth, and not the muddy and polluted teachings of the adversary, or of those whom he has blinded. And as we look about us upon the many streams of Babylon—the various sectarian theologies which profess to be the truth—we find that altho there is something of truth in them all, yet it is sadly befouled and wholly incapable of cleansing their votaries from filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit,—wholly incapable of perfecting them in holiness of the kind which the Lord requires. For instance, false ideas of God and of his character and his plan are incentives to those who so believe to copy these misrepresentations and perversions of justice and love, and are well calculated to develop in the devotees of such a theory a low standard of character, because the low standard which they set for themselves and other fellow-mortals is really higher than that which they ascribe to the Creator.

How important, then, is the truth, and how much meaning we find in our dear Redeemer's prayer to the Father on our behalf,—"Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth." Let us not attempt to sanctify ourselves through any other washing than this; let us not be satisfied with anything short of the "pure water," the pure Word of God, the pure truth.

"YE ARE COMPLETE IN HIM"—Col. 2:10

Now view the class described by the Apostle: they are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus accepted with the Father through the Beloved One. More than this, to them has been opened up the narrow way to life, consecrated, made possible, through the sacrifice offered by our great High Priest They are invited to become under-priests, sharers both of the sufferings, and also later on, if faithful, sharers of the glories of Jesus, the Chief Priest of this order. As a means of attaining the glorious end of their calling they are to cleanse themselves from defilement, and for their use in this respect the Word of God has been provided: it is at once a *mirror* to show them their blemishes, and *water* wherewith to cleanse themselves—the stimulus for the correction of life being the exceeding great and precious promises set before them in the Scriptures. Their hearts, justified by faith, and honest before God, are fully consecrated to him and to his service, and are to be so kept continually—by obedience to the best of their knowledge and opportunities, and by the blood of sprinkling which covers unintentional errors and failures. This is the class that is called to be associated with the Lord in his kingdom; they are styled his brethren, the royal priesthood, the bride, the Lamb's wife, and various other names representing their near and dear relationship to the heavenly Father: and all of these who are faithful to the end of the race-course are to be made partakers of the divine nature, with its glory, honor and immortality.

But let us not deceive ourselves in this matter of having hearts that do not condemn us; let us remember that our covenant was unto sacrifice and not unto self-preservation; that it was a covenant to lay our all upon the altar—time, influence, means of every kind; and that we agreed with our Lord that we would reckon this our reasonable service. Do our hearts condemn us in this matter, or do they justify us? Do we feel that we are doing all in our power to serve the Lord and his truth and our brethren? If so, let us rejoice, and let us continue in the same way, patiently hoping for the glorious results promised to the faithful. But if our hearts condemn us, let us not be discouraged; but on the contrary remember that this is a part of the cleansing of the flesh and of the spirit necessary to our preparation for the kingdom, and let us afresh bind our sacrifices to the altar (Psa. 118:27), and be more and more zealous in expending our little all in the service of him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood. Thus doing, it will be our privilege day by day to draw nearer and nearer to the "Most Holy," and thus finishing our course with joy we shall have share in the first resurrection, awakening in our Lord's likeness.—2 Cor. 5:14,15; Rom. 6:5; 1 John 3:2; Psa. 17:15.

THE PILGRIM HARVEST SERVICE

We will be glad to have at once *postal card* requests for Pilgrim visits from all parts of the United States and Canada. (British friends please address *cards* to our British branch office, London.) We are re-arranging our "Pilgrim" routes and want the following information in few words on postal cards (not letters) for easy reference. Remember that these "Pilgrim" visits involve no expense for the Pilgrim or his traveling expenses—all of which are borne by the Society. We merely request entertainment for the Pilgrim during his two or three days' stay. Answer the questions by number as follows:—

(1) Do you hope for *public meetings*,—as well as for private ones for those already interested?

(2) Could and would the friends secure the use of a school or church building or a public hall if *public* meetings are desired?

(3) Would a suitable room in a private house be provided for the private meetings?

(4) How many friends of present truth reside in your vicinity? (5) How many of these have been consulted and concur in the answers you are sending us? (6) How many of these are WATCH TOWER readers? (7) Do you now meet regularly for worship and study of the Word, as per Hebrews 10.25?

Most of these questions can be answered by either Yes or No or by figures. Number your answers, and add whatever may seem expedient, but do not crowd the card and make it difficult to read and understand.

THE GREAT SHEPHERD AND HIS SON, THE GOOD SHEPHERD

JOHN 10:1-16.—AUGUST 26.

"The Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

David, the Psalmist, wrote prophetically, "Jehovah is my shepherd, I shall not want" (Psa. 23); for in David's day the arrangements for the Shepherd and the flock of this lesson had not been completed. True, the heavenly Father had purposed his entire plan as respects humanity's redemption and return to his care as his flock, but he had not yet sent his only begotten Son, the Good Shepherd, to give his life for the sheep, to call the flock, to open the door and to lead them out and into pasturage and to rest. Nevertheless, in the Lord's providence the nation of Israel had already been gathered, as those who would be prepared to be the flock of the Good Shepherd when he should come. These were "shut up under the law" (Gal. 3:23), waiting for the coming of the Good Shepherd to open the door and to call them by name as his own sheep. Others, indeed, came before the Messiah, affecting to be the true shepherd, leaders sent of God but they were mere pretenders, who sought their own good and glory, and not that of the sheep. They were thieves and robbers, who sought to gain possession of the sheep for their own selfish ends.

The "porter" (representing the law) would not recognize any of these pretenders, nor approve them, nor open to them access to the sheep. But when the true Shepherd came he satisfied the law (the porter), and bought the sheep from justice, giving his own life as their redemption price. Thus he gained the full right to open the door, the full sanction of the porter, the full authority to lead forth the sheep to the green pastures and still waters of divine truth which then became due to them.

At the time of the giving of this parable our Lord was laying down his life, and at the same time uttering his voice, that the true sheep might learn to know him. And not only will all the true sheep learn to know the Shepherd, but, precious thought! the Shepherd knoweth his own sheep individually, so that he calleth each by name as he leads them out. This suggests to us the intimacy of the relationship between Christ and each member of his flock.

The treatment of sheep in this part of the world is very different from that described in the parable, which is still maintained in Oriental countries. Here sheep are driven, and have little or no acquaintance with the herdsmen. But in Palestine, for instance, every sheep has a personal acquaintance with its shepherd and he with it, and it is said that this acquaintance is so particular that the shepherds have a separate name for each sheep, and know each individually by its name; and that the sheep knows its own name and will respond to a call from its own shepherd at any time. How beautifully this illustrates the close relationship between Christ and his flock, the church! He gives to each one of us a new name, and we are each personally known to him—our peculiarities of character, temperament, etc., our strong points and our weaknesses—he knoweth them all. He loves us, cares for us, helps us over our trials and difficulties, and shields us from the temptations which would be too strong for us. "He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape," and causes that "all things work together for good to them that love God, the called ones according to his purpose"—his "little flock" of this Gospel age.

We note also the care of the Shepherd over the sheep, for he says, "He putteth forth his own sheep and goeth before them." The words "putteth forth" have the significance of looking after them, that they all get started in the way to the green pastures and still waters for soul refreshment. He is not heedless, careless, respecting them, whether they go or do not go; nevertheless, having started them in the way he will not drive them: he goeth before them to lead, that they may follow. Our Good Shepherd has indeed set us a noble example, so that we may walk in his steps; and whoever will, to the extent of his ability, trustfully do this, will find his wants abundantly supplied, for "No good thing will he [the Shepherd] withhold from those who [thus] walk uprightly." "He will guide them with his counsel, and afterward receive them to glory."—Psa. 84:11; 73:24.

Our Lord's parable does not tell us about the disciplines which the sheep are sure to receive, but these are set before us in the prophetic psalm on the subject, in the words, "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." The thought is that the Shepherd, while going before and not driving the sheep, nevertheless has such an interest and care that he will not suffer one of the sheep to wander away without administering certain chastisement designed for its good, and to correct it and to bring it back into fellowship in the flock. This is a comfort, and yet it should certainly be the desire of all true sheep to follow the Shepherd so closely that the rod shall not often be necessary.

The link between the Shepherd and the sheep, as here indicated, is love. The Shepherd loves the sheep, and has demonstrated this in having laid down his life for them; and the sheep speedily learn to love the Shepherd, as their care-taker; they recognize him through his voice—the Word of God. This voice appeals to the hearts of all the true sheep, who quickly respond, "Never man spake as this man."

The voice of the good shepherd is a blending of various sounds in a manner in which they are blended by no other voice. His voice sounds forth the chord of justice commingled with the chord of love, and the whole intoned with wisdom and with power. Other theories, plans and schemes of men and devils, have no such harmony of sound as has the message which the great Shepherd has sent us through his Son. His voice speaks to us of a just penalty for sins—death; it speaks of love, in our redemption and the forgiveness of our sins, and the opening to us of the way of life, through resurrection. This "word of grace" constrains all the true sheep as no other message or voice could do. Moreover, when the true sheep hear the voice of the Good Shepherd, it satisfies their longings as nothing else could do. They will no longer be in danger of being attracted by other sounds or voices, theories or schemes, but will reply to all,

"Jesus has satisfied; Jesus is mine."

There are many false voices in the world today, seeking to lead the Lord's sheep astray, and these are sometimes sounded in deceptive tones, to imitate the Shepherd's call, to draw away sheep after those who would be shepherds, but whom the great Shepherd has not appointed: shepherds who not only have not purchased the sheep, but who seek to ignore the great sacrifice by which the Good Shepherd did purchase them. We might mention many such false voices, or false would-be shepherds,—Christian Science, Theosopy, Spiritism, Evolution, Higher Criticism, etc., but we have the Good Shepherd's word for it, that his true sheep will not be deceived by any of these. Well do they know his voice, and its combination of justice, love, and mercy cannot be duplicated by others,—its message of redemption by the precious blood, justification by faith, the high calling, the begetting of the holy spirit, the by-and-by deliverance of the sons of God, and eventually of all who will obey him of the entire groaning creation, through restitution.

This voice, once heard, can never be mistaken for another; and those who know this Shepherd and his voice need never be misled by others. The Lord's true sheep, whom he knows by name and who follow him, will not heed the voice of strange shepherds, but will flee from them. They know when

they hear a false voice, that it means that the adversary is seeking to ensnare them; and such will flee from the voice of error that they may come the closer to the true Shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep. If, therefore, we see some whom we had supposed were of the Lord's flock heeding another voice and following after strange shepherds, and heedless of the voice that speaketh from heaven, we need not be fearful; for if they are true sheep of the Lord's flock they cannot long be deceived, if at all. We may indeed sound out the voice of the Good Shepherd, calling their attention afresh to the harmonies and beauties of the "voice from heaven," but if still they do not hear and heed, we may know that they do not belong to the flock which our Shepherd is now collecting and shepherding.

Amongst those who heard this parable from our Lord's lips, not many comprehended, not many had the hearing ear for the true Shepherd's voice: only a small proportion of the Jewish people followed him and became his true sheep. Similarly now, many are professing to be the true sheep of the Lord's flock, but in this day of the Shepherd's presence his voice, the truth, becomes the test. All of the true sheep will hear and be attracted by the voice of truth now uttered, and will obey it. Those who are not of the Good Shepherd's flock, and who have not his spirit, he desires shall now be separated; to this end they will hear the voice of other shepherds, and be deceived thereby: because they are not truly of the Lord's flock.

Dr. Porter tells of a scene he witnessed, in which several flocks of sheep were for a time commingled, and how, when the due time was come, the separation took place. He says:—

"As we sat and looked, almost spell-bound, the silent hillsides around were in a moment filled with life and sound. Thousands of sheep and goats were there, grouped in confused masses. The shepherds stood together until all came out, and then they separated, each shepherd taking a different path, and uttering, as he advanced, a shrill, peculiar call. The sheep heard them; at first the mass swayed and moved as if shaken by some internal convulsion; then points struck out in the directions taken by the shepherds. These became longer and longer, until the confused masses were resolved in long, living streams flowing after their leaders."

So at the present time there are many sheep in the nominal Church, but they are not all the Lord's sheep. Some belong to human leaders of various sects, and some are God's. The harvest, or end of this Gospel age, the time for separating the wheat from the tares, is the time for separating the different flocks of sheep. In harmony with this, we now hear various voices calling the sheep in various directions, as never before. This is, in the Lord's providence, for the purpose of separating all others from his own "little flock." His sheep will hear his voice and follow him—other sheep, consecrated to human leaders, human institutions, human theories, human efforts, will follow their own bents, and thus be separated from the "little flock," and this is now the Lord's good pleasure Thus he will "gather out of his kingdom all things that offend and them that do iniquity," before the glorifying of his church and the great time of trouble that will follow.

CHRIST THE DOOR OF GOD'S SHEEP-FOLD

As a further explanation of the matter, our Lord refers to himself as the Door of the sheep-fold, the lawful, proper entrance-gate, by which God's people might enter into rest. All who had ever come previously, claiming to be messiahs, had attempted to climb up by some other way than that of keeping the divine law and purchasing the sheep. They were thieves and robbers, attempting to take what they had not secured a right to, and that for selfish gain. But none of the true sheep would heed them nor follow them. Now, however, the Good Shepherd had come, and had purchased the sheep, opening a legal door of entrance to them and liberty for them, and it was appropriate that all of the true sheep should know it. Now it had become possible for the sheep to have in Christ the liberty so long desired, and to be led out and into pasturage and refreshment and to rest and security. Henceforth Jehovah's flock should never lack for pasturage; because, having bought them through his Son, they shall be cared for. They may now 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."

Others who had approached the sheep, seeking to be their leaders, had done so selfishly; had been willing to sacrifice the sheep in their own interest; but the Good Shepherd, solicitous for the best interests of the sheep, demonstrated this by the sacrifice of his own life on their behalf, that they might have life more abundant, better than they had ever known hitherto,—eternal life. Hireling shepherds labor for the hire, and not from personal interest in the sheep, and consequently, instead of being ready to lay down their lives for the sheep in times of extremity and persecution for righteousness' sake, they are ready rather to flee the trouble and avoid persecution. They think chiefly of their own ease and comfort, honor and dignity, and of how much of the golden fleece they can get from the sheep. They are not very deeply concerned respecting the spiritual progress of the sheep, their growth in grace, and in all the fatness of love and spiritual welfare; but specially in numbers and collections.

Perhaps never more than at present is this truth clearly illustrated amongst those who are professedly representatives of the Good Shepherd—under-shepherds in his flock. Many of them give evidence of wanting to be on the popular side of every question—of unwillingness to suffer anything for the sake of the truth, of carelessness respecting the real spiritual condition of the flock; of interest rather in the human institutions through which they obtain their support, and with whose welfare their honor, dignity and titles are associated. Of such shepherds Milton, the poet, wrote, styling them—

" . . . . blind mouths.
The hungry sheep look up and are not fed,
But, swollen with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread."

The Christian philosopher, John Ruskin, commenting upon this, says: "These two monosyllables, 'blind mouths,' express the precisely accurate contraries of the right character in the two great offices of the church,—those of bishop and pastor. A bishop means a person who *sees;* a pastor means one who *feeds.* The most unbishoply character a man can have is, therefore, to be blind. The most unpastoral is, instead of feeding, to want to be fed,—to be a mouth."

Nevertheless, the Good Shepherd will always be represented amongst the sheep by those who have his own characteristics, and who are seeking to walk in his footsteps; and through these he will utter his "voice," and lead his own sheep to pasture and to rest. These will not only have the same voice, the same Word, the same good tidings, but they will have the same devotion to the interests of the sheep—to feed the sheep, to lead them into the green pastures and by the still waters of present truth, and to preserve their liberties in the Lord, and not to pen them up as their own, nor to make merchandise of them.

The Father, the great over-Shepherd, Jehovah, is referred to by the Good Shepherd, Jesus, in verse 16. "The Father knoweth me" [has confidence in me—has entrusted the care of the sheep to me] and even so I know the Father [having full confidence in him, and recognizing him as my Shepherd, director, leader], and [it is in harmony with his arrangement for me and for the sheep that] I lay down my life for the sheep."

The sheep that I am now calling and leading to pasture and caring for and calling by their own names, and who know me, are a very special lot of sheep; in all only a "little flock," for whom Jehovah, he Great Shepherd, has made special arrangements and provisions in his kingdom of glory. However, these are not all of his sheep, tho they are all yet called and led forth. "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold." I bought the whole world with the one sacrifice for sins, and all who have the true sheep disposition, all who desire to be in harmony with righteousness, truth, and the author of these, I must recognize as my sheep, and must search them out far and near, until every one of them shall be found. But not yet: this will be by and by, after the present "little flock" shall be glorified with me. Then they, with me, shall be the shepherds who will gather in all of the true sheep, delivering them all from the power of the enemy, and bringing so many as will obey my voice ultimately into that glorious condition of oneness, harmony with the heavenly Father and with myself, in which condition, as my sheep, they will be entitled to everlasting life. "Then there shall be one fold and one shepherd," as it is written, "Of whom the whole family both in heaven and in earth is named"—Eph. 3:15

I come to thee with all my tears,
My pain and sorrow, griefs and fears;
Thou precious Lamb who died for me,
I come to thee, I come to thee.

O wondrous love! what joy is mine,
To feel that I am truly thine.
Thou precious Lamb who died for me,
I come to thee, I come to thee.

"THE LORD APPOINTED SEVENTY OTHERS ALSO

LUKE 10:1-11, 17-20.—SEPT. 2.

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few."

Our Lord had previously sent forth the twelve apostles, as heralds of himself and the kingdom. (Luke 9:1-6) The sending forth of seventy was evidently some little time afterward, probably in the last year of his ministry. Their commission reads almost in the same words as that given to the twelve, tho they are not recognized anywhere as apostles on an equality with the twelve. The fact that seventy men would voluntarily go forth as ministers of the Lord, without hope of earthly reward or salary, is sufficient evidence that a strong influence had already been exerted by Jesus' teaching. In this connection we remember the Apostle's statement that above five hundred brethren were sufficiently advanced in knowledge and zeal to be accounted worthy of meeting the Lord after his resurrection, which implies a keen interest on the part of several times that number. We may reasonably suppose that these seventy were representatives of a much larger company of deeply interested ones. They were sent into the various cities and villages, whither the Lord himself would go. They were to prepare his way by announcing the kingdom at hand, and by performing the miracles intended to demonstrate the authenticity of their message.

An explanation of why they were sent forth is given (verse 2): it was because the harvest was great and the laborers too few to properly consummate the work in the time appointed of the Father. All interested were expected to share in this appreciation of the greatness of the work, and the necessity for more laborers being sent forth; and it is but reasonable to suppose that the seventy sent were chosen from amongst those appreciating the situation and anxious to be commissioned.

There are several lessons for us in this matter: we too are in a harvest time—in the harvest time of the Gospel age, as they were in the harvest of the Jewish age. Now, as then, the harvest work is great, and the laborers are comparatively few, and now, as then, we cannot hope that any would succeed in doing harvest work unless specially commissioned or sent forth by the Chief Reaper. Hence, all who appreciate the work now in progress, should pray to the Lord to send them forth in his service, or if already engaged in it, that he would graciously open to them doors of opportunity for greater usefulness in his service. In the beginning of this harvest comparatively few were used of the Lord in connection with the harvest work; but as we progress we find that the Lord is graciously pleased to send forth and use more and more those who are zealously anxious to lay down their lives for the truth.

The expression, "The harvest is great," does not necessarily mean that the amount of ripe "wheat" to be garnered is great. It means rather that the difficulties and oppositions, and multitudes of "tares," make it difficult to reach all of the "wheat" class. The work is great here, as it was great in the end of the Jewish age; yet only a "little flock" will be gathered now, as only a remnant was gathered from Israel, as the Apostle Paul pointed out. (Rom. 9:27) The mass of Israel professed to be the Lord's people, but their piety was little more than profession. They drew nigh to the Lord in attendance at the synagogues, and in celebrating the feasts, felt full and self-satisfied, and looked with pity upon the Gentile nations, and had a great spirit of missionary aggressiveness, and "compassed sea and land to make a proselyte" to Judaism. Nevertheless, the Lord, who read the heart, recognized that theirs was only a formal lip service, and that their hearts were far from him; and we see conditions today very similar to this, in nominal spiritual Israel.

None were fit to be sent out as heralds of the kingdom except such who thoroughly believed in the kingdom—such as had accepted Jesus as the Messiah; such as believed in his presence—such, therefore, as could speak forth with earnestness and power the message they were sent to bear. And so it seems to be in this harvest time. The Lord is sending forth more laborers continually; yet only such as recognize the kingdom as nigh, even at the door; only such as recognize the *parousia* of the King; only such as have a zeal to tell the joyful tidings to others, are being used and blessed of the Lord in the gathering together of his elect,—the ripe "wheat," his "jewels."—Psa. 50:5; Mal. 3:16, 17; Matt. 13:39, 41.

It is not supposable that our Lord meant that any should appeal to him to send forth more laborers into the harvest, who at the same time would not be willing and anxious, to the extent of their ability, to enter this harvest service themselves. There may be some, but we trust very few, who would be prepared to pray: "O Lord bless, I pray thee, thy work, and send forth more laborers; but do not send me. Permit others to sacrifice time and strength and zeal, that I may rest, and have neither part nor lot in the matter, sacrificing little or nothing." Only those are properly qualified to petition the Lord on such a subject, whose hearts are burning with a desire to do with their might what their hands may find to do, according to their opportunities. Such, in praying, would be anxious, first of all, to themselves be used as servants of the great Chief Reaper, for it is "he that reapeth that receiveth wages and that gathereth fruit unto eternal life" now, as it was also in the Jewish harvest. Those who are most zealous to serve the Lord, and most willing to sacrifice on behalf of his cause, are the ones who will receive the greatest present blessing of spiritual fellowship with the Lord, and who will be the best prepared to share the glories soon to be reaveled.

The Lord adopted with the seventy the same method that he started with the twelve; *viz.*, of sending them two and two; and similarly we, at the present time, encourage the colporteur laborers in this harvest to go two and two, for mutual encouragement and helpfulness, etc. As the poet has said,

"So when two together work, each for each
Is quick to plan and can the other teach;
But when alone one seeks the best to know,
His skill is weaker and his thoughts are slow."

It is questionable just why the Lord chose seventy for this work. However, we remember that Moses chose seventy of the elders of Israel for his assistants, and that this number, seventy, was from that time onward preserved in Israel, and known as the *"Sanhedrin,"* or committee of seventy chief men and judges. In the light of this fact, it would appear that if the nation of Israel had been in proper condition of heart to receive the Lord, the chiefs of that nation would already have embraced his cause, and the seventy members of the Sanhedrin would by that time have been proclaiming the Messiah through the length and breath of Palestine. But since they had not received the King, and had not prayed him to commission them to announce him, our Lord commissioned others, and the work went on, the honor and privilege passing by those of influence and education who might have enjoyed it had they been worthy. Doubtless the seventy sent forth were, like the apostles, chosen from amongst the honest-hearted of the common people, and not many, if any of them, were rich, wise or learned.

Likewise, in this harvest time, there are many ministers, professedly servants of the truth, and possessed of education, influence, etc., who by now should realize that we are in the harvest of the Gospel age, and should be seeking of the Lord an opportunity to engage in the harvest work; but instead, they are described as "dumb dogs, lying down, refusing to bark"—refusing to awaken the household under their care to let them know that the kingdom of God is at hand, and that all not received into the kingdom are about to be plunged into a great time of trouble. All of the spiritual house of today must either receive a more than Pentecostal blessing, in being "changed" and made sharers of the kingdom, or else, being rejected from the kingdom, receive a baptism of fiery trouble —having their portion with the world, not being accounted worthy to escape those things coming upon the world.—Luke 21:36.

That the Lord did not expect the seventy to convert and gather in all Israel is very distinctly shown in his statement, "Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves." The Master knew that the majority of the professedly consecrated Israel of God were consecrated to self and selfishness, to sect and party, and not to the truth. The majority were represented as voracious wolves, not sheep. Nevertheless, there were lambs and sheep amongst the goats and the wolves, and these all must hear the message, and thus be prepared to receive the Messiah, when he should present himself to them.

Special instructions were given to these specially sent-forth ones. They had a peculiar work to do and the conditions accorded. They were not, therefore, a criterion for subsequent workers under different circumstances. They were to carry neither purse, nor valise, nor extra shoes, and were to salute no man by the way. They would thus be dependent on the generosity of those to whom they ministered the truth. And the effect of this would be beneficial in several ways. (1) It would test the faith of those who went forth, and keep them continually depending on the Lord's supervising care, and trusting that he who had sent them knew how to make provision for their necessities while they complied with his commands. (2) It would furnish an opportunity for hospitality to those to whom they preached, and who, by reason of the necessities of the case, would be constrained to reach a decision promptly as to whether or not they were in sym-

pathy with the message, and hence with the messengers, and willing to entertain them. The same lesson of dependence on the Lord was implied in the provision for no change of raiment. Besides, it was to be but a short tour.

The injunction not to salute any one by the way may be understood to refer to the custom in Oriental lands of travelers stopping frequently to chat with each other respecting the news. The disciples had but one message, the good tidings, and they were to give all diligence to its promulgation, and not to be general newsmongers. On arriving at a house they were to take careful note respecting their reception, and were to anticipate this with a prayer that peace, blessing, favor, might be upon that house and its inmates. If a son of peace, a child of God, resided there, they might expect that under the Lord's providence they would have a kind reception, and were to accept it as of the Lord's arrangement. If they were not so received, they were to consider it as an evidence that that was not the home of God's people, living in covenant relationship with him, and were to take their departure, seeking another and another place. Peradventure they found no entertainer in the village, they were, nevertheless, to give their testimony. And it should be given in a striking manner, *viz.*, by the shaking of the dust from their shoes, which, to the Oriental mind, would signify a very solemn and final testimony; and then they were to say, "Notwithstanding, be sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."

All who are engaged in the present harvest work may learn some very profitable lessons here, applicable, indeed, to the Lord's people at any time while engaged in his service. We have no time for the ordinary converse. The time is short; the harvest work is great; the laborers are few; our time is consecrated: we must labor while it is called day, knowing that a night cometh wherein no man can work. We have consecrated our lives even unto death: we are commissioned of the great Lord of the harvest to seek for the true "wheat," and to gather it into the barn. What time have we for frivolities or worldliness or the many social amenities? Rather, we must content ourselves with giving very little attention to these things, and must press along the line, engaging heartily in the work given us to do, if we would have the approval of our Master, his "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Altho it is not customary today, as it was in Palestine nineteen centuries ago, to salute a house and say, "Peace be to this house!" nevertheless all of the Lord's people should be peacemakers, peace-promoters, peace-lovers, and a blessing of peace and restfulness should go with them wherever they go. Alas! how many of them are slow to learn that God has not called us to strife, contentions, bickerings, anger, etc., but to love, joy, peace, etc. How few, comparatively, have learned how to speak the truth in *love;* and always to give a soft answer which turneth away wrath; and always to avoid the grievous words which stir up anger. Like the seventy of our lesson, in our daily avocations and efforts to minister to others, let the peace of God go with us, shining in our faces, governing our actions and intoning our language, so that, as the Apostle expresses it, our speech shall be always seasoned with grace.

Conditions in civilized lands today are very different from what they were and still are in Oriental lands, so that here and now it would be unusual to be expected to entertain strangers; nevertheless, all who are of the Lord's true people should be on the lookout to entertain hospitably any servants of the Lord, who they are sure carry his message, the Gospel of the kingdom. And, as the Apostle indicates, they should be just as careful not to entertain, not to assist, and not to bid God-speed to any who are bearing a false gospel, and denying that the Lord bought us.—2 John 10.

REJOICE IN THINGS UNSEEN

When the seventy returned from this mission they were full of joy; saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us, in thy name." Our Lord assured them that this was what he expected, and intended, when he sent them forth, and explained respecting his own knowledge of Satan in his prehuman condition, that there and then he had been a witness to Satan's fall from high glory and privilege and position to his present attitude of chief adversary of God. "I beheld Satan as lightning [as a bright one] fall from heaven." It is for those who deny the personality of Satan and who deny there are any fallen angels, to explain away these plain statements of Scripture. The true children of God, the true sheep who hear the voice of the Shepherd, will not be deceived upon this point any more than upon others. What matters it to us that we did not see Satan fall from his glorious condition? Our Master did, and he has borne testimony, not only respecting Satan's personality, but also respecting his fall from brightness and honor. What is it to us that others deny that there are fallen angels, demons, who seek to impersonate the dead, through spiritualism, etc.? We have the Master's words, and the words of the apostles, to the contrary, and as true sheep we both hear and heed the Shepherd's voice and follow him. We heed not the voice of Satan, uttered through those whom he controls, telling us that there is no devil, that there is no second death, etc.

Our Lord proceeded to tell the seventy that it was he who had given them the power they had enjoyed, and that it included immunity from the bites of serpents and scorpions, and from all the power of the enemy—all enemies, but specially the enemy, Satan: the same one mentioned also in the prayer which our Lord taught, saying, "Deliver us from the evil one." It may not be amiss to note here the fact that these powers and authorities over Satan, poisons, serpents, etc., were confined to the twelve and to the subsequent seventy, and were never given to the church in general. The only Scripture which even seems to so imply is Mark 16:9 to the end, and these verses are not found in the oldest Greek MSS., and are evidently interpolations, added probably about the fifth century: they are omitted from the Revised Version and others. But while no such immunity from poisons and bites and stings are granted to the Gospel church in general, we have what serves every purpose in this respect; *viz.*, the Lord's promise that nothing shall by any means *hurt us* as new creatures—that the Lord will permit nothing to happen to his consecrated ones that he is not both able and willing to overrule for their *good*, their highest welfare.

While rejoicing with the disciples in their increased faith and joy, resulting from their activities in his service, and in the exercise of the gifts which he had bestowed upon them, our Lord cautioned them against *thinking too highly* of such miraculous gifts, and assures them that their chiefest cause for joy lay in another direction—in the fact that they had been accepted as sons into God's family (John 1:12); in the fact that their names were written in heaven, as prospective joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom—prospective members of the body of Christ, to suffer with him, and thus attest their fidelity, and by and by to be glorified with him to all eternity. This is in harmony with the Apostle Paul's statement in 1 Cor. 13:1, where he assures us that the miraculous gifts conferred upon the early church by the laying on of the Apostle's hands, such as speaking with unknown tongues, interpretations of mysteries, etc., are not proofs of spirit-begotten conditions; that a greater proof is the possession of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love that never faileth.

The more of the spirit of love we possess the greater is our likeness to God's dear Son, our Redeemer, and the more will we be fitted and prepared for a share with him in his heavenly glories. If, therefore, the Lord permits us to do some little service in the present harvest, or to bear some burdens in the heat of the day, or if he grants us the privilege of successfully contending against the great adversary and his servants, and *hinders us from being stung* or "hurt" by their words or looks or deeds, and if he grants us opportunities for helping others out of soul-sickness by administering the good medicine of the present truth, let us rejoice in these privileges and opportunities; but let us rejoice still more that under the Lord's providence we are his children, begotten of his spirit—that our names have been recorded as members of his family, and that by and by we may expect to be joint-heirs with our Elder Brother. Yea, in these good hopes we will rejoice.

IS THE RESTITUTION CALL NOW OPEN?

A dear brother in the truth seems to think that the teachings of DAWN, Vol. V., differ from those of DAWN, Vol. III., on the question heading this article. He sees clearly that in DAWN, Vol. V., the view we present is that the restitution call cannot begin until the last member of the Gospel church has been changed, glorified, but he thinks that the third volume teaches that the restitution call will be in progress simultaneously with the closing work of this Gospel age. This clearer statement of the subject in DAWN V. is the result of our having learned that some had gotten the wrong impression from Vol. III. In proof of his point, the brother refers us to Vol. III., page 218, where it is stated that "the stopping of the favor or call here, in 1881, is followed, or rather lapped upon, by the general call of the whole world to the Millennial

blessings and favors on condition of faith and obedience." Also pages 365 and 367: "Further, where the special favor of the general Gospel call ceased, October, 1881, the blessings upon the world would seem to be due to have a beginning." "It (1881) was the date of the closing of the high calling, and hence the date for the beginning of the restitution call for mankind in general."

On questions of so much intricacy it is sometimes difficult to use language sufficiently exact; especially if at the time of writing objections or criticisms are not fully anticipated. Were we to express the above points again we would try still harder, as in DAWN V., to guard our statements, and thus to prevent any misunderstanding. Our thought is, that the close of the high calling in the year 1881 was a marked date, and that from that time onward we should expect manifestations along the line of restitution—evidences that restitution blessings were in process of development. We had no intention of conveying the thought that restitution, physical, mental and moral, should be expected in 1881, and onward. As a matter of fact, we see no such process of general physical restitution in operation, nor ought we to expect it until the Day of Atonement sacrifices (of this Gospel age—Christ and the church, his body) are complete.

We have already pointed this out in the pamphlet, "Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices," published in 1881. We there show that the high priest does not put on the glorious garments, representing the dignity and authority of rulership and blessing, until the "Lord's goat" has been killed, its body burned without the camp, its fat burned upon the altar, and its blood carried into the "Most Holy" and sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat. (We there show also that this goat typified the church, all of whose experiences there typified cannot be accomplished until the last member of the body of Christ has finished his sacrifice completely.) Then it was that the high priest went to the altar, lifted up his hands, and began to bless the people, who meantime lay prostrate in the dust awaiting that very blessing, which typically represents restitution.

In the above statement that "the stopping of the favor or call here, in 1881, is followed, or rather lapped upon, by the general call of the whole world to the Millennial blessings and favors," we hoped that the reader would have in mind our further statement; that altho the call, in its open or full sense, ceased in 1881, it would be prolonged in a special or private sense for a time, just as Israel's national favor ceased five days before our Lord's crucifixion, when he said, "Your house is left unto you desolate," yet in an individual sense of the word, God's favor continued with Israel exclusively for three and a half years following that date; only that instead of being a national favor, it was a private, an individual favor. On page 219 we endeavor to explain this continuation of the Gospel call, in another form, using the following language:

"But tho the general 'call' has ceased, the 'door' is not yet shut The end of the call and the shutting of the door are distinct and separate. The 'door' stands open for some to enter the race for the great prize of joint-heirship in the kingdom after the *general* 'call' has ceased. God has predetermined a fixed number to constitute the church, 'the body of Christ' and there can be neither one member superfluous nor one lacking (See this typically taught in Lev. 21:17-23) It follows that he could not call or invite to that honor more than would complete the number that he had determined, and God's Word shows that this number had been secured [called] in October, 1881 But since some of those who responded under the general call, and made the covenant with him, will fail to keep that covenant, fail to so run as to obtain the prize, the 'door' stands open after the general 'call' has ceased, to permit the entrance to the race, to self-sacrifice in the service of the truth, of some [under the private or individual call] to *take the places* of such as may, during the inspection, cast aside the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness; and also of such others as, having made the covenant of self-sacrifice in the service, love the present evil world, become overcharged with its cares or pleasures, and fail to perform the requirements of their covenant."

Our thought is that this secret *extension* of the privileges of the call, after it has ceased as a *general* offer, must of necessity precede the beginning of the restitution privileges, and hence that only preparatory work in respect to the restitution and the proclamation of it, will be in order until the harvest of this Gospel age has been fully gathered. The knowledge of restitution is granted to the Lord's consecrated people now, to the intent that they should not be in darkness with the world in respect to the divine plan, and especially in view of the approaching great time of trouble, and also in view of the falling of the systems of error, false doctrines, etc. It is necessary that the restitution should be recognized by God's people, in order to keep them from falling in this day of trouble. But the *message* or call to restitution is not *due to the world*, to our understanding, in any sense of the word; hence it is that the efforts being made in connection with the dissemination of present truth are confined, so far as seems reasonable and possible, to the church—to those, at least, who professedly claim to be the Lord's people, and not to the world.

Our brother's letter suggests several questions, which we here propound and answer, hoping that the answers may be helpful, not only to him but to others.

(1) *Question.*—May it not be, that both the high calling and the restitution call are now open? Or, if only one of them, would it not seem the more probable that the restitution call alone is open now? I fail to see the force of your claim that the "door" stands open after the "call" ceases.

Answer.—We believe that we have shown, foregoing that the restitution call could not begin until the sacrifice of the church is completely finished, and until the High Priest, with every member of his body, is fully clothed with the honors and dignities of his office, represented in the garments of glory and beauty. We doubt if we can make the matter of the open door after the general call has ceased, any plainer than above set forth. We think it beyond question that the Lord could not call at any time a greater number than the *elect number*, even tho his foreknowledge assured him that many of the called ones would not make their calling and election sure, and therefore would not be amongst the chosen. We hold, therefore, that at such time as the full number of the elect had been called, the general call must of necessity have ceased; and yet, since the Lord clearly foretold that a casting out of some during the inspection of the guests would follow (Matt. 22:10-14), and since the elect number must be complete, it follows that there must be some way of bringing in others to take the places of those who would be cast out, after the general call ceased and the work of inspection began. To our understanding this work of inspection of the guests has been progressing for some time—since the call ceased As some were found unworthy of their privileges and "cast into outer darkness," similar to that in which the whole world is, others were admitted to the favors of the called, and the attendant testings. And this work must continue until the full quota of elect ones shall have passed divine approval. We can think of no other way that would permit God to be just and reasonable in his dealings, since he will not accept less than the foreordained number, and since he will not call to that number any who, in any sense of the word, might be open to disappointment. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!" As pointed out (DAWN, Vol III., page 222) these additions are illustrated in the parable by those admitted to labor in the vineyard at the eleventh hour, after the regular calls had ceased.

(2) *Question.*—Did not the restitution call precede the Gospel call? Were not Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all Israel called to restitution? If this be true, then the Gospel call was merely a supplementary one, for the time being, and in that event its closing or cessation would at once put in force again the original call which it had temporarily superseded

Answer.—No: none of the patriarchs were called to restitution, nor was it possible that either they or others could attain restitution blessings until after the ransom had been paid; until after all the Atonement Day sacrifices had been offered. If restitution had been possible without the ransom, then Christ died in vain, so far as the world of mankind is concerned. But no; all that anyone enjoyed of restitution favors in the past, was what we now enjoy; *viz.*, a *knowledge* of them. A slight knowledge or hint at restitution was given to father Adam and mother Eve. Subsequently a clearer statement of the same was made to Abraham, and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob. There is a vast difference between the promise of a thing and the thing itself. Had the restitution call gone forth in the true sense, anyone responding properly would have been *restored* to perfection and everlasting life. True, there was a *kind of offer* of restitution made to Israel under the Law Covenant—an offer that they would be restored to perfection and life *if they would keep their Law Covenant inviolate.* But, as we have seen, the keeping of that law was impossible; and hence the attainment of restitution under it was equally impossible.

The special merit of the patriarchs consisted in the fact that, living before any call to everlasting life was made, and with merely a hint of God's gracious purposes, they exercised so great faith respecting the same—enduring much in their

endeavors to please God, and because of their confidence in his promises. From the Apostle Paul's account, some of them endured, faithfully, experiences which, had they lived during this Gospel age, would have constituted them overcomers in the highest sense of the word, and joint-heirs with Christ in the kingdom. But living before this high calling or any other call had been issued, and suffering and enduring valiantly and faithfully, they are promised a better resurrection, a more favorable resurrection than that of the world, tho it will not be so wonderful a resurrection as that of the church. As the Apostle remarks, God has promised some better thing for us (than for them), "that they without us should not be made perfect."—Heb. 11:40.

Their resurrection will be better than that of the remainder of mankind, except the consecrated Gospel church, in that it will be an instantaneous raising to perfection, while the world's resurrection will be a gradual one, accompanied by disciplines and testings, and called by our Lord "the resurrection by judgment"—a gradual raising up of the obedient and willing throughout the Millennial age, step by step, to all that was forfeited and lost in Eden.

(3) *Question*—Will not the restitution call be a call to faith and to obedience, without sacrifice? If we cannot imagine such a call as being now in process, let me ask, Why not? Was not this call the one that was open to Cornelius and to everybody else, both before and since his time, as mentioned by the Apostle Peter, "I perceive that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him?"

Answer.—Peter did not mean to be understood that he that feared God and worked righteousness to the best of his ability *had always been* acceptable to God. Peter had just learned that a new dispensation had been ushered in, and that since Christ had redeemed, not the Jew only, but the whole world of mankind, therefore *now* repentance and remission of sins were proper to be preached in Christ's name to every creature, Gentiles as well as Jews; and that whoever sought to do the Lord's will to the best of his ability would be acceptable in the Lord's sight.

The restitution call will be a very different one from any that has ever gone forth as yet. It will not be a call to faith and to reckoned forgiveness of sins, but a call to obedience and to the actual blotting out of sins. During the Millennial age the world of mankind will be dealt with according to the condition of each, and obedience to the extent of ability will be required of each individual. Every obedience will receive its reward, in the way of mental, moral and physical recuperation, restitution; and every disobedience will receive a just chastisement, and thus throughout that age all who will shall have the opportunity of development, mentally, physically, morally, until, at its close, if he has been obedient to the great Teacher, Christ, he will again be in the image and likeness of God, as was Father Adam, but with additional experience gained—not only during the fall, but especially the experiences gained under the administration of Christ's government, during the Millennial period, while *rising* again; while being restituted out of sin and death conditions, into conditions of righteousness and life.

What is now known to the church of this Gospel age as "justification by faith" (in like manner also the ancient worthies were justified) will not be in operation during the Millennial age, nor be necessary; because the conditions then will be so different from present conditions. It is because "we walk by faith and not by sight"—because faith is now so difficult, and therefore so rare, that it is so highly appreciated and rewarded of God. But when the Millennial age will have been ushered in, the age of *faith* will have passed—that will be the age of *knowledge*—the age of evidences so clear, so unmistakable, that even "the wayfaring man, tho ignorant, shall not err therein, for the *knowledge* of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the face of the great deep." With knowledge thus abundant, so that there shall be no need to say to one's neighbor, "Know the Lord," because all shall know him, it follows that special faith will be impossible, and hence the rewards of special faith will no longer be offered.

We do not mean to say that mankind during the Millennium will not believe; on the contrary, none can do otherwise than believe: we do mean to say, however, that there is a difference between *believing* and exercising *faith*. We now believe various things by faith, which the world in the next age will believe, not by faith but on evidence, by knowledge—it will be impossible for them to doubt them, seeing that the evidences will be so indisputable. For instance, now God tells us to reckon all of our past sins forgiven, and ourselves fully justified in his sight. Nevertheless, we continually see evidences of our own weaknesses in our minds and bodies. The sins are not blotted out; they are merely reckonedly covered. In the case of the church's sins: they will not be blotted out until death shall destroy these mortal bodies, and until the Lord, in the first resurrection, shall grant us glorious, spiritual, perfect bodies. In them there will be no trace of sin or weakness or imperfection; all our sins will then be actually blotted out. But now we are required to *believe* in the covering of our sins; to exercise faith in God's declaration. Our next step of faith is in connection with the high calling to sacrifice earthly and temporal interests for the gaining of the heavenly glory, honor and immortality. But the heavenly crown and blessing are seen only with the eye of faith; and whoever runs in the race now set before us in the Gospel, must not only look with the eye of faith unto Jesus, as the author and finisher of our faith, but with the same eye of faith must see the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, has laid up for those who are faithful. Thus ours is preëminently an age of faith, of reckoned conditions, and of trust in the promises: and it shall have its great and precious reward.

Not so will be the conditions of the Millennial age, when ushered in. Knowledge will be there, as we have seen; and each day's experiences will result either in mental, moral and physical development, or in chastisements for failures to make progress. Such experiences will give ample demonstration of what may be expected as the ultimate outcome—restitution as the reward of obedience, or the second death as the punishment of disobedience.

The matter is clearly set before us in the Scriptures, which clearly teach that during this age the rule of divine dealing is, "According to thy faith be it unto thee," while the rule of the judgment of the world in the Millennial age is clearly laid down in Rev. 20:12: "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book of life was opened [the first book of life is called the Lamb's Book of Life, containing the names of the elect church, his bride:—this other book of life will be the book or record of those who shall pass the restitution trial or judgment satisfactorily], and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books [the Scriptures—John 12:48] *according to their works.*"

It would be a mistake to suppose that God will call mankind to sonship during the Millennial age, and not require them to make full consecration of themselves to him, and to that righteousness of which he is the personal representative. None can ever have eternal life upon any other condition than this—absolute obedience, and more—absolute harmony with the very spirit of the divine law, the law of righteousness, the law of love. And all who will be in harmony with the Lord to such an extent as this, would of necessity sacrifice, if there were opposition to the Lord or to righteousness which would make necessary a sacrifice of any kind, rather than deny the Lord and the principles of his holiness.

The reason why there will be no sacrifices required of the world during the Millennial age is that sin and Satan will no longer be in control—"this present evil world" (dispensation) will have passed away, and in its stead will have been ushered in "the world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness"—wherein righteousness will be the rule, wherein the King and all in favor with him and every feature of government will be one of righteousness, truth and love.

To suppose the restitution call already commenced would be to suppose that God had in some manner authorized some one to announce that henceforth no one would suffer for right doing, but only for wrong doing; and that henceforth whoever sought to do right to the best of his ability, would find himself unopposed therein, and that his every effort would promptly bring mental, moral and physical strength and recuperation, which, going on and on, would by and by reach absolute perfection. Furthermore, it would be to promise that any who accepted this restitution call would never die the Adamic death; but on the contrary, accepting this call heartily, would find that day by day, year by year, the power of death in him was being vanquished and the process of restitution progressing.

When that call shall go forth, and those restitution privileges shall be offered to mankind, it will be as the Prophet has declared, that no man shall thenceforth die for Adam's sin, nor for the sin of his fathers, but only for his own sin. (Jer. 31:29, 30) We understand that this time will not be reached until after the time of trouble—not until A. D. 1915. To our understanding, from that date onward, the kingdom being fully established, the call of the world to restitution privileges will be opened, and whoever shall then die will die for his own sin [second death] and not for father Adam's; and

whoever will then be obedient to the Lord will experience the blessings of his grace in restitution—actual, perceptible recovery beginning at once, as the reward to the faithful under the restitution call.

The sense in which Millennial blessings and favors are already lapping upon the Gospel age, to our understanding, is this: (1) Knowledge, inventions, etc., are bringing to the world of mankind blessings never hitherto enjoyed, and which are really intended for the Millennial age, and are merely being gotten ready or prepared in this "day of God's preparation." (2) Restitution blessings are lapping also, in the sense that these inventions, etc., are gradually leading on to the great time of trouble, in which present institutions, social, financial, political, religious, will all be overthrown—that in their stead God may bring in the better provisions and arrangements of the Millennial kingdom. (2) Restitution blessings are coming to the church now, in the sense that she is permitted to foresee these coming blessings upon the world, and to rejoice exceedingly, and to lift up her heart in thankfulness and praise to him who loveth us and who bought us with his own precious blood, and to realize how it is "the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

(4) *Question.*—Suppose some one should say, "I wish to give up this present world and all its honors and pleasures, to obey and follow Christ, no difference what trials and persecutions it may bring; but I have no expectation of salvation on the divine plane, and I am not running for that prize. Salvation on the human plane is better than I deserve, no matter how much it may cost me to follow Christ now, in the opening years of his reign, before Satan is bound. I am glad of an opportunity to show my loyalty under adverse circumstances, which will prove that I am sincere." Who may say that such an one might not come in under the restitution call?

Answer.—The Apostle, on one occasion, said, "The times of this ignorance God winked at"—took no account of. So all the way down through this Gospel age, while this "high calling" has been presented there doubtless have been some of the Lord's followers who have not clearly grasped his promises in all their length and strength and beauty—many who did not clearly understand that the overcomers of this age are to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, and partakers of glory, honor and immortality. Their ignorance, however, did not alter the call nor the Lord's engagement. The heavenly Father is, so to speak, dealing with Christ rather than with us, and thus it is written that we are "accepted *in* the Beloved." Whoever, therefore, during this Gospel age, has fully consecrated himself to the Lord as his Master, fully trusting in him also as his Redeemer, and seeking to walk in his footsteps, the same is an heir of God and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, his Lord, whether he knew it or not; just as it would be in respect to an earthly inheritance.

It might seem strange that a son should not have some knowledge of his father's wealth and of his father's intention to give him a portion, but the son's ignorance would not alter in any degree the father's will, nor hinder him from participating in its provisions. So we should say respecting those of the Lord's faithful ones during this age, who have not been aware of how great things "God hath in reservation for them that love him." And this applies also to such an one as you mention in this question: his ignorance will not alter the divine arrangement; and if he faithfully follow the Lord now we have every reason to believe that in the regeneration he shall sit in his throne, whether he expects so great a favor or not. Nevertheless, we should expect that now the Lord would graciously reveal to such a faithful sacrificer his goodly heritage. There surely is no Restitution Call at the present time—no offer yet of an opportunity to grow out of imperfection and death, into perfection in God's likeness and into life everlasting.

"OUT OF DARKNESS INTO HIS MARVELOUS LIGHT"

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—About one year ago your book, called THE PLAN OF THE AGES, fell into my hands. It came like the day-star arising in my soul, flooding my mind with new thoughts and conceptions as to the great plan of redeeming this old, lost world. Since 1897 I have been out evangelizing, preaching "Christ and Him crucified," to men throughout the States, but my "advanced" views soon gave dissatisfaction among the orthodox preachers, especially among the set to whom I belonged, the Methodist Episcopal church society. It was then that I began to read in earnest every thing I could find along the line of prophetic truth. I have read and re-read with great pleasure and profit the first five volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN, and am only awaiting now further issue of Volume VI. I can not express to you my indebtedness to you for the light I have received from the perusal of the WATCH TOWER publications.

May God continue to bless you with light, that you may be the means in his hands of leading many more pilgrims into the glorious light of the liberty of the gospel of Christ. Since seeing the fulness of God's truth, I have withdrawn from the M. E. church and ministry. Pray for me that I may continue "to walk in the light as he is in the light."

Yours in the Light, R. K. RICHARDSON,—*Alabama.*

[To the Lord be all the praise for the light now *"in due time"* shining upon his Word and revealing to us his gracious character. I am glad to hope that withdrawal from human institutions and their service means a fuller appreciation and closer membership in "the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven" and a more zealous and more wise participation in its ministry of the truth.—EDITOR.]

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Some time ago Brother Woodworth witnessed my method of handing out the Volunteer TOWERS and was so well pleased with it that he made me promise to write to you about it. I don't consider it anything out of the ordinary, but for the sake of my promise I will give it to you.

With a bow and a smile I say, "Sample—WATCH TOWER"; or "Free sample WATCH TOWER." If any questions are asked, I say, "An unsectarian religious magazine." My reasons for this method are, I seek to interest them thus, or rather to arouse their curiosity in knowing what the paper is; rather giving them the impression that I am seeking subscribers. In this way they will read with an unprejudiced mind—it does not arouse their antagonism by giving them the impression that you have something to refute the arguments they have just been listening to. If any know of the WATCH TOWER and do not care for it, they can refuse to take it, and thus one is saved for some one else. I think I am justified in giving the imprsession that I am seeking subscribers; if anyone becomes interested, he *will* become a subscriber, and it is for such that we specially labor. With much love, I am,

Yours in the best of bonds,

JOS. L. HOAGLAND,—*Pennsylvania.*

UNTO HIM BELONGETH ALL

"Just why I suffer loss
I can not know;
I only know my Father
Wills it so.
He leads in paths I cannot understand;
But all the way I know is wisely planned.

"My life is only mine
That I may use
The gifts he lendeth me
As he may choose;
And if in love some boon he doth recall,
I know that unto him belongeth all.

"I am his child, and I
Can safely trust;
He loves me, and I know
That he is just;
Within his love I can securely rest,
Assured that what he does for me is best."

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

REV. R. HEBER NEWTON'S OPINION

Doctor Newton writes to the *Christian Citizenship League* as follows:

"The teachings of the church, for the most part, are far from following the teachings of Jesus. Nay, they are far from recognizing what those teachings are. The organization of the church is planned and patterned upon a policy which is the very antithesis of a true society of Jesus.

"Commercialism dominates the organization, and conventionality tyrannizes the pulpit. The law of the market, rather than the law of the mount, is accepted by the church at large.

"Our Protestant churches are composed, for the most part, of a constituency drawn from the well-to-do classes, and they see nothing essentially unsound or unethical in the economic system of the day. The pulpit, therefore, is rarely free to deliver its soul, if it has one, upon the burning questions of our generation.

"Blind leaders of the blind, both seem hastening to fall into the ditch which lies before our civilization. And yet within the Christian church is the very ideal that the world hungers for the very power to solve these problems. Infinitely pathetic is the situation."

This is a very severe arraignment of orthodoxy in any case; but coming from one of its leading lights it is terrible!

PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE AND IN AMERICA

Within the past few years Protestantism has been making considerable progress in Catholic France; but it is to be remembered that there the term Protestant includes all systems of religion and irreligion opposed to Roman Catholicism.

As might be expected, this in turn arouses the ire of Romanists, especially the clergy, who, long accustomed to full control of the masses, and to having their mandates pass without dispute or criticism, are now furious in their attempts to hinder their people from slipping the bonds of gross religious ignorance and superstition, and escaping from their control. Deprived of the civil power of the past—lost a century ago—and unable to torture or destroy those who protest against their system, they nevertheless clearly show that the spirit of the past still dominates them, and that only opportunity is lacking, and this by reason of a higher civilization and a more generally enlightened public conscience—not because of a higher and holier religious standing.

Words are the cruelest weapons now permitted, and these are used with energy and venom and regardless of the truth. For instance, the *Bonne Presse*, the organ of the Assumptionists (a Roman Catholic order), and many *Croix*, or Catholic church papers, are seeking to arouse prejudice and public sentiment against everything not Catholic, by confounding Jews, Freethinkers and Free Masons with Protestant Christians—charging all with treachery to France, etc.,—and the general name of "*Huguenots*" has been revived as applicable to all those to whom Romanism is opposed. The inference is deducible from some of the writings, that their authors would like to see these modern "*Huguenots*" massacred as were the others—for the glory of God and the *peace* of the Roman Catholic church.—See MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. II., pages 332-353.

The names of some of the tracts and books published in the interest of this crusade against Protestantism would, alone, give a clew to the character of the attack; but we will give a few extracts:—

"*The Protestant Peril*," of 569 pages, declares:—

"The Huguenots go hand-in-hand with the traitors of the fatherland and with the foreign foes of France, just as their religious fellows did in the year 1870. . . . . The Protestants force their way into the houses of the French people, ostensibly to sell Bibles, but in truth to spy out where the honest peasant has hidden his savings. They are picking out quarters for the army of the invasion. Therefore, we must keep a watch over these imbeciles and force them to leave our towns. . . . These pious gospel messengers do not propose so much to make converts to Protestantism, as to demoralize our good people and to lay plans for facilitating the proposed invasion of our country. We appeal to the peasants to become new crusaders in the interests of the good cause."

"*The Protestant Conspiracy*" charges that the queen of England annually contributes five million dollars to propagate Protestantism in France, and thus to make the latter a vassal state to Great Britain. Another work is entitled, "*The Treachery of Protestantism.*" "*Treason's Formation*" is another of these. It says:—

"The Huguenot is a born traitor. A Catholic will die for his *faith;* a Jew to save his *money;* but a Protestant knows no martyrdom. . . . The claim of the innocence of Dreyfus was simply a specimen of Protestant treachery in order to make it possible for England to occupy Fashoda, and William II. to make his journey to Jerusalem. All the defenders of Dreyfus are open or secret Protestants."

"*The Protestant Conquest*" is the title of another of these blasts of ignorance and falsity, designed to prejudice the populace so that they will give Protestants and the Bible no hearing. It suggests the wisdom and propriety of murdering leading opponents, both political and religious, as follows:—

"The Catholics are too scrupulous. Nobody can bake an omelet without breaking some eggs. No revolution can be achieved without advancing over dead bodies. Do you think it would be a crime to condemn and put to death such men as Zadok Kahn, Reinach, Scheurer-Kestner, Picquart, Zola, Brisson, Yves Guyot, Jaures, Clemenceau, Monod, and Ranc, because they have organized the Dreyfus conspiracy? I confess openly that I would have no hesitancy to vote for the death of this Reinach, etc., and such pastors as Monod, etc."

French Protestants are justly indignant at such unscrupulous methods of opposition, and are crying out for freedom and fair and honest treatment; and to offset it are publishing pamphlets entitled, "Away from Rome," and scattering them widely.

* * *

But now note the difference between the sentiments of Protestants in France, and Protestants here. Where they are in the minority they want liberty and God's Word to prevail, and appeal to *reason and the Bible* as in offset to ignorance, superstition and priestcraft. But how is it here in "the land of the free" where Protestantism controls the great majority? Ah! here we see the weakness of fallen human nature displayed; for here Protestants, like the Catholics of France, are most bitterly opposed to any advanced light—especially any further light from the Bible;—not only denying what they cannot gainsay Scripturally, but becoming the more angry in proportion as they find present truth unanswerable.

True, they have not published volumes in opposition to our presentations, but this is no doubt due to two facts: (1) There is no opportunity to confound the gospel we preach with any class of politicians or political aspirations; and (2) they know nothing to say against our position and fear to call attention to it lest their closely guarded and tightly penned "sheep" should get a taste of "the *good* word of God," and break away from sectarianism to the "green pastures and still waters" of divine truth. But most of their fears are groundless, for the majority of their flocks are not "sheep" anyway; and the "goats," true to a perverse nature, would prefer tin cans, paper, filthy rags, or anything of a sensational character—Evolution, Higher Criticism, human philosophy, and "science falsely so called"—rather than the truth.

United States Protestant *methods* differ from French Roman Catholic *methods*, but both have the same object; namely, to prejudice the minds of the people under their control who are trusting to them as their guides and spiritual advisers; thus to hinder them from investigating truth on its merits and in the light of the divine Word.

Having mentioned the Roman Catholic method, it is but just that we cite instances illustrating the Protestant method. For instance, some years ago the pastor of the North Ave. M. E church of this city made a most furious attack upon the Editor of this journal, whom he had never met, and whose writings he probably had never read—as would seem to be implied by the false statements of our position made by him in a discourse over an hour long. What was the ground for the attack? Simply that five members of his congregation had been baptized by us the week previous, and that he knew, in some way or other, that we believed in the imminence of the kingdom of God. He railed at the fact that this teacher did not belong to any of the sects, and was not recognized by any of them, informed *his* people that he had been specially educated *so as to be able* to guide them in all spiritual matters; and that they should seek no other counsel respecting God's Word.

He then *demonstrated* his wisdom and ability as "a scribe instructed respecting the kingdom" by declaring that the second coming of Christ must be many thousands of years future, *because in his judgment*, this was clearly taught, not by the Bible writers, but by the coal fields and ore deposits of earth, which he thought would last that long.

If the learned gentleman had only thought of it he might have prophecied a still longer interim—millions on millions of

years—basing his calculations on the supply of limestone for macadam and whitewash, and on the supply of granite for tomb-stones. This encouraging (?) sermon on "The Second Coming of Christ" ended with an attempt to arouse the murder spirit amongst the "goats" of his flock and to intimidate the "sheep" with words, understood by all to refer to the Editor of this journal, who was (by request of the recently baptized ones) present in the audience thirty feet from the reverend and learned speaker, who in loud and angry tones shouted, "Do you know what they would have done to such a man eighteen centuries ago? They would have led him outside their city and would have stoned him to death!"

Here is the same murderous spirit manifested by the French Catholics, and in both incited by a bitter hatred of the truth—or rather by a *fear of the truth*, and a desire to preserve, by any and every means, the *human* organization they have been taught to regard as *divine*. "By *any* means" is none too strong; for we know of numerous instances in which professed ministers of God's truth have most outrageously falsified for *the good of the cause*, as the Jesuits would say.

For instance, it makes the false shepherds (who seem to predominate) very angry when members of their flock receive present truth and request that their names be stricken off the sectarian roll because they consider it quite enough and much more in accord with the Lord's will and Word to have it written only in "the Lamb's book of life,"—and quite sufficient to be members of "the church of the first-born, which are written in heaven," and thus in fellowship with all true "sheep," wherever found. In some instances reported to us the pastor kept the letter to himself, and long afterward charged the one who had withdrawn with backsliding, neglect of covenant in not attending service and hence unworthy of respect or fellowship.

In one instance a dear sister who had been a Bible class teacher of prominence and influence was so feared by her erstwhile pastor that he deliberately, and with much hypocritical show of sorrow, circulated the report that she had "gone insane"—"a very pitiable case." His crafty satanic method succeeded; and her church friends and neighbors "let her alone," for fear they would "excite her" and "make it necessary to send her to an insane asylum." Needless to say, the sister is of much sounder mind than ever before;—of much sounder mind than any who can believe the unscriptural and God-dishonoring doctrine of eternal torment, taught by the jarring creeds labeled "Orthodox."

It was in view of such cowardly and disreputable methods coming to our notice that we prepared what are known as "Withdrawal Letters"—setting forth the truth in kindly language—which we supply freely to all who desire them, so that *each member of the congregation* receiving one may be truthfully informed as to our reasons for renouncing membership in sectarian systems; and thus, too, the temptation to misrepresent is taken from the false shepherds whose love for the sheep is chiefly for the sake of their "golden fleece." But those kindly-worded letters are feared and hated as much as the DAWNS.

Space forbids us to mention numerous instances of perfidy and misrepresentation by "ministers" against our publications —especially MILLENNIAL DAWN. Publicly and privately they warn their people against it, and advise those who have it *not to read it*, but to "saturate with oil and burn it," evidently thinking us so opposed to eternal torment that we would use some kind of fire-proof paper that would need oil to make it burn. Others learning that colporteurs had reached their city and had sold DAWNS to their parishioners, have gone about from house to house, warning, threatening and entreating (according to the intelligence and financial dignity of the person) that they violate their engagements and refuse to take the book; and if they already have them to be sure to burn them.

Why all this warning, etc.? Love for the "sheep"? Oh no, indeed! but love for themselves. They well know that wherever the true light of the Word of God goes their "craft is in danger." (See Acts 16:16-24) Often they hear of their "sheep" getting into by-paths of sin but who ever heard of their working themselves into a frenzy of energy on that account? Why then are they so excited the moment MILLENNIAL DAWN is mentioned, or seen in the houses of their sheep?

Their fear is (1) that if the people read the DAWNS they will know far more about the Bible, and will begin to think and to ask questions which they cannot answer. (2) It will show them that they have been hiring shepherds to lead them to the green pastures of truth who, instead, have been penning them up in sectarian folds and forcing them to subsist on the God-dishonoring doctrines of the dark ages. (3) It will lead the true "sheep" to get out from among the "goats" and "wolves in sheep's clothing," by showing them that the "harvest" time of separation has come and that a great Chief Shepherd is calling forth his own sheep to himself and to fellowship with all other sheep—free from human creed-pens. (4) No wonder these worldly-wise shepherds resent a teaching which would gather the few grains of "wheat" from a parishful of "tares." It would look bad to call his a wheat-field if there were no wheat in it. Then, too, it would count in numbers (tho far less than they suppose—for the "tares" take little or no interest in present truth), and their prestige and salary depend so much on numbers; how could they regard DAWN otherwise than as their enemy likely to bring all kinds of trouble to their slumbering flocks by awaking them to thought and Bible study?

This seems to make no allowance for honest preachers, lovers of the truth who should be glad to find it in DAWN or anywhere, and glad to proclaim it at any cost,—some one complains. No, we do not deny that there are honest, God-fearing and truth-loving men in the Christian ministry, scattered probably among all denominations; but evidently, as at the first advent, the Doctors of Divinity as a *class* are, by their training and selfish interest, enemies of the true light, the wisdom from above, and friends and patrons of earthly wisdom. The majority are blind and cannot see the true light and of the remainder a large proportion seems to love the present world, and to be willing to sell the truth for its "mess of pottage." Nevertheless, here and there some "forsake all" for the sake of the truth,—to suffer with Christ, if so be that they may also reign with him by and by.

Nor does it always stop with threatening words: these in small towns are often followed by social ostracism and business boycott too often successful. For instance, a brother wrote us a short time ago, changing his address, explaining that he had been obliged to move onto a farm because his cotton-gin, saw-mill and grist mill in town had been boycotted until he could not longer earn a living—because of his attempt to explain the truths of the Bible to his neighbors. The charge against him was that he "had too many different translations of the Bible" and "had many texts marked in his Bible which neither the preacher nor his neighbors could *find* in theirs;"—not being so well acquainted with their Bibles as with their almanacs, daily papers, dominoes, cards and chess.

Alas, poor world! It is still true that "men love darkness rather than light," and that this is their condemnation, leading surely to the great time of trouble with which this age is predicted to end, as the same love of darkness led natural Israel to its great trouble and overthrow, in the end of the Jewish age.

Yet none of these things move the Lord's people, for the same light upon the Word shows not only that the Lord's true people will be hated and maligned even to the end of this age, and that whosover will live godly must suffer persecution; but it shows also the object of such tests and trials and sacrifices—to fit and prepare a little flock to be faithful and merciful kings and priests of God during the coming age when with their Lord, Jesus, whom they follow through evil as well as good report, they shall, as God's representatives "judge the world"—giving to all the fullest opportunity to come back to full harmony with God and righteousness.

PREPARED TO FALL INTO SPIRITISM

It is our expectation that Spiritism, as one of the latter day delusions, is to play an important part in the next few years in connection with the great falling away already begun, in which "a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand." Romanism taught, and still teaches, a Purgatory to which their dead go at death for purification for heaven; and that while there the prayers and paid masses of their friends on earth avail for them to a sooner release—to heavenly bliss. Protestantism at its start, through Luther and its principal exponents, denounced this as a Papal deception to fill its coffers with the money of its deluded people; and failing to grasp the truth that a dead person is not alive anywhere, but awaits the resurrection of the dead as his only hope of a future life, Protestantism took its illogical position still held—that death ends all hope, and that all not fit for heaven go to a hell of everlasting torment. And, in harmony with this, prayers to and for the dead were reprobated—the righteous needing none, and the wicked being hopeless.

It has often surprised us that with the thought that their dead are not dead, but more than ever alive and "hovering" among the friends at the funeral, as some ministers explain (?), there has not been a greater disposition to follow the lead of Spiritism and seek communion with those supposed to be alive and near, and able to assist. The explanation seems to be that Romanists are under the control of the priests instructed who are the saints who may be

prayed to, and instructed that those who need to be prayed *for* can only be reached or assisted through the priests,—who alone must do the mass-saying and praying. And Protestants have been restrained by the original declaration of the leaders that prayers to and for the dead were both Romish superstitions, unsanctioned by the Word of God—to which we heartily agree.

A CHANGE ALREADY IN PROGRESS

But the Boer-British war has started a fresh discussion of the question of prayers for the dead. As Roman Catholics, after news of a battle, repaired to their cathedrals to pray for the Catholic dead, and to offer mass on their behalf in Purgatory, Protestants have been perplexed and felt their need of *something* to offset the hard error of their creed that if the soldier were a saint he went at once to glory, but if not a saint at once to an endless and hopeless torment in hell. Loving fathers and doting mothers were unable to hide from themselves that their sons, and the army in general, were far from being saints or "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light;" and yet they felt sure that they were far too good and noble and patriotic to be turned over to the care of devils to be roasted eternally: and this coming now, at a time when people are *thinking* more than ever before, and when human sympathy is greatly expanded, is awakening serious thought in Britain.

As usual, however, the adversary manages to turn thought into a wrong direction; and so they fail to see that all the dead must wait for the second coming of the Lord and for the resurrection awakening then due, and that then (during the Millennial age) the whole world will be a grand and good Purgatory;—when Satan will be bound, and when so many as will, can have the assistance of the royal priesthood in getting rid of their errors and weaknesses, and coming back to perfection by a process of restitution. No, on the contrary, the suggestion is that the early Reformers must have erred in rejecting that feature of Rome's teachings which permits and encourages prayers for the dead. Note the sentiments promulgated by the influential *Christian World* of London. It says:—

"Here is theology in the roughest: its chiefest problem thrust on you in a fashion which brooks no shirking. What has really happened? Where or what is he who, a moment ago so near, is now at a remove to which our space computations offer no clew? We are all on-lookers today at tragedies of this sort, and the questions behind them press us with relentless force. Do our dead still think or love? Have we any sort of relation with them? Can we do aught for them or they for us? . . . .

"What on this subject [communion with the dead] is the position of Protestant Christians today? Signs are abundant that the standpoint from which it is approached by non-conformists, not less than by conformists, is a somewhat different one from that held by the Reformers and the Puritans.

"Thoughtful minds are now asking whether the sixteenth-century onslaught on Purgatory and priest-craft did not, in the rush, carry away with it some precious things that it is time now to restore. . . . .

"And why should we not pray for the dead? What is prayer, in the best conception of it, but the following of those we love, with aspiration and affection, with desire for their highest good, with the whole best emotion of our soul? What barbarous infidelity has taught us that death interposes a limit to this out-going? The notion that those who now rest in God are, because of that, beyond the reach or need of prayer is heathen, and not Christian. It is disloyal at once to God, to the departed themselves, and to our own best instincts. There is no position, not that of heaven's central point; there is no condition, not that of supremest blessedness, that is outside the range of love. . . . .

"We have neglected our dead, and in so doing have weakened one of the most intimate of our links with the unseen. We have put up in our minds barriers that do not correspond with the reality, and so have obstructed the flow of some of the grandest of the human inspirations. The mind revolts against these limitations. Its prophetic instinct recognizes them as a mistake. The vagaries of Spiritualism are a rough protest against the policy of cutting the cable between here and the beyond. And that other side protests also. Near to us, on the other side of a very thin veil, lies a great realm of life which has the closest connection with our own. What that connection is we at present only dimly discern. Our organs of perception seem only in the most rudimentary condition. It may be that our later indifference on this side has hindered their development. But develop they must, for *they are among humanity's most priceless possessions.* A stage will yet be reached when they will be part of the soul's general apparatus, and when, not to a stray prophet here and there [mediums?], but to the common man will it be given to stand with Bunyan's pilgrim on the Delectable Mountains and behold what was visible there."

Light (Spiritualistic, London, April 10) thinks this is a real, tho belated, recognition of the essential truth of the Spiritualistic position. It says:—

"Spiritualists have been severely criticized and ridiculed for affirming that the departed are frequently benefited by the advice, sympathy, and prayers of earth-dwellers. We have been denounced for teaching that progress after death, following upon repentance and effort, is possible for the ignorant and sinful dwellers on the threshold. . . .

"Think of it! Spiritualism is a *'protest against the policy of cutting the cable between here and the Beyond!'* Aye, and evidently the protest has not failed, it has not been in vain. While the writer laments that 'our organs of perception [physical, mediumistic perception, or "spiritual gifts"] seem only in the most rudimentary condition,' he suggests that indifference has 'hindered their development,' and he fully justifies us and our long struggle for recognition against, not only indifference, but prejudice, intolerance and active hostility, by affirming *'develop they must, for they are among humanity's most priceless possessions!'*

"After this we shall assuredly have *The Christian World* founding a 'School of the Prophet's for the development and exercise of mediumship and psychical powers generally."

PRAYING AND FIGHTING—AN EMPEROR'S SERMON

The German Emperor preached a sermon on board his yacht Sunday, July 29, from the text, Exodus 17:9-11. His argument was that as Moses prayed and got a blessing for Israel, so all Germans at home should pray that their brethren gone to war in China might successfully slaughter the heathen Chinese, who should be like the Amalekites. The press report of the discourse follows:—

"The soldiers shall be the strong arm which punishes assassins. They shall be the mailed fist which smites that chaotic mass. They shall defend, sword in hand, our holiest possessions. True prayers can still cast the banner of the Dragon into the dust and plant the banner of the cross upon the walls.

"Again is heard God's command, 'Choose us out men and go out to fight with Amalek.' A hot and sanguinary struggle has begun. Already a number of our brethren are over there under fire. Many more are traveling along hostile coasts. You have seen them, the thousands who, to the call of volunteers to the front who will guard the empire, have assembled themselves to battle with victorious banners. We who remain at home are bound by other sacred duties. Woe unto us if we remain slothful and sluggish while they are engaged in their difficult and bloody work, and if from our place of security we only curiously look on while they wrestle in battle.

"Not only should we mobilize battalions of troops, but we should also, and shall, set in motion an army of trained people to *beg* and *entreat* [God] for our brethren that they may strike into the wild chaos with sword in hand. May they strike for our most sacred possessions. We would pray that God the Lord may make heroes of our men and lead those heroes to victory, and that then, with laurels on their helmets and orders on their breasts, he may lead them home to the land of their fathers.

"Our fight will not be finished in one day; but let not our hands grow weary or sink until victory is secured. Let our prayers be as a wall of fire around the camp of our brethren. Eternity will reveal the fulfilment of an old promise—'Call upon me in trouble, and I will deliver thee.' Therefore pray continuously."

The Emperor and many other militant "Christians" fail to see that Israel was used of God as a typical people and that the duly authorized slaughter of the Amalekites was because their iniquity was "come to the full" (Gen. 15:16), and God would use them as types of evil and evil-doers to be overthrown by the antitypical Moses, the antitypical Mediator, Christ—as Pharoah and his hosts previously typified the same thing. Similarly the "Land of Promise," Canaan, was typical of the heavenly Canaan.

The Spiritual Israelite is to watch and fight and pray, but against a different kind of enemies and with different weapons—mighty through God to the pulling down of error, and the gaining of victories over sin and self and Satan. "The weapons of *our warfare* are not carnal," says the inspired Apostle—not swords, machine-guns and battle-ships.—2 Cor. 10:4.

As for the "Christian soldiers" going to "heathen China" from "Christian Europe" we fear they have not a true

"soldier of the cross" among them, and but few who have any knowledge whatever of the sword of the spirit—the Word of God. They are probably no better than the thousands of their comrades already there and of whose unchristian conduct, after the capture of Tien Tsin, the telegraphic dispatches published say. -

"This day has been devoted entirely to looting the native city [Tien Tsin]. The Chinese killed many of their women to keep them from falling into the hands of the allied troops. It is impossible to cable a description of the scenes that were enacted. . . . . American and Japanese troops were the only ones who made any attempt to restrain the civilian or soldier looters."

THE GERMAN KAISER'S HUMANE (?) EXPRESSIONS

The Emperor is practically the pope of the German National Church system; we presume he has received the collegiate degree of "D. D.," as did Bismarck. He is evidently another "man of blood and iron." He has surely placed himself, by recent utterances, at the head of the revived ancient order of Christian soldiers of the period of the crusades. The "Boys' Brigades" should all be pointed to this fact;—and be advised to resign and turn in the opposite direction from the general Christian (?) drift of our day. The following from the *Presbyterian Banner* is to the point. It says:—

"'Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you' Is this passage in the German New Testament? Has the Emperor William ever read it? If he has he must have forgotten it, or lost its spirit, for last week, in dispatching German troops to China, he is reported to have said to them. 'Every civilization not founded on Christianity is sure to be brought to naught. I send you out. If you close with the enemy, remember this: spare nobody, make no prisoners; use your weapons so that for a thousand years hence no Chinaman will dare look askance at any German.' The whole address breathes the spirit of ruthless destruction to the Chinese. The great 'war lord' doubled up his 'mailed fist' and threatened to pound China to pieces. The vain emperor, swollen with a sense of his own importance, seemed to be sublimely unconscious of the violent inconsistency of his fierce paganism with his professed Christianity. He would outdo Mohammed in spreading religion with the sword. There are difficulties, however, in the way of this plan. Christ himself told Peter, who was eager to use it for defending the kingdom, to put up his sword, and there is no evidence that he has handed this weapon to William II. for this purpose. And further, there are the Chinese themselves; there are 400,000,000 of them, and they may prove a considerable obstruction in the way of William's policy. In fact, the German emperor's plan is about the worst possible one that could be announced in the present emergency. It would consolidate the Chinese and turn them into a horde of fanatics that might easily turn out to be a genuine 'yellow terror.' It is believed that the emperor's rash words will render the cooperation of the powers difficult, if not impossible. England and America will not set out on any such bloodthirsty mission. When Christianity seizes the sword, it may perish by the sword. Poor old China, in its paralysis, needs pity. Something must be done in the way of chastisement and reorganization, but let not passion seize the sword and sweep it with a besom of destruction. Justice must be done, but let it be tempered with mercy, and let the Christian nations act in a Christian and not a pagan spirit."

"NOT SO PAUL WON MACEDONIA"

Rev Dr. Halderman lifts his pen against the modern and erroneous methods of propagating the gospel of "peace on earth, good will toward men." He says:—

"I am absolutely sure that in the future Russia will gain the supremacy. It is also true that, taught by Western genius, the Eastern hordes will yet break in awful avalanches on the West. The greed, the rapacity, the Christless, godless selfishness of European nations will get its reward. All the Christianity that has been wrought in China will be small, counting in the terrible final balance that shall be made against so-called Christian nations, who have poisoned China with opium and made them look upon Christians as only another division of rapacious foreign devils.

"Considered morally, there are two sides to the question. These Chinese are fighting for their homes, their land, their institutions. They know the Christian nations are ready to rob and cheat them; and when they find the missionaries backed up by guns and swords and bloodthirsty Cossacks, by rude and godless soldiery, ready to kill and slay, they are only the more infuriated and determined in the opinion that any white man is a devil and needs to be slain.

"It was not so that Paul won Macedonia and Rome. When he went to Rome he did not say, 'Down with Nero! Down with the powers that be!' On the contrary, he counseled Christians to recognize that here Nero's government, bad as it was, was permitted by God and that Christians should submit.

"It was by the blood of martyrs our church won at first: not by the blood of their foes, but their own blood; not shed with arms in their hands, but shed at the stake or rack or block with prayer on their lips and love in their hearts."

GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL CARE

Because two of the Lord's dear sheep of the Allegheny congregation recently lost their lives in an accident, while returning home from meeting and discussing the sermon, many of the brethren have been surprised. The inquiry arose, Do we not believe that God's consecrated people are specially the objects of his care? And if so, how was such an accident possible?

These same questions are liable to arise in many minds, and hence we discuss the matter here for the benefit of all.

We advise that each WATCH TOWER reader shall peruse afresh the tract entitled, "Calamities: Why God Permits Them." In it we discuss this topic at considerable length—from the standpoint of accidents to the world, and accidents to the church. Now we will confine our remarks to the latter phase of the subject, suggesting:—

(1) It is the Scripture teaching that every member of the church must die somehow. This was the purport of our consecration—"even unto death." Each member of the "royal priesthood" became a member by consecrating,—presenting his body a living sacrifice as did our High Priest, Christ Jesus. And just as it was necessary for him to finish his course of dying in actual death, so will it be with each of us.

(2) As the Master's death was not on a "flowery bed of ease," neither, probably, will be the death of any of his foot-step-followers. And, if it be a choice between a bed of tedious sickness and a sudden death by "accident," many would choose the latter as the less painful—the quicker "change."

(3) But it is not for us to *choose* on this more than upon other subjects. It is ours to accept with patience and full resignation whatever divine providence may permit; and this may vary. Under some circumstances it may be better that death come through a lingering illness in which God will be glorified, and the power of his truth to sustain shall be demonstrated in the patient, loving spirit of the dying sufferer. Or, at another time, the Lord may see best to permit death to come upon his dear one suddenly—as a shock, as a calamity: to test the faith of some, and to awaken others from lethargy to vigilance,—from drowsiness to a fresh energy in running the race toward the mark for the great prize. The suddenness of the death of the two dear sheep of this Allegheny fold certainly has had a good effect upon many of the dear ones most intimate wth them, and who knew them both as most saintly characters—ripe in the Christian graces, and fully ready and waiting for their "change." Undoubtedly many not so prepared have been awakened to fresh vigilance, and a renewal of consecration vows, and zeal in self-sacrifice, by this incident and the thought—Would I have been ready had the call thus suddenly come to me?

(4) If to some the question arises,—But what about the little children needing parental care? The answer is, that these parents had already placed their children, as well as themselves, under divine care; and that care is still over the children: as able to care for them now, as for both parents and children before. This is a place for trust—for faith. Whoever cannot trust his children to divine care does not as yet properly know his Heavenly Father, and needs to give renewed diligence to this important study. Such an one has not yet attained the faith that would be acceptable to God, and without which it would be impossible to please God,—the faith of an "overcomer."

(5) The shock connected with our dear Redeemer's death was no doubt a severe test of faith to some of the early disciples—it seemed as tho it proved that our Lord was in disfavor with the Father—"We did esteem him smitten of God, and afflicted." Yet to those who stumbled not in unbelief the shock of our Lord's cruel death became afterward a great lever of sympathy for good as they fully grasped the thought, "He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement for sin

which brings peace to us was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed." The apostles also suffered violent deaths and learned to regard such calamities not as marks of divine disfavor, but the reverse.

(6) There can be no *"accident"* happen to the Lord's consecrated ones, viewed from the divine standpoint. Not a hair of their heads can be injured aside from the Father's *permission*, and what God purposely permits cannot be properly considered an accident from his standpoint, nor from the standpoint of those who fully trust his providence and grace. We might even suppose a calamity in which ninety-nine children of this world and one of the Lord's consecrated met death together. It might be purely accidental so far as all but the Lord's one was concerned: but, to that one nothing could occur unforeseen of God—nothing that God could not have fully controlled. and which permitted must mean a blessing to his child who rightly and in faith accepts it,—"For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." So it was in our Lord's case. As he testified, the Jews could not touch his life before because his "hour was not yet come." And when his hour did come, our Lord testified to Pilate,—"Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." The same is true of every member of the body of Christ, the royal priesthood. But this divine supervision does not watch for the unconsecrated of the world—except as they may be children of the saints, or others whose affairs and interests are interlinked with theirs.

(7) Expecting as we do that the living members of this royal priest or "jewel" class will all be gathered to glory sometime before A. D. 1915 (and so far as we are now able to surmise by 1910), we are bound to suppose that a considerable number of these will, in some manner, die sudden or violent deaths. And happy for us will it be if this thought that our "change" may come at any moment, shall be so impressed as to assist us to be always ready to answer the summons with joy.

Let us each permit this thought to arrange our business affairs, our family affairs, our relationship to the "brethren"—our relationship to the world in general—all our words, and thoughts, and doings; and thus it will bring us great blessing and assist in making us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

The Editor will not be surprised if his death should come suddenly; nor if by divine permission it should come in some unpleasant form that might, for the moment, seem to "jolt" and interrupt the "harvest work." Let all of the consecrated be on guard against such a wavering of doubt respecting the divine power to care for and carry on the work. If such a trial does come, it will no doubt in part, at least, be intended of the Lord to show that the work is his and not ours; and that he is perfectly able to carry on his work, using one or another of his children as his servants to set the food of his providing before the household of faith.

All of our affairs in daily life are shaped to these ends: to the development and bringing forward of others ready to the Lord's hand, should he at any moment call for the transfer of our stewardship and bid us "Come up higher." And the same applies to the financial means and interests which the Lord has entrusted to our care. Let none be surprised, then, at anything which may happen to us, but, on the contrary, glorify God on our behalf, and press along the "narrow way" with redoubled energy.

DOING, TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE

LUKE 10:25-37.—SEPT. 9.

GOLDEN TEXT:—*"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."*—Lev. 19:18.

Probably while our Lord was preaching, and his audience seated about him, either upon the hillside or in a synagogue, a lawyer stood up, and thus politely intimated his desire to say a word in connection with the subject under discussion. The term "lawyer," amongst the Jews at that time, signified one versed in the Law of Moses, one claiming to be able to expound that Law, and to teach others its true meaning. Such persons today we term theologians. These were also termed scribes or learned men—irrespective of their religious convictions, some of them adhering to one view and some to another; some being Pharisees, others Sadducees, etc.,—each endeavoring to interpret the Law in harmony with the teachings of the sect to which he adhered.

Luke does not give us the connections, but quite possibly this lawyer raised his question in connection with some discourse in which our Lord held forth that he himself was the Bread of Life, of which, if a man eat, he may live forever—or in which he had been representing himself as the Good Shepherd, who would give his life for the sheep; or as the Redeemer who had come, that God's people might have life, and that more abundantly—eternal life. This lawyer (or, as some today would say, this D. D.) was probably of the Sadducees, who denied a resurrection and any future or eternal life, interpreting the law, which promises life upon certain conditions, as merely a decoy, intended to promote holiness amongst the Lord's people, but nevertheless a deception, since the holiest and most faithful of the race had not inherited eternal life, but had gone down into death, even as others.

In this view of the matter this Jewish D. D. propounded to our Lord a question, hoping that the answer would give room for a discussion, in which he would be able to show himself the greater of the two teachers, and to prove to his pupils, at least (who were probably present with him), that his theories were correct—that no matter how faithfully the law might be kept no reward of eternal life would be given, and that faith in Christ would be equally futile in this respect. The Evangelist says he asked the question, "tempting" the Lord, that is, to prove him, to draw him out, to expose the weakness of his argument: saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" You recognize me as a scribe, a doctor of the law, a teacher; as one, therefore, who is living a godly and upright life, so far, at least, as his neighbors and pupils may be able to discern. Looking back I see that the holiest and best of our nation (the holiest nation in the world, and the only one recognized of God) have not inherited eternal life. I see that, on the contrary, they have died as other men; I see that for some cause (whether it be the Lord's failure to fulfill his promise, or man's failure to comply with the conditions) all have died, none having attained eternal life. Tell me now, what shall I do that I may not share the same fate of death—that I may live everlastingly?

Our Lord answered the question with great directness, at the same time signifying his unquestioning faith in the promises of God, that whatever God had promised he would surely fulfil—implying, therefore that if he failed to obtain eternal life it would be his own fault, and not the fault of God. Our Lord practically said, I stand by the Scriptural record: you are versed in the law; quote, as you understand it, the teachings of the law on this subject.

The answer shows that this Doctor of the Law was well versed, for he quoted correctly the most direct statement on the subject to be found in the law. Our Lord's reply was equally to the point: "Thou hast answered right; this do and thou shalt live"—I confirm the Law; I uphold it; I vouch for its truthfulness; none who keep that Law can possibly die. The difficulty with all Jews who have died has been, that they did not fulfil that law requirement toward God and man.

DISPLAY OF HEAVENLY WISDOM

The Doctor of the Law was trapped. He had hoped to entangle Jesus in a discussion, and had himself become entangled; for the great Teacher had pointed out that the fault was not in God—that God was not unfaithful to his agreement under the law; that the fault lay with the people. And this included the lawyer as well as the remainder of the race; and that he so understood it is implied in the statement, "He, desiring to justify himself, said, And who is my neighbor?" It was very shrewd of the lawyer to avoid discussing the first commandment, respecting the love for God with all the heart, mind, soul and strength; because no one can thoroughly judge another in respect to this feature of the law; only God and each individual heart knows absolutely whether God is loved with every talent, every power of heart of mind and of body. But others can judge to some extent respecting obedience to the second commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The lawyer felt that he could safely leave the first proposition and claim that none could judge his heart, provided he could "justify himself" in respect to the second proposition, his dealing with his neighbor. Hence it is that he brought up this point, saying, "But who is my neighbor?"

There was a difference of opinion amongst the most learned Jews on this subject of who is the neighbor meant in the law, —some claiming that it meant all Jews, and Jews only. Others claimed that the word "neighbor" would mean only those Jews who lived holy lives. Thus the lawyer practically said, I shall be obliged to yield my contention and acknowl-

edge you superior to myself as a teacher, unless we can get into a contention on this subject of who is the neighbor. In that event I shall at least be able to bring a strong argument that will appeal to all the hearers. But when the great Teacher had, in parable form, explained the true meaning of the word neighbor, the lawyer found himself without an argument.

"NONE RIGHTEOUS, NO NOT ONE"

Some have supposed that our Lord meant that this Doctor of the Law and others who heard him should understand that the Samaritan of the parable, by doing a kind and neighborly act, won for himself the inheritance of *eternal life*, and that our Lord meant further to teach that the lawyer and all of his hearers might inherit eternal life if they would go and do likewise—do as the Samaritan did—do good, help their neighbors. This view is a serious error. In the first place, we do not know that any Samaritan ever did just such an act of kindness. It was merely a parable, a suggestion: Suppose that such conditions existed, and suppose that a Samaritan had done such an act, would he not be a good "neighbor"? The reward of eternal life was not offered on condition of being a good neighbor merely. This was one of the conditions (the one the lawyer questioned), but it was quite secondary to the main proposition—Thou shalt love the Lord with every power and talent of mind and body. The lesson which the lawyer and every other Jew needed to learn was that no imperfect man could possibly fulfil that requirement. All so learning that "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10) would be prepared to look for the promised Messiah as, first of all, their sin-bearer, to justify them and to discipline them and make them perfect and able to obey the law.

Our Lord in the parable represents a priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan, in order to give force to the matter. The priest was specially consecrated to God, the Levite also was consecrated (and most of the Doctors of the Law were Levites), while the Samaritans were outcasts, without God, and having no hope in the world, aliens and strangers from the commonwealth of Israel. The Samaritans, altho they lived in a part of the land of Israel, shared none of Israel's promises; but, as our Lord testified, "Ye worship ye know not what: we [Jews] know what we worship; for *salvation is of the Jews.*" The Samaritan, therefore, was introduced into the parable to make a strong contrast before the minds of the hearers, and to say, A neighbor is one who does a neighborly act, however high or however low he may be in the scale of intelligence or dignity or divine favor.

What our Lord wished to prove to the lawyer and to all hearers was, that the Law was just and holy and good, and that any Jew complying with its conditions would inherit its promise—eternal life. He wished all of his hearers to realize, therefore, that the fact that neither they nor their fathers inherited eternal life proved, not that the law was imperfect, but that they were imperfect, sold under sin, and unable, therefore, to comply with the just demands of the law. It was difficult for the Jew to learn this great lesson; *viz.*, that he could not keep the perfect law of God, and hence that he needed a Savior, a Redeemer, who would keep the law for him, and thus justify him before God, and who would then grant him eternal life as a gift, as a favor—not of the law, but of grace.

In harmony with this, the Apostle assures us who trust in the sacrifice for sins which Jesus gave, and who have entered into New Covenant* relationship with God through him, that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us"—the true sense, meaning, purport of the Law being in our hearts, God accepts this as instead of absolute fulfilment of the letter of the law. The sacrifice of our Lord Jesus compensating for all our imperfections, for all differences between the actual demands of the law and our efforts to conform our lives thereunto, we, walking not after the flesh but after the spirit, are reckoned as no longer fleshly beings but new creatures

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Altho this parable of the good Samaritan was not given to illustrate by what good works the lawyer, or any other man, Jew or Gentile, might attain eternal life, but, on the contrary, was given merely to head off the argument of the lawyer, and to leave him without excuse, it nevertheless contains a rich lesson, which has brought a blessing to many. Not only has it made it clear to many of the Lord's dear children the course of conduct pleasing in the Father's sight, *viz.*, that of generosity, love, benevolence, etc., but it has also brought blessing to many who are not the Lord's children, in that they became recipients of mercies, favors and kindnesses in adversity which, otherwise, they might never have known.

The road leading from Jerusalem to Jericho has a steep downward grade through a rocky country, which abounds in caverns, the hiding places of highway robbers. It has always been a dangerous road, and on it the traveler is not entirely safe to this day, unless under some kind of a protective guard This feature of the parable was, therefore, in strict accordance with the conditions of the time; so was the fact of the priest and the Levite passing, for Jericho was one of the appointed cities of the priests and Levites, and it is estimated that twelve thousand of them resided there then. These, with other priests and Levites from other parts, took their turns in the service at the Temple in Jerusalem, and, consequently, were frequently on this road.

Our Lord's parable seems to imply that the religion of the Jews, instead of bringing them nearer and nearer to the spirit of the Law, was really, by reason of the formalities and ceremonies and pride connected with it, tending to separate them further and further from the condition of heart which would be acceptable to God. The priest, most fully consecrated to the service of God in the Temple, is represented as having *least* interest in the brother in distress. He passed by on the other side (of the ravine), not counting the circumstance worthy of attention; reflecting, no doubt, with a self-righteous feeling respecting the honor of his own position as a servant of God, and unwilling to run the risk of ritual contamination. The Levite, also consecrated to God and his service, but not so high in office and privilege, was more disposed to consider the poor brother, and to render a helping hand. He went so far as to stand and look at the sufferer, and to think over how much trouble would be involved in assisting him, and how much risk he himself might run in so doing (altho we are inclined to believe that the priests and Levites were, on account of their office, generally exempted from molestation by the robbers.)

EFFECTS OF TRUTH ON HONEST HEARTS

Then our Lord chose, as hero of his parable, a despised Samaritan, unrecognized by God and disowned by his favored people. This heightens the force of the picture, by suggesting the thought that one who had never learned at all respecting the true God and his will, one who had never been offered eternal life on the terms of obedience to that law, might nevertheless exercise so much of brotherly kindness and sympathy as to lend a helping hand to a neighbor in distress.

And it is still true that many who, by reason of their better knowledge of God, through his Word and plan, should be possessed of a larger measure of his love and grace, are instead more deficient in these qualities than some who have been less highly favored. It might indeed be that some who are strangers to the covenants and promises of God as yet, possess, by reason of being well born, a large measure of natural generosity, benevolence, kindness, sympathy, and might be good Samaritans by nature, rather than by grace; and it may also be true that some who have been begotten again to the new life and to the new hopes may *naturally* have less of this good Samaritan element of kindness and generosity, because low born according to the flesh—born with a predominance of selfish proclivities. However, such an one, coming under "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," will soon be taught in Christ's school, that love is the fulfilling of the law; and if he be an obedient pupil he will gradually attain to a better appreciation of the heavenly Father, and in heart, in spirit, will learn to love him with all his mind, with all his being, with all his strength. And so surely as this condition obtains, and in proportion as the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, it will enlarge them also toward our fellow-creatures, so that every "new creature" must at heart come into such a degree of fullness of love toward God and toward his fellows as would make him not only an obedient and self-sacrificing son of God, but also a good Samaritan, a kind friend, a loving father and husband, a generous neighbor to all with whom he stands related. He will be a living exemplification of the Apostle's injunction,—doing good unto all men as he has opportunity, especially to the household of faith.—Gal. 6:10.

* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants

Beautiful hands are they that do
The work of the noble, good and true,
Busy for them the long day through;
Beautiful faces are they that wear
The light of a pleasing spirit there.
It matters little if dark or fair;
And truly beautiful in God's sight,
Are the precious souls who love the right

"BEWARE OF COVETOUSNESS"

LUKE 12:13-23.—SEPT. 16.

"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"—Mark 8:36.

While Jesus was preaching on spiritual themes he was interrupted by one of the audience, whose heart was filled with anxiety respecting temporal matters, esteeming that he was being wrongly dealt with by his brother in the division of the parental estate; and perhaps finding that through some technicality he could not obtain what he considered to be his just rights under Jewish laws, he appealed to the great Teacher to use his influence on his behalf—to speak to his brother—to tell his brother that he *ought* to deal generously, and perhaps to threaten him if he failed so to do.

How many there are who see just this much and no more in the teachings of Christ—a channel through which to serve their own interests; a means of securing justice to themselves. How many are ready to quote our Lord's precepts when it suits their convenience so to do, but who otherwise and at other times manifest little interest in them, and in the principles of righteousness which they inculcate! Persons in this attitude of heart are rarely able to grasp or enjoy the spiritual truths which our Lord enunciated, just as the young man in the lesson was failing utterly to profit by our Lord's spiritual teaching, because his entire thought was preoccupied with his own personal, selfish plans and schemes and views—however just they might have been.

Our Lord flatly refused to interfere in the manner suggested, saying, "Who made me a judge or an arbiter over you?" Thus he illustrated the general teaching of the Scriptures. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's" and again, "If any man sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, refuse not even if he take similarly thy cloak also"—do not ask or expect anything beyond what is granted by the civil laws of the land in which you live. "Be subject to the powers that be; for the powers that be are ordained [permitted] of God." Our Lord's kingdom, long promised, and which eventually shall be "the desire of all nations," had not then come, and still has not been set up. We still pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." The Lord's people are to recognize this fact, and not to expect absolute righteousness and justice until present conditions cease, with the close of this dispensation,—of which the Scriptures tell us Satan is the prince or ruler. Instead of expecting justice in full measure now, the Lord's people should rather be surprised that there is so large a measure of justice obtainable in many parts of the world.

As our Lord was not willing to impose himself as a judge or an arbitrator in his day, so his followers now should not seek to interfere in secular affairs. The case would have been different had the two brothers come together to our Lord, and, indicating that they wished to do right, had requested his judgment of what would be the right course. In that event undoubtedly our Lord would have favored them with his view of the question and the reasons for it.

It would be an excellent thing for all of the Lord's footstep-followers to learn well this lesson of non-interference in secular matters—the lesson, that those who speak as the oracles of God should speak respecting spiritual matters, to the spiritual class and not to the worldly—to them that have ears to hear, and not to the blind and deaf. This, of course, would not mean that the Lord's people should not give any advice, but merely that they should not give advice nor otherwise interfere outside the laws, customs and usages of the country in which they reside. The young man in the narrative undoubtedly had appealed to his brother and to the Jewish authorities for the relief which he thought he ought to have; and similarly it is proper for a Christian to appeal to the person immediately interested for what he considers to be just rights in the matter in dispute. He may appeal also to the laws of the land in which he resides; but if he fails in this he should content himself with his condition and wait patiently for the Lord's kingdom and its righteous retribution.

* * *

This principle, put into practice by Christian missionaries in China, would, we believe, have led to very different conditions than those which now obtain there. But our Lord's example and various injunctions along this line have been very generally ignored, and, to the contrary, it has been the custom of missionaries, who have gone to China and other lands, to ignore the laws of those lands and "the powers that be" there, which God's ordinance has permitted. They have attempted to settle all kinds of disputes; interfering in a manner which the Master, in this lesson, disapproved of. Not only so, but they have sought and invoked, publicly and privately, the interference of various so-called Christian governments of the world on their behalf, and in violation of the laws of "the powers that be" in those countries. It is as a result of this wrong line of conduct that the good of Christianity, its moral and civilizing influences, are specially hated and feared,—as political interferences, aimed at the destruction of the laws and institutions which to those people appear to be wise and good; and which undoubtedly are adapted to the present intellectual and moral conditions of the masses of their people.

We cannot too strongly condemn, as contrary to the Master's teachings, modern methods of missionary effort—backed by cannon, warships and soldiers. It seems to us wholly contrary to the method employed by our Lord and the apostles, and advocated by them. It is much more in harmony with the methods adopted during the dark ages by Papacy and by Mohammedanism. Early Protestant missions seem to us to have been along much more reasonable and proper lines. The missionary, in giving himself to that work, understood and agreed that, figuratively speaking, he took his life in his hands; he had already sacrificed his life before starting. Neither he nor those who sent him forth thought of appealing to the government to avenge his death, either with many lives for the one life, or with large sums of money, nor with large concessions of land, or with large privileges of commerce. He went as a representative of the meek and lowly Jesus, as a "living sacrifice," as the apostles in early times went forth, without backing, ecclesiastical or civil. Like the apostles, they were privileged to appeal to all the laws and moral instincts of the people in whose midst they were living, and for whose good they were laying down their lives; but more than this they did not do, and were not authorized to do by anything in the Scriptures.

It is the present wrong system of compassing sea and land to make proselytes, with battleships, cannon and soldiers, that is responsible for the loss of thousands of lives and awful misery. Were the missionary question today left upon the same footing that it occupied in the days of the apostles, and again at the beginning of this century, it would probably be less pretentious in appearance, but in reality probably would have found just as many of the "elect" as the present method: and would have left undisturbed questions that already have caused much trouble, and which in the near future will cause more. It would have left millions of the poor heathen in a much more contented frame of mind than at present—would have left them much more susceptible to the influences of the true Gospel, when, by and by, the great missionary work which God has planned will begin in earnest, under the administration of the kingdom of heaven, with Christ and his elect church, the kings and priests, to rule and bless with infinite power and wisdom and love.

* * *

But while refusing to interfere with the matter, the Lord made use of the intrusion to point a lesson on the subject of covetousness—a lesson which would be of benefit to both of the brothers, if they were present, and a lesson, indeed, which could not fail to be of profit to all of his hearers. The exhortation to take heed of covetousness would apply to the one who had sought our Lord's interference. Possibly he had been asking something outside of his rights and outside of his father's will and intent—coveting what his father had really intended should go to his brother. Or, if he were asking only what was reasonably his due, our Lord's words would be a consolation to him, as showing that whether or not he got all of his rights in the present life would be a comparatively unimportant matter—unimportant as compared to his having such experiences as would be favorable to his eternal life, and rightly using those experiences. Our Lord's words would also be a lesson to the other brother, if he were seeking to defraud and to take unjustly what belonged to his brother—or even if he were covetously ungenerous in construing his brother's rights. Indeed, every one who will carefully consider the meaning of our Lord's parable in illustration of this subject of covetousness will draw from it a valuable, a profitable lesson.

THE RICH CHURL

In this parable it is not stated that the rich man had obtained his wealth by any unlawful means. He is not charged with having defrauded his brother or his neighbor. The record merely is that he had temporal blessings in abundance, and that by natural increase he was wealthy; and the point of the lesson turns upon his question to himself, What shall I do with these possessions?

The right attitude of mind, "the spirit of a sound mind," would have answered this question somewhat after this manner: These bounties of divine providence are a trust, and I am a steward, a trustee; my position will permit me to be a

source of great blessing to others of my fellow-creatures not so bountifully supplied; in fact, I have in my hand the power to make many fellow-creatures comfortable and happy; and in discharging this stewardship in this proper manner I shall have much greater pleasure than if I endeavored selfishly to use all these bounties upon myself, or to store them up for my own use in the future.

Such an unselfish, generous course would not only have had divine approval, and thus have constituted "true riches" "laid up in heaven," but, additionally, it would have been the most direct road to happiness for the already favored individual himself. It is a true proverb, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty." So, many have found that hoarding of earthly wealth leads to poverty of heart, to a meanness of disposition, which is not enjoyed by the individual himself, and which is strongly reprobated by him with whom rests our eternal interests, our everlasting blessing and riches. On the contrary, he who uses, in harmony with his best judgment, the earthly wealth committed to his care, thereby purchases to himself a rich reward of approbation on the part of all with whom he has to do; and, through the Lord's gracious arrangement in Christ, this cultivation of the spirit of love becomes a most important factor in respect to his attainment of everlasting joy and blessing.

As illustrating the uncertainty of such selfish calculations, our Lord might have made the parable to close by showing the rich man as losing all of his possessions and being reduced to beggary through some misfortune, such as war or fire; or he might have shown him the victim of a loathsome disease, in which even his riches could not purchase attendance, so that thus he might suffer want in the midst of plenty. But he chose to close the parable by merely representing the rich man as dying suddenly—ceasing to have and to hold and greedily enjoy his selfish hoardings. "Soul, take thine ease," etc., is merely another way of saying—Self, take thine ease, eat drink, etc.

Our Lord, to enforce the lesson, then raises the question, Whose, then, shall these things be? They could no longer be enjoyed by the accumulator, whoever might get them; he would be poor indeed, whoever might enjoy them; for these were all that he had; he had given up thought and effort and every talent to money-making and to attempted selfish enjoyments, and had not been rich toward God,—had not been rich in good works—had not laid up treasure in heaven. His life had been a failure; he would enter the next life a pauper, as respects mental and moral development in good qualities. He would enter it with a load of selfishness, with which to some extent he had been born, but to which he had added greatly by a life of selfishness. And his load of selfishness will, in that future life, for a time handicap his efforts toward true nobility, should he then make efforts toward perfection under the gracious terms of the Millennial kingdom.

Tho our Lord in the parable represents the covetous person as succeeding in accumulating riches, yet, as a matter of fact, the majority of covetous people never so succeed; and their selfishness is not less reprehensible from the fact that it fails of success. The thought rather is that if a covetous person who succeeds makes a miserable failure of life, how much worse would be the failure of the covetous person who gains nothing, either in the present life or in that which is to come!

Our Lord, turning to his disciples at this juncture, gave a special lesson applicable to them only, and not to the multitude. Literally translated this message is: Be not *anxious* as respects your earthly life, its food and its clothing. Think rather of the life which is to come; remember that this present condition is, from the divine standpoint, a death condition. Consider that in you who believe, the new, the eternal life, has already begun, and that if you will faithfully continue under present conditions in living for this new life, and not after the flesh, it will be perfected in the First Resurrection. Think more of your bodies than of the raiment which covers them; think more of your life than of the natural food by which it is at present sustained. God is able and willing to give perfect life and perfect bodies and perfect conditions to those who believe in me, who walk in my footsteps and meet my approval. The reason why you need not take *anxious* thought for these temporal things, for which the world takes anxious thought (and necessarily so), is this: you have come into harmony with God, and have been adopted into his family; believing in me, you have been granted "liberty to become *sons of God*." (John 1:12) As sons of God, with the new life begun in you, you are to realize that everything of the present life is quite unworthy to be compared with the future and eternal interests. You are to remember that, having consecrated yourselves to the Father's will in becoming my disciples, you have given up every interest and matter to his superior wisdom. Be content, therefore; be without anxiety, knowing that so long as you abide in me, and so long as you are walking in my footsteps, your Heavenly Father knoweth what things you have need of, even before you ask him, and is both able and willing to give what is best.

Therefore, if in divine providence you receive poverty as your unavoidable portion, accept it as best for you, according to divine wisdom; remembering that it is our Redeemer who is guarding our future and eternal interest, and permitting such experiences in this present life as will be most beneficial to us, and as will lead most directly to eternal riches and favors, and that in greatest measure.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE CHICAGO LOVE FEAST

A love feast from beginning to end! This was the public expression of many, and apparently the sentiment of all in attendance. Our Lord surely poured us out a grand spiritual blessing and refreshment. Surely if any went away empty it was in part or in whole his own fault. None of our conventions ever exhibited more love for the Lord and his truth and his brethren. Indeed each succeeding one seems just a little better than its predecessors, however grand they were. And may we not expect this, as we approach nearer and nearer in our journey toward "The general assembly and church of the first-borns?" It would be but reasonable that the ripening of the hearts of a larger number should be more and more manifest in the exhibited fruits of the spirit.

The Chicago Convention was announced as a—

CONVENTION OF BELIEVERS IN THE ATONEMENT Through "the Precious Blood of Christ"—"A Ransom for All," and in His Millennial Kingdom

It lasted for three days, continuously—except for intermissions for food and rest—and was followed by a colporteurs' session in the interest of those already in that service, or about to enter it.

The attendance was the best we have ever had;—three important items contributing: (1) Chicago's large population and the goodly number already interested in the truth there. (2) The city's central location. (3) The unusually low rates of railroad fare granted from every direction and over all roads. The number in attendance was estimated at between 500 and 600, and of these about 300 were from outside Chicago.

We had a grand time! The Lord be praised! May the blessing so abundantly poured out not only be lasting in its effect upon those who received it, but may it overflow from them upon the brethren at their various homes, and thus become wide-spread. We know well that we had the loving thoughts and earnest prayers of many thousands not privileged to meet with us. Eighty-two symbolized their consecration to death by water baptism (46 brothers, 36 sisters) It was a grand sight, such as is seldom witnessed on earth. We may be sure that our Lord, the great Chief Reaper, and the saints who have already joined him "beyond the vail," and also our guardian angels who continually minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation, looked upon that scene with deep interest, as did some three hundred brethren in the flesh who were witnesses.

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIANS TROUBLED

The split between Northern and Southern Presbyterians during the Civil war made of them practically two distinct bodies or denominations. The troubles and suggestions respecting the Confession of Faith have all been amongst the Northern brethren, until lately. However, at the last "General Assembly of the Presbyterian church (South)" a petition was received from the Presbytery of Brazos, Texas, requesting that the Assembly "modify the statements of the Confession regarding the eternal damnation of non-elect infants."

The resolution was strangled in committee which reported *adversely to any discussion of the Confession* fearing no doubt that the question once opened never would close. The representatives of the Brazos Presbytery asked an amendment to

the Confession reading thus:—"All dying in infancy are elect infants, and are regenerated," etc., Chapter 10, paragraph 3.

Note now the shrewd but dishonest treatment of that petition (formulated by the committee and adopted by the Assembly) in these words,—"We recommend that the prayer of the overture be declined, inasmuch as the present language of the Confession cannot, by any fair interpretation, be construed as teaching that any of those who die in infancy are lost."

Let us read over this paragraph 3, Chapter 10, of the Confession and see whether or not the Brazos brethren and humanity in general have mis-read it. Here it is: "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated, and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth. So also are all other *elect* persons who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word."

If the General Assembly were sincere in averring that in their judgment these words do not teach that there are non-elect infants who dying in infancy are lost, then it follows that these brethren have totally repudiated the doctrine of election taught in other paragraphs of their Confession of Faith. For if *all* infants are elect, or if the election does not take place until after the period of infancy, then they must deny all that Calvinism stands for in the way of *Predestination* and *Foreordination*. Otherwise they would be forced to the position that *only elect persons* die in infancy and hence must assume that God specially intervenes to *prevent* the non-elect from dying in infancy, specially supervising the deaths of the millions of infants dying annually from infanticide, lack of care etc.

But to think of the General Assembly taking any of the above positions would be altogether unreasonable, and hence we are unwillingly forced to think of their resolution as lacking in honesty, lacking in truthfulness, which they no doubt excused on the Jesuitical plea that—It is right to do wrong if thereby you can serve God and the church. However, *the* church is not served by this false statement, even if a sect is thereby held together a little longer. The true church "whose names are written in heaven," and which will eventually include all the truly "elect" "little flock," is never benefited or served by error or falsehood; but, as our Lord declared, only by the truth—"Sanctify them through thy truth, thy Word is truth." Nor is God served or honored by such false representations of his Word and plan.

Furthermore, the specifications of "*elect* infants" implies that the framers of this Confession had in mind *non-elect* infants who die in infancy, whose fate they left to be implied by the intelligent reader, who, if he accepted this Westminster Confession as a whole, would believe in elect and non-elect adults, and coupling this with the specifications of the same Confession on *predestination* would conclude that every *non-elect adult* must at one time have been a *non-elect infant*, who dying in infancy would have died non-elect and unregenerated and unsaved by Christ through the spirit who worked not upon them at any time nor anywhere nor anyhow, because he pleased not so to do, they being non-elect.

One would suppose that our dear Presbyterian friends, finding themselves in such inextricable confusion on this doctrine of election, and yet finding much on the subject in the Bible, would be ready, yes anxiously and hungrily waiting for the reasonable Bible-solution of the subject presented in *Millennial Dawn*. Yet comparatively few of them seem to be so. The only reasonable explanation is that the majority are not sufficiently honest with themselves and with each other, and with God and his Word. They do not sufficiently love the truth—error is preferred. They do not hunger and thirst after right. Hence also the comparatively few who are "sanctified through the truth"—the large number failing to make their calling and election sure, because unsanctified by reason of their false doctrines.

THE "BIBLE HOUSE," ALLEGHENY

Friends of the cause naturally feel a deep interest in everything connected in any manner with the harvest work. We have frequently been urged to publish the Editor's picture either in the DAWNS or in these columns; but have as persistently refused. It is the truth rather than its servant that should be honored and proclaimed. There is too much disposition to credit truth to the preacher, forgetful that all truth is of God, who uses one or another servant in its proclamation as it may please him.

However, when requested to publish a photo of our workshop, the "Bible House," we could think of no reasonable objection, and hence it is being reproduced in this issue. The third floor is the chapel in which Sunday and other services are held. On the top floor, centre, is the Editor's study: his usual seat being near the window at the head of the spiral fire escape.

GATHER ALL THY CHILDREN HOME

Heavenly Father, Holy One!
May thy will in me be done;
Make my heart submissive, meek,
Let me ne'er mine own way seek!
Loving Savior, I would be
Ever more and more like thee,
Free from pride and self-desire,
Fervent with a holy fire.

Blessed Lord, thy saints defend,
Watching o'er them to the end;
Day by day their faith increase
Keep them in thy perfect peace,
Comfort, strengthen, guide and bless,
Lead them through the wilderness;
And when thy due time shall come,
Gather all thy children home! —G. W. S.

"DO YE EVEN SO TO THEM"

"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."—Matt. 7:12.

Whatever the tests we apply, Jesus and his teachings are seen to tower above all others. For instance, we are frequently told that the Golden Rule is found in the writings of Confucius as well as in the New Testament, and that this is a proof that Confucius was a teacher equal in rank with Jesus, and equally sent of God. And no doubt many of those who give this report do so in all honesty; for the fact is that many Christians have never seen the depth and scope of the Golden Rule given by Jesus, and misunderstand it to be the same as the maxim by Confucius, which much resembles it. There is a wide distinction, however, and in comparison the words of Confucius might be termed a brazen rule. His maxim is, "Do not do to others what you would not wish them to do to you." We repeat that this is as much as the majority of Christians have ever seen in the Golden Rule given by our Lord.

We would be glad to see the maxim of Confucius received and acted upon throughout the whole world by every creature, and undoubtedly the result would be a great blessing to mankind—a great improvement over present conditions, in which almost everybody except the saints who seek to walk in the footsteps of the Lord are continually doing every day the very things which they would not wish their neighbors to do to them. But even tho so great a reformation could be brought about, it would still leave much to be desired; it would still leave the world far from the condition suggested by our Lord's prayer, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." For men might, through policy or for other reasons, deal justly with each other, refraining from the doing of such things as they would not wish done to them, and with all that their hearts might be very full of selfishness, meanness, covetousness, etc., and very far from the condition of love.

But when we note the comprehensiveness of our Lord's Golden Rule, we find it is absolutely a love-rule; and that it leaves nothing to be desired: nothing could possibly be added to it; it is complete. It is not merely a negative law: "Thou shalt not" do an injury; it is a positive law: "Thou shalt" do good. Thou shalt do thy neighbor all the good, all the kindness, all the service, that thou wouldst have him do to thee. This law, which the Apostle calls "the law of liberty," the perfect law, this Golden Rule for life, has no parallel anywhere, in any writings, and could not possibly have a superior, —a grander sentiment could not possibly be expressed. But how few there are who rightly appreciate and love this rule, and use it daily in the measurement of their own conduct! As already noted, the majority, even of the best people in the world, the vast majority of Christians, fail to discern its lengths and its breadths, and consider it merely an injunction not to do injury to others. How few, then, joyfully and appreciatively grasp its sentiments, and seek from the heart to conform their lives thereto—none but the saints, none but the "elect," we may be sure, are thus in heart-harmony with the essence and spirit of their Heavenly Father's law of love.

There might be danger of some of the Lord's people using this rule amiss and to their injury, by being overgenerous toward others and not sufficiently careful of themselves; but such instances are very rare, because in our entire race the general result of the fall has been to crowd out love and benevolence, and to fill us with selfishness. So much is this the case that it has become a worldly proverb that "Self-preservation is the first rule of life;" that self is always to be number one, and to be cared for well and thoroughly before others are to be even considered.

Even after we have been begotten of the holy spirit, as new creatures, after the transforming of our minds has begun, we all know from experience that the selfishness of the old nature is so deep-grained that it is likely to hold its own with us to the very end of life. We have, however, known of some who, in their desire to conform themselves fully to the Lord's will, have taken an extreme view of this Golden Rule, and have understood it as tho it said, "Thou shalt do to thy neighbor *as he shall wish thee* to do to him"—not noticing that this would be a very different rule, and one which might operate very unfavorably in every way. While few are in danger of making a mistake in this direction, many are inclined to reason on the matter from this standpoint, and to say: We could not possibly carry out this Golden Rule in the ordinary affairs of life, because, for instance, if I were to do to my neighbor as I should wish him to do to me, I should sell him a five-dollar pair of shoes for one dollar; or a twenty-dollar suit of clothes for five dollars; or what he might want of wheat or oats at half the usual price. And if I adopted such a rule with one, I should properly adopt it with all, and this would soon mean bankruptcy in my business; so, evidently, the Golden Rule cannot be used in human affairs at the present time.

But we answer that this is a mistaken view of the Golden Rule, and whoever examines it should see that the difficulty probably lies in the selfishness of his own heart. He thinks his neighbor might expect goods at less than cost, because he thinks that he himself would be *willing to receive* goods at less than cost from his neighbor. The application of the Golden Rule should show him his difficulty: should teach him the lesson that when he goes to his neighbor to buy shoes he must do to his neighbor as he would that his neighbor should do to him: he must pay his neighbor a reasonable price for his shoes; a reasonable, living profit. And likewise in every other transaction: the Golden Rule teaches us that we should be willing to pay the farmer for his produce, and the manufacturer for his, as we would think just if we were the manufacturer and making the sale. Likewise, if we were making the sale, we should not think of charging our customers a larger profit than we would think reasonable if they were the sellers and we the customers. Whoever of the Lord's people, therefore, gets thoroughly into the way of using this Golden Rule in all of life's affairs will certainly find that it will elevate their conceptions of justice, righteousness, equity; and these godlike qualities will become more and more developed in them, as parts of their characters, until they will obey them not merely because of their harmony with the Master's Golden Rule, but because they will recognize their true beauty and grandeur, and because their hearts will be in harmony with them.

But this rule, while thus inculcating justice, goes beyond this and inculcates benevolence;—such benevolence and so much of it as we, with properly balanced minds would be disposed to ask of others if we were the ones in need, in straits. O how grandly rounded out in spiritual character would all of the Lord's true saints become, under the influence of this Golden Rule! It would not only affect the actions of life, making them first just toward all with whom they had dealings, then, benevolently disposed toward all needing their assistance to whatever degree they were able to render assistance without doing injury to others,—and, additionally, the same law in force would extend also to their every word. Under the regulations of this golden measurement how few bitter or angry or slanderous words would be used—for how few would like to have others use such to or of them — to speak to them in anger and with bitterness and rancor, or to slander them. No wonder the Apostle tells us that those who have put on Christ must put off all these—anger, malice, hatred, strife, envy, slanders, etc. Additionally, this Golden Rule would lead to kind words, gentle actions, considerate demeanor; for who would not wish such from his neighbor? As the Apostle again declares, we are to put on as Christian graces,—gentleness, meekness, patience, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, love.—Col. 3:8, 12-15.

This Golden Rule, beginning with the outward actions, and progressing to our words, would very quickly extend to our thoughts; and as we would not wish to have others think ungenerously or meanly of us, nor put a bad construction on our every act of life, but would rather that they would view our words and deeds generously and lovingly, so we in turn

would find, that under the influence of this Golden Rule, our thoughts of others would become more generous, more noble, less suspicious, etc.

This Golden Rule is assuredly the divine law which our dear Redeemer expressed in other words at another time, saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." We may safely consider, therefore, that the one rule interprets the other, and that to love our neighbor as ourselves signifies that we should love him and do for him as we ourselves would wish him to love us and to do for us. And we could not understand it to mean more than this. God expects of us that we will make reasonable provision for ourselves and for those for whom, by legal or natural ties, we are responsible—our families, our relatives, as the Apostle says: "He that provideth not for his own, and especially they of his own house, hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."—1 Tim. 5-8.

Evidently, therefore, our own households are our first charge and responsibility, and must have reasonable attention before we could hope to do for our neighbors. This would indeed be putting a difference between our neighbor and ourselves, and between our neighbor's family and our own family, but the matter is well adjusted by the Golden Rule, rightly interpreted, which requires of us that we shall do for our neighbor, in his want and extremity, as we would have him do for us, were we in his circumstances and he in ours. And our minds being leveled up to a plane of justice, we should expect that if we were in distress our neighbor would first make reasonable provision for his own family, and not give to us to the injury or deprivation of those more immediately and more closely dependent upon him.

IS THE GOLDEN RULE INCUMBENT?

But some one may inquire: Is it *necessary* for us as Christians to attempt to carry out this Golden Rule in our daily lives? When we see that very few even of Christian people appreciate the rule, or to any extent seek to carry it out, may we not consider that it is a very good rule, but that its observance is not made incumbent upon us, and that our attainment of eternal life and heavenly glory are not linked with the observance of this Golden Rule? May we not consider it rather as a good standard to have in mind as the perfect law, but consider that we are not to live up to that standard in any sense of the word?

We answer that this Golden Rule was the one by which our dear Redeemer's every action was measured, the one according to which he lived, and under which he laid down his life on our behalf, and it is essential to and incumbent upon all those who would be his disciples, his followers. All who hope to become his joint-heirs in the kingdom are required to walk in his footsteps as he set us an example (1 Pet. 2:21), or, as another Apostle declares, God has fore-ordained to have an elect church to be joint-heirs in the kingdom with Christ, but he has equally fore-ordained that none shall ultimately be acceptable as members of that glorified church except such as shall, in the present life, become copies of God's dear Son, our Lord Jesus: and to copy him means to copy the Golden Rule, which was exemplified in him and in his course. It follows, therefore, that whoever expects to share the kingdom must give diligence to the formation of character, and that this Golden Rule is necessary in such formation of character—to develop in us not the principles of equity, or justice only, but also the spirit of love, of unselfishly doing good to others.—Rom. 8:29.

DIVINE STRENGTH PERFECTED IN HUMAN WEAKNESS

But here again comes in the question, How can those who by nature are fallen and imperfect, and full of inherited selfishness and meanness, ever hope to keep this Golden Rule, which is the full measure of a perfect man's obedience, and which, with all his well-doing and sacrificing, was not more than fulfilled by our Lord Jesus himself? How could we hope to be approved as keepers of this Golden Rule, in the sight of him who can read, not only the outward conduct, but also the thoughts and intents of our hearts?

We answer that here comes to our relief the gracious arrangement which God has provided for this Gospel age, *viz.*, justification by faith. Our justification not only covers "the sins that are past" (Rom. 3:25), and makes us acceptable to God in Christ, so that we can offer ourselves as living sacrifices upon his altar, but, more than this, it stands with us all the way down the journey of life, and according to God's grace in Christ it compensates for, or makes up for us all of our unintentional deficiencies, so that, as the Apostle says, "The righteousness of the Law [expressed in the Golden Rule] is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."—Rom. 8:4.

Since we are not all alike fallen, not all alike selfish, it follows that some walk much nearer to the spirit of the divine Law, attain much closer to the measurement required by the Golden Rule, than can others; yet no fallen creature can walk fully up to the requirements of the Golden Rule, so long as handicapped by the various weaknesses of the flesh; and here the grace of God in Christ makes up our deficiencies; those who are able to follow the pattern most closely are still far from following it absolutely, and consequently need to have the merit of the precious blood of Christ imputed to them to make up for their shortcomings; and those who are still more fallen, and who, with their very best efforts, are still further from measuring up to the grand standard of the Golden Rule, need that much more of God's grace to compensate for their deficiencies. Hence the Apostle declares that where sin and imperfection abound the most, there God's grace correspondingly abounds the more; so that those who are in Christ and seek to walk in his footsteps, who are in their hearts measuring themselves with the Golden Rule, and seeking to the best of their *ability* to live up to its requirements, may be succeeding variously in their endeavors, from the worldly standpoint; but from the divine standpoint all such are reckoned as having their blemishes fully covered with the merit of our dear Redeemer's sacrifice, and that therefore the righteousness of the Law, its true meaning, its spirit, and the true measure of the Golden Rule, is reckoned as *fulfilled* in them to divine acceptance,—perfectly.

But it is not merely to have this Golden Rule thus reckonedly fulfilled in us for a day or for a week or for a month that counts us "overcomers," but that we shall faithfully continue to walk as closely in the Lord's footsteps as we may be able, faithfully continuing to use his Golden Rule to the best of our ability; and that we shall do this day by day and year by year with continued and increasing zeal, until our Master, watching the process of development of character, shall say, It is enough; the character is fixed; the love for righteousness is permanent and thoroughly developed; the spirit of love is indelibly marked, and altho there still remain in the flesh traces of selfishness, yet they are dim and faint in comparison with the original mark, and give good evidence of victory gained, not in the flesh, but in the heart, in the will.

"They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."—Mal. 3:17.

ANOTHER SERIOUS ERROR MADE BY SOME IN APPLYING THE GOLDEN RULE TO LIFE

Undoubtedly the Golden Rule has, to a considerable extent, exercised an *influence* over even worldly people (nominal Christians), where such have come more in contact with the true saints who endeavor with more or less zeal to recognize and to use the Golden Rule in the measurement of their daily conduct, without their being keepers of it is a rule, or even professing so to do. And even amongst Christians who have given themselves to the Lord, and who fully desire that his will in every particular shall be done in them, and who recognize this Golden Rule as a grand expression of the divine will, we believe there are serious misapprehensions respecting the proper manner of its use. For instance, among the noblest of the Lord's people are some who say, We will turn our backs on society and worldly enjoyments, and devote what time we have at our disposal to the improvement of the fallen —to moral reforms, social reforms, financial reforms, the reforming of drunkards, etc. And still others, imbued with the same spirit, and with the same desire to fulfil this Golden Rule, say, We will leave home and friends, and go into far-off lands as missionaries, to preach Christ to the heathen.

We are bound to appreciate such noble sentiments, whether we can agree with the conclusions as to methods of work, etc., or not. We love the noble principle which, if not in every instance, at least in many cases, lies at the foundation of such sacrifices of time, influence, convenience, etc.: it is an outworking of the Golden Rule in these dear friends, saying to themselves and to others, If we were in the slums or in heathen degradation, we should wish that some of God's children would come to us, to lift us up and enlighten us, and hence we should do so to others, even as we would, if our conditions were altered, that they should do to us.

This is sound reasoning and a proper application of the Golden Rule, and yet also, we believe, a mistaken or wrong one. One of the first lessons that the Christian is called upon to learn in the School of Christ is, that his judgment is defective; that not only our physical powers have degenerated through the fall, but that likewise our mental powers have suffered; so that the whole world today is not only un sound of body, but also unsound of mind, unsound of judg-

ment. The primary lessons of God's children in the School of Christ are to the effect that we all lack wisdom, and that for this very reason he has provided his Book, the Bible,—"that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished."—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

We are taught in the Book that the work of salvation is one too great for humanity itself, and that therefore God has undertaken the work; we are taught that he has not left the matter to operate itself at random, neither has he left it to our imperfect judgments and puny efforts: we are taught that the great Savior of the world planned his work "from the foundation of the world," and yet that it was four thousand years and more before he took the first great step for its accomplishment, namely, the giving of his Son to be the redemption price of Adam and his race (1 Pet. 1:20); we are taught that having begun this work of salvation God has not abandoned it, and does not intend to abandon it, but that eventually "he shall bring forth judgment [trial] unto victory;"—and that eventually our Lord Jesus shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul on man's behalf, and shall be satisfied;—that eventually the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and all shall know him from the least to the greatest; that eventually he shall bring in everlasting righteousness, so that the time shall ultimately come when all the families of the earth shall be blessed with the knowledge of God's goodness and grace, and with an opportunity to benefit thereby; that eventually whosoever will not obey the great Prophet-King shall be cut off from amongst the people in the second death; that, eventually there shall be no more dying, no more sighing, no more crying, no more pain there, because the former things of Adamic sin and its penalty and blight shall have been done away.—Isa. 14:24, 27; 55:11; Matt. 12:20; Isa. 53:11; 11:9; Jer. 31:34; Acts 3:19-23; Rev. 21:3, 4

But many of God's dear people overlook these gracious provisions and promises of his Word, and partaking to a considerable extent of the spirit of love they forget that God's love is still greater than their own, even as God's wisdom is greater than theirs; hence they lose sight of the fact that the entire plan of salvation is of God, and that he has not abandoned it to others, but will carry it out himself in his own due time. It is because they forget this that they become burdened with the weight of responsibility, and feel as tho the salvation of the world rested upon themselves—and, impressed with this feeling of self-importance and forgetfulness of God's Word, they go into the mission work, slum work, and to the heathen. They forget, and are greatly disadvantaged by so doing, that God has already declared, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my plans higher than your plans, and my ways higher than your ways."—Isa. 55:8, 9.

As a consequence of this oversight and misdirection of effort, these dear friends are doing works now which God intends shall be done in a future age, and which can and will be done then to very much better advantage every way. God has appointed the Millennial age for this work of lifting up the weak, opening the blind eyes of the barbarians, and unstopping their dull ears to hear the message of divine grace. God has appointed that when his time for this great work, in which he is more interested than any of his creatures possibly could be, will come, the conditions will be favorable to the success of his plan, which he guarantees us will succeed, and will bring blessings to all the families of the earth, and will enlighten every man born into the world.—Gal. 3:16, 29; John 1:9; Acts 3:19-21.

God's Word informs those who seek his counsel, that at that time Satan shall be bound so that he may deceive the nations no more, as he is now doing (Rev. 20:1-3): that during that period of Satan's restraint those whom he now blinds (2 Cor. 4:4) with various doctrines, sophistries, superstitions, etc., will be freed from these, and have the eyes and ears of their understanding opened. It informs us also, that at that time he will establish as the King over all the earth his honored agent, who gave his life as a ransom for mankind; and that our Lord Jesus will establish the kingdom of God amongst men, a kingdom not merely in name, but also in power and in fact; one which shall rule the world, forcibly putting down sin, oppression, ignorance, superstition, darkness; and raising up righteousness, truth, and every good principle and influence for the blessing and uplifting of those whom he purchased with his precious blood. It informs us that under his beneficent reign all evil shall be subdued, that even death shall be conquered; and that all mankind, freed from the Adamic sentence of death, may, if they will, then attain unto eternal life and full human perfection, and that only the wilful sinners against light and opportunity will be utterly destroyed in the second death.—1 Cor. 15:24-28; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9; Acts 3:23.

The same Word instructs us that the Lord's plan for the present age does not purpose the conversion of the world; nor its salvation in any sense of the word; nor its uplifting; but that his plan, on the contrary, is simply the development of the church, the foreordained and predestinated number, a "little flock," who must all be selected from amongst men, and every one of them be copies of God's dear Son. (Rom. 8:29) It also informs us that this work of God in this age is the work in which we are invited to be co-workers together with God. It points out to us that this is the work of the bride—to make *herself* ready for the marriage (Rev. 19:7); that the special work in this present time consists not only in the "*calling*" of the church, but also in the building up of one another, among the called ones, in the most holy faith;—helping one another to perfect holiness in the reverence of the Lord,—showing us that a large part of our work is in our own hearts, cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, helping one another to make our calling and our election sure, by perfecting in our hearts the Golden Rule.—2 Cor. 7:1; Jude 20.

But overlooking the particular service marked out for those who would be co-workers with God in this age, our dear friends, now criticised, misuse their Golden Rule, by applying it outside of the class for which the Lord intended it in this age. It will be applicable to all the heathen world and the sub-stratum of society in the Millennial age, but now it is applicable chiefly to the household of faith. True, if we could accomplish all that the Lord would have us accomplish for the household of faith, it would then be very proper for us to extend our efforts to the heathen and lower strata of society, rather than to sit down in idleness; but so far from finding that we have not enough to engage our time in the household of faith, we find that we are in the harvest-time of the age, and that the harvest is great and the laborers are few, and that there is much more than enough to engage all our time and energies among the "brethren" whom the Lord our God has called. Hence the Golden Rule calls us to be exercised chiefly amongst these, and not amongst those whom the Lord our God has not yet called, but who are left, in the divine plan, for a calling and blessing of another kind in the next age—the Millennial age.

Looking back we see that our dear Master, who gave the Golden Rule, observed it in the manner we are now advocating. Living in the end of the Jewish age, and knowing that the divine favors and blessings at that time were confined to fleshly Israel, our Lord, with a full appreciation of the Golden Rule, nevertheless used it in strict harmony with the Father's plan; and accordingly instructed his twelve apostles also, saying, "Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; for I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:56; 15:24, 26) Likewise the apostles understood that while, at the death of Christ, the middle wall of partition, which had heretofore separated divine favor from other nations, was now broken down, so that, so far as God was concerned, the Gospel message was open to every creature,—nevertheless, that every creature had not open ears for the Gospel, and that according to the Lord's plan he would not open their ears until his due time, the Millennial age, and hence it was that the apostles sought for the class to whom the present message, the high calling for the church, was intended,—"He that hath an ear, let him hear."

Pursuing this policy of searching for those who had ears to hear, the Apostle Paul, sent by the Lord to be the great messenger of grace to the Gentiles, did not say within himself (as some of our dear missionary friends seem to say within themselves), I will seek out the most illiterate and degraded people in the world, that I may lift them up. Had this been the Apostle's sentiment he doubtless would have hastened, with his coadjutors, southward from Jerusalem into darkest Africa, or eastward from Jerusalem into India, with its hundreds of millions, and still further eastward into China, with its hundreds of millions, in utter ignorance of God and steeped in superstition. But the Apostle had made a better study of the divine plan, and knew that the times of restitution, the Millennial age, was set apart by God for this general uplift of mankind; and that it would be a waste of effort to undertake to do that work in advance of God's cooperation; in advance of his time and in advance of his ar-

rangements, which his wisdom foresaw would be necessary to the accomplishment of that work.

The Apostle reasoned, on the contrary, "God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31), and that appointed day is a future day, the Millennial day; and if God has appointed that day to be the time for the world's judgment, it would be folly on my part to attempt to bring in a judgment of the world sooner than God intends it, even if I were able to do so. He reasoned, further, that if God has appointed a future day for judging the world in general, then the world in general is not on trial or under judgment in the present Gospel day, and hence might just as well be left in their heathen darkness a little longer, as God already had left them in heathen darkness for more than four thousand years,—and he reasoned wisely, logically. He was instructed of the Lord, and hence he had the spirit of a sound mind, and did not attempt to do an utterly impossible and hence a foolish thing. He did not attempt to be either wiser or more loving than the Heavenly Father, but trusting to the Heavenly Father's wisdom and love he sought to know the will of God now, in this present age, that he might thus be an ambassador for God and a coworker together with him.

Nor was he left in darkness. He was instructed of the Lord, and he in turn instructs us, that the work of the present age is the work of preparing the *judges* of the world, who, when the great day of the world's judgment or trial shall have dawned, will be prepared to execute judgment and justice in the world, and to bless with a righteous rule all the families of the earth. He informs us that the saints now being tried (judged), tested and developed in character are undergoing this severe process, and are required to walk in the "narrow way," to the intent that they may be fit to be instruments of God for *judging the world* in righteousness when the due time for that judgment shall have come. (1 Cor. 6:2, 3) Consequently, we find that the Apostle's energies, so far from being directed to the substratum of society, the heathen and the barbarians, were directed to the very opposite class. He sought the best people in the world; the most moral people and the most intelligent; the people most advanced in every sense of the word—believing, and rightly, that the reasonable and gracious plan of God would commend itself better to such than to the sodden and benighted and stupefied and degraded minds of the barbarian heathen. Conservatively, the Apostle first sought the intelligent classes of Asia Minor, and after having gone through various cities (not attempting nor expecting to convert the people *en masse*, but merely hoping, in harmony with the divine program, to find a few, a little flock, and to establish these in principles of righteousness and in the School of Christ, to learn of him and to develop character, and to be prepared for the future work of judgship and joint-heirship with Christ in the kingdom)—the Apostle pressed on to find still others who had "ears to hear."

The declaration of the Scriptures is that he and his company purposed to go into Asia, but that under divine providence he seemed to be hindered from going there, and that then God specially directed him in a dream, and sent him into Europe with the message—sending him, not to barbarians, but to the most enlightened and most cultured people of the then civilized world, the people of Greece. (Acts 16:7-10) And we remember that later on the Lord sent the Apostle to Rome, telling him in advance that this was his purpose, and seemingly in order to keep the Apostle in Rome he was sent there a prisoner, yet for three years was permitted to have full liberty to preach Christ to as many as had ears to hear. And let us not forget a circumstance which occurred in connection with the journey to Rome, when the Apostle was shipwrecked on the Island of Melita. (Acts 28:1-10) He found there a people who, so far as we are able to judge, were on the average better prepared for the truth than the Chinese, Malays, etc., and of these the record says, "The barbarians showed us no little kindness." We might suppose that barbarians who were disposed to be kind and generous to people who were ship-wrecked on their coast, would be a rather more favorable class to approach with the gospel of Christ than cannibals, to whom missionaries of today frequently go.

And yet what do we find as the result of the Apostle's stay in the midst of that people all that winter? Do we read that he left several flourishing little missions? Do we read that he preached day and night unto the barbarians? Not a word of it; no mention is made of the slightest effort to reach them. The Apostle seemingly knew that they were too degraded to have any ear to hear the Christian message, or to be called with the high calling which God during this age is sending forth, to gather the bride for his Son. We have every reason to believe that the Apostle made no effort whatever to make known the Gospel of Christ to those heathen people. Quite possibly while he was there forcibly detained in their midst, and unable to reach those who would have an ear to hear the good tidings, he may have attempted to suggest to them certain moral reforms, or how to live more comfortably, or something else that would come within the range of their measure of intelligence. But apparently he had no thought whatever that the Gospel "High Calling" was for such, and hence the Golden Rule, operating in his life and governing his conduct, was limited accordingly—limited to act in harmony with the divine revelation and the divine plan.

Why is it that the example of Jesus and his inspired apostles is overlooked by so many of our dear Christian friends today? Why is it that they use their Golden Rule without respect to the divine plan and divine promise? We answer, It is because some of them are leaning to their own understanding, instead of seeking the divine word, and to be taught of God; they think they know what ought to be done without inquiring of God's Word, and they are going about to do what they think should be done, rather than seeking to follow heaven's directions and Apostolic example. Many of them, indeed, are not self-conceited to the extent of being careless respecting advice; indeed, many of them are quite lacking in thought on their own part, and only too willing and too anxious to take advice of others; but they are not sufficiently careful where they get the advice.

They say to themselves, We *belong* to the Presbyterian body: look at its millions; look at its education; look at its influence. Or, We *belong* to the Methodist body: look at its numbers, influence, etc., etc. The same is true of the others. And then they ask, Is it possible that all these wise and learned men should be mistaken? Do they not all advocate that we should thus go out to preach the gospel amongst the heathen? Yes, we answer; this is a part of the delusion: many of the great and worldly-wise have adopted a theory, and are attempting to operate the Golden Rule wholly outside of and in utter neglect of the divine plan. Their theory is that *God's kingdom has come*, and they point to the civilized nations of Europe and America as evidences and proofs that God's kingdom has come, and they say, What all zealous Christians should now do is to convert the Chinese nation, the Japanese nation, India, and all the tribes of the earth, that these also may become Christian nations like those of Europe and America, and thus the whole world will become God's kingdom.

But we answer, This is false, utterly false; the nations of Europe and America are not God's kingdom, notwithstanding the fact that they claim to be Christian nations, and that they put upon their coins that their monarchs reign by the grace of God. They are all, at best and at most, "kingdoms of this world," under the control of Satan, "the prince of this world." (John 14:30) These are the kingdoms which at the advent of Christ's kingdom he declares shall be broken in pieces as a potter's vessel, as being utterly unfit for his service, and utterly out of harmony with the principles of righteousness which will be established in his kingdom.—Rev. 2:26, 27; Dan. 2:45.

Alas! if these kingdoms of so-called Christendom be the fulfillment of our dear Redeemer's prayer which he taught us as his disciples, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven"—if we must accept these as God's kingdom, if we must think of their rule as being God's will done on earth as it is done in heaven—then some of us are greatly disappointed, for we find that God's will is very little done on earth, and consequently heaven, if no better than this, must be a pandenomium in comparison to what we had hoped for.

But we are not mistaken; the Lord's Word everywhere teaches that the present Gospel age is for the selection of the kingdom class, the saints, who by and by, in God's due time, shall be joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom, and inheritors with him of the great promises made to Father Abraham, that this seed, Christ (head and body—Gal. 3:16, 29), shall bless all the families of the earth, as God's kingdom bringing in everlasting righteousness. Would to God that we could assist to some extent in opening the blinded eyes of Christendom on this subject: and yet we could not hope to render any assistance to the general mass of churchianity,—for it is the divine plan that not the "tares," but only the "wheat," shall *now* understand.—Dan. 12:10; 1 Thes. 5:3-5.

All we can hope for is that those who are the Lord's true

saints are not, and never have been, fully satisfied with the position in which they are, and the work which they are doing; but realize a heart-hunger for something better, more satisfactory, and more in harmony with the divine character and power—that these who have ears, and who have already heard to some extent the true Gospel, might now hear the true ring of the Shepherd's voice, and thus be called away from Babylon and its confusion of error, its jargon of contradiction and insincerity, to the green pastures and still waters of divine truth—present truth—that thus separated (delivered from Babylon's bondage) they might be more fully united with the Shepherd himself, and become co-workers together with God in his work, learning to exercise the Golden Rule in their own hearts, in their own lives, and to help others of the household of faith and the bride of Christ to do the same

Nor are we to overlook the fact that while the present Gospel message is for the highest types of men, it appeals specially to the middle class of these—the humble but intelligent rather than the rich or great. "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matt 11:25, 26.

WATCHING AND ITS REWARD

LUKE 12:35-46.—SEPT. 23.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.*"—Matt. 26.41

Prayer is good, it is absolutely indispensable to Christian life It means, not only a living faith, but a growing faith. Experience will prove that neglect of either private prayer (Matt 6:6) or prayer in the congregation of the Lord's people (Acts 12:12; 1:14; 16:13; 1 Cor. 11:4, 5; 14:13 14: is sure to lead to leanness of soul and lukewarmness in respect to spiritual things—unfaithfulness, coldness, death On the contrary, communion with the Lord in prayer brings increased confidence in the Lord's supervision of our affairs increased faith in all the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word; increased realization of his dealings, past and present; increased love for all the brethren of Christ, and increased solicitude for their welfare and spiritual progress. Prayer is thus closely and actively identified with progress in spiritual things, progress in the fruits of the spirit, toward God, the brethren, and all men.

Our Golden Text suggests, however, that more than praying is necessary. Praying that does not fully represent the sentiments of the heart is apt very quickly to degenerate into a mere form of words—drawing nigh to the Lord with the lips while the heart is far from him,—perhaps enwrapped in business or pleasure or sin. Whoever, therefore, would make progress in the spiritual way must not only pray with the spirit and with the understanding, but he must also watch—against the sinful tendencies of his own flesh—*self*-gratification, selfishness, also against the allurements of the world toward so-called worldly pleasures, worldly ambitions, honor amongst men, the love of money, etc.; also against the wiles of the adversary, whose deceitful attacks usually come upon the Lord's people as "an angel of light"—to deceive them into forms and ceremonies of Churchianity, substituting before the mind and affections and consecrated intentions, human sentiments and methods and works and objectives, as instead of "the hope set before us in the Gospel" (Col. 1.23) and its various exceeding great and precious promises, by whose incentive the Lord has called us to walk and to run, by faith and not by sight, following in the footsteps of our Redeemer.

Our lesson itself deals particularly with the watching; but in harmony with the Golden Text we know that all true watchers must also be prayers, and that all fervent prayers will also be watchers. Prayer represents the faith; watching represents the works which must accompany it, so long as it is a living faith; for, as the Apostle declares, Faith without works is dead—it speedily loses its vitality, its value its very existence.

Our Lord gave a parable as was his custom in teaching to illustrate this lesson of the necessity for watchfulness.

A wealthy householder is represented as absent for a considerable portion of the night at a wedding-feast, and expecting on his return that the servants of the household would be awake and alert to receive him and any company he might bring with him It was expected of such servants that they would not only not retire to bed, but that they would not even get drowsy To give their master a proper reception they should be thoroughly awake, quick to hear and to respond to his knock, and to "open unto him immediately." Hence, in the parable, such servants are represented as having their loins girt about and their lamps burning brightly. The custom of Orientals at that time was to wear long, loose, flowing robes. These, when they were resting, were loosened at the girdle but when attending to business they were drawn tightly at the waist with a girdle or belt, preventing them from intertering with proper service. Lamps, which were the mode of illumination, were also necessary in the night, and should not be permitted to grow dim, but be trimmed as necessity required.

Our Lord points out that such faithful servants would be appreciated by their master, and that he would give them a reward—he would honor them by treating them as his friends and bring forth to them of the good things from his pantry He would indeed gird himself as a servant and serve these faithful ones: and for the master of the house to do this would imply the bringing forth of the very best that he possessed. But in order to fulfil the conditions and be thus acceptable to their master they must be ready in whatever hour of the night he might come.

The parable, without question, refers to the second coming of our Lord Jesus, and points out to all of his faithful servants the proper attitude of watchfulness and preparation to receive him at whatever time his second advent should occur. It also indicates that it was the Lord's good pleasure not to reveal definitely and positively to his people when to expect his arrival, but rather that all the way down through this night-time which we designate the Gospel age, and which must necessarily precede the morning of the Millennial day, they should be continually awake, alert, waiting for him ready to receive him at any moment. They should have the loins of their minds girt up and be active in thought, in word and in deed, in every matter pertaining to the Master's service, that they might be approved of him;—the lamp of the divine Word, so necessary to their enlightenment, should be with them, and well supplied with the oil of the holy spirit—and well trimmed, in the sense of rightly dividing the word of truth, and seeking to understand through it their proper attitude of heart and conduct, to be pleasing to their Master.

The parable is a very simple one, and could scarcely be misapprehended by the class for whom all parables are intended—the consecrated church. These realize at once that the central thought with them, as the Lord's servants, must be such readiness of heart and mind and character as will be pleasing to the Master when he shall come to gather his "jewels,"—his watching, faithful servants. This thought of the return of the Lord, and of the blessings which he has promised to his faithful ones at that time, is the great incentive set before the called ones of this Gospel age. It is for the Master's favor and the consequent exaltation with him to a share in his kingdom, then to be established, and a share in the great work of blessing the world of mankind, then to be accomplished, that all of the saints are seeking, watching praying, striving.

Well has the Apostle said, "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he [the looked-for Master] is pure." It is this hope that leads the faithful servants continually to the lamp of the divine Word, to trim it and to thereby keep themselves thoroughly awake, quick of ear and quick of eye in respect to any and every thing relating to the will of the expected Master, and such conditions of heart-purity and robes of righteousness as would be pleasing and acceptable in his sight at his arrival.

Let all watchers fully appreciate this parable, and be on guard against every ensnarement of the adversary, and against the stupefying influence of the world and its spirit, and against the selfishness and weaknesses of his own flesh: and let each put on the graces of the spirit, and assist his fellow-servants in these preparations, that thus an entrance may be ministered to him into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.—2 Pet. 1:4-12.

What great blindness and spiritual stupor respecting so simple a parable is manifested by many who are regarded as teachers in nominal Zion, in respect to this lesson! Note the interpretation of it offered by one of the leading "Helps to Sunday School teachers." The writer evidently is not so blind as to fail to see that the parable relates in some manner to the second coming of our Lord; but he *is* so blinded

by misconceptions, false doctrines, etc., as to give the following as an explanation:—

"The comings of the Lord are ever unexpected to us,—his coming at death, his coming to judge the world, his coming in his kingdom, his coming in the harvest-times of men, his coming in the crises of our lives, his coming with opportunities and open doors, his coming with the power of the holy Spirit."

This blind teacher thus believes in seven comings of Christ, additional to his first coming eighteen centuries ago. More than this, the words we quote signify that the writer believes that a coming of Christ occurs every time a death occurs (or possibly he limited this to the death of his saints; but other teachers of the same school of darkness, when preaching funeral sermons, are accustomed to announce the Lord's coming in the death, not only of saints, but of pretty nearly everybody). This writer further claims a coming of Christ in all the crises as well as in all the opportunities of human life. He evidently believes (may we not say, dreams?—he surely is not *awake*, and surely his lamp is not trimmed and burning, nor the loins of his mind girt about) that there are millions of comings of Christ. Moreover, speaking (in his dreams) as a mouthpiece of the great adversary, he speaks of the harvest-time of men—evidently to direct attention away from the Master's explanation that the harvest-time will be "the end of this age," in the which he himself will be the great Chief Reaper, and will associate with him his faithful servants in the work of gathering the wheat (his faithful) into his barn (the spiritual condition). —Matt. 13:30.

Note another method of wresting the Scriptures, and of attracting the minds of the Lord's people away from the great truth everywhere set forth in the Scriptures, and particularly enunciated in this parable, *viz.*, the second coming of our Lord as King, and the duty of all his faithful ones to be ready, expecting and joyously waiting for that event. This perversion and wresting of the Scriptures is in the interest of temperance, and represents the watching as implying temperance work, thus: "Not only those who are laboring and praying for temperance reform, but the young people especially, should be wide awake and *watchful* in regard to temperance. They should *watch* the effect of strong drink upon others. They should *watch* its effect upon the community. They should be on their guard against the smallest beginnings of the habit of using intoxicating liquors. They should *watch* for opportunities of helping on the cause of temperance by word and by example, in public and in private."

Is it any wonder we hear the Master prophesy respecting the unfaithfulness amongst his professed people at this time, saying, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find *the* faith on the earth?" The form of the question implies the answer. No: he will not find the faith flourishing in the earth,—not predominating. Other Scriptures, however, assure us that at the time of his coming he will find a little flock of faithful watchers—not many great, wise or learned, but chiefly "the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the kingdom." As for Babylon in general, she is saying, with louder voice than ever, Have we not done! done! done! Are we not rich and increased in goods! Are we not compassing sea and land to make proselytes!

But the Master will say, Thou art poor and blind and miserable and naked, and knowest it not! (Rev. 3:17) Thy colleges, of which thou dost boast, are they not the very hotbeds of infidelity, denying my Word—denying that my work was perfect in the beginning, and that present conditions of sin and degradation and death are the penalties of violation of my righteous law; denying also the value of my sacrifice for sins, given that the heavenly Father might be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in me; denying that holy men of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the holy spirit, and claiming a superior wisdom as "higher critics," by which they determine that myself and my chosen and inspired apostles were ignorant and incompetent and deceived when we quoted the words of the prophets and applied them; denying also my second coming, to gather my little flock the church, to associate them with me in the kingdom promised through the prophets, which shortly shall bless all the families of the earth; claiming, on the contrary, that all things continue as they were from the beginning,—that a process of evolution is in progress, and that no Redeemer, no redemption and no restitution are necessary—some of them going so far as to claim that no personal deity is necessary but that what they call the laws of evolution are the creator, preserver and savior of the race.

Is it any wonder that under such false teachings in high places, and the same teachings repeated with more or less of ability throughout the length and breadth of Babylon—is it any wonder that my people are "perishing for lack of knowledge"? (Hos. 4:6) They have "hidden the key of knowledge," and not only fail to enter into the privileges and opportunities of this Gospel age and its call, but them that would enter in they hinder by their false teachings and misrepresentations, putting darkness for light, and light for darkness.—Luke 11:52; 2 Pet. 2:1; 3:3, 4; Amos. 8:11; Matt. 23:13; Isa. 5:20.

Alas! that any whose eyes of understanding have been opened in any degree should be deluded into supposing that he can do God service by co-operating with Babylon in any measure, sense or degree. Surely they are under the blinding and stupefying influence of the adversary when they do not hear sharply and distinctly the Lord's message to all of his true people at this time, to come out of Babylon and be not partakers of her sins, her errors, her false teachings, and the crime implied in these, and on account of which severe scourgings are coming upon Babylon, and will fall with special severity upon those who had known better, and who for any reason have refused to obey the voice of him that speaketh from heaven—our present Lord, King, Bridegroom.—Heb 12:25-27; Rev. 18:4.

Our Lord applied the parable in few words, saying, "Be ye, therefore, ready also, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour that ye think not." That is to say, watchfulness for the great event of the King's return would be absolutely indispensable, and would constitute a mark or indication of those worthy to be called true servants or "brethren." We are not to make the mistake of supposing our Lord to mean, Watch incessantly, for you will not know when I do come. This would be an absurdity. The central thought of the parable is that the faithful servants, awake and watching at the proper time, will hear the knock, will recognize the Lord's presence, will open to him, in the sense of believing and accepting his presence, and will be rewarded by him in the time of his presence by being supplied special knowledge respecting heavenly things which would be "meat in due season" to their comfort and joy. All who are faithfully watching shall know when the event occurs, so surely as those who do not watch shall not know.

The Apostle Paul speaks of this same great event and of the same class of watchers, designating them brethren; and after explaining that the second coming of our Lord would be upon the world as a thief and a snare, and that the world will not escape certain trouble and overthrow of their systems and politics, he explains that, on the contrary, "Ye brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake *you* as a thief"—you have your lamps trimmed and burning As he further explains, the brethren worthy to know and to escape the troubles incidental to that time do not sleep, as do others; they are watchful; they are alert, and because thus alert they know of the Bridegroom's arrival, of which the world knows not; and in the time of his presence these brethren are fed with special spiritual food, which the world knows not of. The Master himself is sending forth, at the hands of his servants, the needed meat in due season, things new and old for the strengthening of his household for this present time of trial and for the perfecting of the saints for the work of ministry, to which he has called them.—1 Thess. 5:1-6.

TO WHOM DOES THE PARABLE SPECIALLY APPLY?

This was Peter's question. He wondered whether or not the Lord meant that the specially chosen twelve apostles were these servants who must watch and wait for him at his second coming, or whether the parable was of general application, and meant that everybody should watch. Our Lord did not answer this question directly, for to have done so would have been contrary to the divine plan; to have answered directly, to have shown that our Lord was not coming in the early watches of the Gospel night, would thus have been in contradiction of the very teaching of the parable, that he must be watched for all through the Gospel night.

Evading this feature of Peter's question our Lord embraces the opportunity to give some further instruction, and explains to Peter and to us all that at that time, "then," *i. e.*, at the time of his return, his second advent, he would look out and appoint a steward for the dispensing of spiritual food to the household of faith: and that a special blessing would be with that steward in the event of his faithfulness, and that he would be removed from the stewardship in the event of unfaithfulness. Faithfulness on the part of this steward would imply larger and continued service in dispens-

ing the meat to the household of faith at that time. But unfaithfulness on his part, and a disposition to tyrannize the household, would be sure to result in his being cut off from further opportunities for serving the household, and lead to his having a severe experience with the unbelievers in the time of trouble then to come upon the world. And altho it is not stated, it is fairly inferable that such an one being deposed from stewardship, another would take his place, subject to similar terms and conditions as to faithfulness.

In certain senses of the word, and in certain respects, every child of God is a steward—a steward of his own talents, opportunities, privileges, abilities in the Lord's service; and each one is to recognize that his responsibilities as a steward in these respects is toward the Master who gave him the talents, and who will require at his hands an account thereof—an increase by reason of proper use. We are not, therefore, to understand our Lord's answer to Peter to imply that none of the household but the one are in any sense of the word regarded as stewards. Such an interpretation would be in conflict with numerous Scriptures. We are to notice that the stewardship mentioned is not a stewardship of talents and opportunities, but a stewardship of spiritual food merely.

Neither does it imply that in the end of this age, and at the time of our Lord's presence and the sending forth of meat in due season that the special steward alone will have to do with the dispensing of the food for the household, for, as shown in Matthew's account of this parable (Matt. 24:45-51), there are "fellow-servants" whose duty and privilege it will be to co-operate with this steward in the dispensing of the viands, the feeding of the household of faith. The thought would seem to be that in the interest of the household and for its comfort and joy and blessing the Master at an appropriate time would furnish to some one of his servants a key to the precious things of his Word, thus providing bountifully "things new and old" for the sustenance and joy of the household, and minister these through numerous fellow-servants, as well as through the one to whom the key of this stewardship would be specially entrusted.

In this connection we are to remember that every stewardship brings with it weighty responsibilities, and while such responsibilities are not to be shirked, neither are any of them to be undertaken lightly, without appreciating the fact that every one who becomes a servant of the household of faith has thereby a larger degree of responsibility, not only toward the household, but toward the Master of the house, from whom comes every commission. And every servant is to remember that unfaithfulness would surely lead to his removal, even as every manifestation of humble faithfulness on his part will endear him to the Master and to every faithful member of the household, and imply his continuance in the service until the Master shall say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter into the joys of thy Lord."

REVIEW OF THIRD QUARTER

SEPTEMBER 30.

"Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."—James 1:22.

Reviews are frequently profitable, and especially so when conducted in the light of this Golden Text; with a view to noting to what extent we have heard the voice of the Son of Man, and to what extent we have been obedient to his messages. To fancy ourselves as making spiritual progress merely by gaining information respecting the Lord, his miracles, his teachings, etc., is to get the nut and crack it and drop the kernel, the thing of real value

It is in harmony with this thought that our Lord declared, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and they that hear shall live." The dead are the entire human family, all of whom must hear the voice, the teaching of this great Prophet, whom the Father has sent, not only to redeem, but also restore so many of the human family as will accept his favors upon his terms. All must hear eventually but comparatively few have the hearing ears at the present time. The prince of this world blinds the mind, closes and stupefies the ear, or makes what may be heard of no effect through traditions of men, or through hardness and selfishness of the hearer's own heart. Blessed are our eyes if, seeing and hearing of the Lord's grace and goodness toward us and toward all of his creatures, we at once fall into obedience to the spirit of the great Teacher's instructions. In so doing we will have passed from death unto life—gradually, until, under the ministry of the great Prophet, as sharers in the first resurrection, we shall be perfected and possess life in perfection, yea, life more abundantly—immortality—the divine nature.

VOL. XXI ALLEGHENY, PA., SEPTEMBER 15, 1900 No. 18

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

[The following, author unknown, came from India, from a Christian Missionary. It is excellent.]

WHAT IS THE END OF LIFE?

The end of life is not to do good, although so many of us think so. It is not to win souls—although I once thought so. *The end of life is—to do the will of God.* That *may* be the line of doing good or winning souls or it may not. For the individual, the answer to the question, "What is the *end* of my life?" is *"To do the will of God, whatever that may be."*

Spurgeon replied to an invitation to preach to an exceptionally large audience, "I have no ambition to preach to 10,000 people, but to *do the will of God*"—and he declined.

If we could have no ambition past the will of God, our lives would be successful. If we could say, "I have no ambition to go to the heathen; I have no ambition to win souls; my ambition is to do the will of God, whatever that may be," *that would make all lives equally great or equally small,* because the only great thing in a life is what of God's will there is in it. *The maximum achievement* of any man's life, after it is all over, *is to have done the will of God.*

No man or woman can have done any more with a life—no Luther, no Spurgeon, no Wesley, no Melanchthon can have done any more with their lives; and a dairymaid or a scavenger can do as much.

Therefore, the supreme principle upon which we have to run our lives is to adhere, through good report and ill, through temptation and prosperity and adversity, *to the will of God, wherever that may lead us.* It may take you to China, or you who are going to Africa may have to stay where you are; you who are going to be an evangelist may have to go into business; and you who are going into business may have to become an evangelist. But there is no happiness or success in any life till that principle is taken possession of. And the highest service is first, moment by moment, to be in the will of God. It may be to work or to wait; to stand fast or to lay still. 'Tis he, our blessed Lord, who will keep us in his will, if our eyes are fixed on him.

How can you build up a life on that principle? Let me give you an outline of a little Bible reading:—

The definition of an ideal life:

Acts 13:22—*"A man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will."*

The object of life:

Heb. 10:7—*"I come to do thy will, O God."*

The first thing you need after life, is food:

John 4:34—*"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me."*

The next thing you need after food is society:

Mark 3:35—*"Whosoever shall do the will of my Father in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."*

You want education:

Psa. 143:10—*"Teach me to do thy will, O my God."*

You want pleasure:

Psa. 40:8—*"I delight to do thy will, O my God."* A whole life can be built up on that vertebral column, and then, when all is over,

1 John 2:17—*"He that doeth the will of God abideth forever."*

THE SPREAD OF MOHAMMEDANISM

If reports are to be believed Mohammedanism is spreading in Asia and Africa much more rapidly than is Christianity. This is credited to three reasons. (1) Its simplicity of doctrine, which makes it commendable to persons of low intellectual capacity—Believe in Mohammed and obey his simple law and have an eternity of sensuous bliss. (2) Its permission of polygamy, common throughout those countries. (3)

Its uniform requirement of total abstinence from intoxicants.

Recognizing the fact that Christianity makes few proselytes from Mohammedanism, and that the latter is growing rapidly in numbers and influence, the British Government has of late years been attempting to gain the confidence and support of her Mohammedan subjects, whose number is estimated at one hundred and fifty millions—*fifty millions more than all denominations of Protestant Christians in the whole world.*

Doubtless this change of attitude toward the very religion against which all the Crusades of medieval times were waged, though due to political policy, is backed by the changed religious sentiment of our day;—which under the lead of the higher critics has declared,—

"The hope of the race lies in a deeper study of the great, inspired writers of the past, such as Shakespeare, Homer, Dante and a few others, whose works have charmed the minds of people of culture. The Bible, also, though a little out-of-date, has been recognized, in the past, as a work of inspiration, and you may find it helpful to include it in your course of reading."

General sentiment, therefore, resolves itself into this,—Since our wise men tell us that the Bible is unreliable, and that the death of Christ Jesus no more redeemed the world than did the death of other reformers; and since they tell us that future happiness depends upon the cultivation of our mental and moral qualities, and that Shakespeare's and other writings are quite as good or better than the Bible for such culture, how do we know but that the Mohammedan's Bible—the Koran—is as good or better than our own, and they as right as we or more so? Therefore let us not any longer say with the Bible that there is no other name than that of Jesus given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved; but let us say, Get morality and education in the name of Mohammed or Jesus or Confucius or whomsoever you please.

Such would be the *logical* outcome of such teachings; and thereby we are reminded of our Lord's words respecting these times—"When the Son of Man cometh shall he find the faith on the earth?"—Luke 18:8.

WHAT GREAT BRITAIN IS DOING FOR MOHAMMEDANISM

Shortly after the capture of Khartoum by General Lord Kitchener, and at his instance, a Mohammedan college was founded, known as Gordon College, and more recently another Mohammedan school was founded at Sierra Leone, on the west coast of Africa. This latter institution was opened with considerable ceremony under the auspices of the acting-governor, Major Nathan, and of it the New York *Sun* says editorially:—

"The ceremony began with a prayer in Arabic offered up by the Imaum of the mosque, Alfa Omaru, who afterward gave a short account of the efforts to promote education made by the Sierra Leone Moslems. He referred to the years 1839 and 1841, when the Mohammedan religion was considered as a danger to the colony, when Moslems were persecuted and their mosques pulled down by excited mobs. Thanks, however, to an enlightened policy, matters were set right, and for more than fifty years the Moslems have enjoyed full toleration and the protection of the British Government. In 1872 the festival of the Lesser Bairam had been attended by the governor, Sir John Pope Hennessy, with a military escort, and in 1879 another governor, Sir Samuel Rowe, had entertained seven hundred Moslems at Government House on the occasion of the Bairam Festival of that year. In 1891 Governor Hay handed over a fine property with commodious buildings to the Moslem community for educational purposes, accompanied by a grant for the payment of the teachers. These successive events were important epochs in the history of Islamism in West Africa, and the Imaum looked forward to the day when the present elementary school would become the stepping-stone to a college."

In his reply Major Nathan cited examples of Mohammedans occupying official positions in Indian and in Egypt, and added that,—

"He wished them to perfect themselves in Arabic in order that they might know what real Mohammedanism is. When they understood the Koran, he said, they would see that their religion was one telling them how to live, and not a religion of charms and gewgaws. Knowing English, they would have the literature and wisdom of the white man open to them: and with Arabic, they would be able to read not only the Koran, but the 'Makamat' of El Hariri, known already to some of them, and the 'Alif Lailat wa Lailah,' the translation of which English people read with pleasure. In concluding, Major Nathan urged them not to rest content until they had in Sierra Leone a Moslem college whence wisdom and knowledge might go forth over the whole of West Africa."

The *Sun* believes that the importance of the incident can hardly be overestimated. It says:—

"The news of the official encouragement given to the Mohammedan religion and the culture of its sacred language, Arabic, will in a very short time spread from the Atlantic to the Red Sea, and the wisdom of the policy that dictated it will be justified by the resulting spread of British influence among the Moslem populations of North Africa. In all probability it will lead to a corresponding rivalry on the part of the French, whose hold on the Arabs of Algeria is none too strong, owing to mistakes in policy and the want of character of many of those appointed to office.

"The next century no doubt has many surprises in store; but whatever they may be, not the least strange will be the spectacle of the two Western nations that led in the crusades promoting, for political and territorial reasons, the creed they then tried to crush."

However peculiar all this may appear from the standpoint of *nominal* "Christendom," it is perfectly clear to all of the "royal priesthood." We see the fallacy of the claim that European kingdoms are *Christ's* kingdoms—that the Word of God never did recognize them as anything but "kingdoms of this world" ruled by "the prince of this world." We see that the nominal churches are not the one true Church of "saints," whose names are written in heaven. We see that the Crusades, Inquisitions, and all similar attacks upon human beings and their moral and religious liberties were never authorized by the Lord; but were wholly contrary to his Word and spirit. We see that it is perfectly proper and consistent for worldly people and governments (English, French, German or what not) to favor *any* system or all systems of education and religion that will in any degree counteract vice and immorality, and preserve peace.

True, we who have had the eyes of our understanding opened to see matters *clearly* from the Bible standpoint could do nothing against the truth and in favor of error—nothing to foster and encourage the error or even to apparently bid it Godspeed. But we are not in official positions where such questions could come to us: because we are "not of this world" even as our Redeemer was not (John 17:16), therefore the world disrespects us (John 17:14), and offers us no places of public influence. Fidelity to our Lord's principles thus saves his faithful from perplexities: they have died to worldly politics and its aims and duties and methods, and have been "*translated* into the kingdom of God's dear Son," and are thus members of the "holy nation" which has not yet come into power and ruling authority—waiting for their King to exalt or set them up in power and great glory at the time when his kingdom shall be *revealed* to the world as the supplanter of all kingdoms of this world.

METHODISM AND HIGHER CRITICISM

"The 'heresy' case of Professor Mitchell (see *The Literary Digest*, January 27), has been effectively disposed of for, at least, some years to come. By the recent General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Chicago it was referred to the bishops, who, apparently finding it as embarrassing a subject to handle as did the Conference, referred the matter of Dr. Mitchell's retention to the trustees of Boston University, by making him eligible to re-election for five years—until, conveniently, after the next meeting of the General Conference. The fact that the trustees of one of the leading Methodist theological seminaries have now unanimously re-elected Dr. Mitchell, who is *one of the most prominent American exponents of the higher criticism*, and has been accused of deviating widely from the traditional view as to the authorship of certain Old Testament books, is regarded as an event of significance. *The largest Protestant denomination in America thus tacitly votes to retain an upholder of the higher criticism as official instructor of her young clerics.*"—*Literary Digest.*

PRESBYTERIANS BEING SIFTED

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church recently in session in St. Louis, in reply to overtures for a revision of its Westminster Confession of Faith, referred the matter to a committee, whose business it shall be to learn the opinion of the local Presbyters and to report to the Assembly of 1901. The Presbyterian weekly journals give the best clue to the results, for they are generally under the care of the leaders amongst the ministry, who generally "try to be on the winning side."

From the trend of comments by these journals (*The Interior* and *The Herald* and *Presbyter* alone seem to urge revision) we opine that the Confession will probably not be revised but reaffirmed. The result of this course would be to sift out the honest but deluded souls in pulpit and pew who for years have burdened their consciences (and in many instances hardened them) with slander against the divine character and deceit toward all mankind in professing the West-

minster Confession. These have for years consoled themselves with the thought that (1) the Confession is a dead letter anyway, which today nobody believes, and (2) that it would soon be changed, "perhaps next year,—and my conscience can stand the strain that much longer." If now that Confession is reaffirmed by the denomination these will be thereby forced out to maintain even a vestige of peace with God and a good conscience toward God and man. The pity is that their consciences are not more tender and their hearts more loyal to God and his truth that they should act more promptly.

"The children of this world [the "tares"] are wiser in their generation than the children of light [the "wheat"]," said our Lord. And so in this case undoubtedly the reaffirming of the Westminster Confession is the wisest course so far as the preservation of the "tare" organization is concerned. For though, as above suggested, this will drive out some of the most conscientious, it will be found that they all told are but few. On the other hand were the Confession revised or repudiated it would mean to the rank and file of Presbyterianism, "We have lost our gods! We have admitted that we were all wrong in respect to our faith—blind men who for centuries have attempted to lead the confessedly blind world into truth, and now confess ourselves bewildered, yea totally blind as respects the divine plan!" Every Presbyterian would feel abashed at such a confession, and hence it is that such a revision of creed is improbable: and if it were seen to be inevitable many would transfer their "good names" and titles to other denominations before the funeral.

"THE PRESBYTERIAN" ARGUES AGAINST REVISION THUS,—

"Too much has been said recently to weaken the force of our doctrinal statements. Many who never thought of calling them in question are wondering what they really teach."

The people would have little difficulty in deciding the meaning of that very explicit and carefully worded "Westminster Confession," were it not that the theologians having told them, "These be thy gods, O Presbyterians!" are fearful that the pews (more honest than the pulpits) shall discover how terribly homely, yea, devilish, are these gods which they have so long worshipped and served.

Continuing, *The Presbyterian* says, "Others who regard the false constructions put on them as the work of adversaries, now find that even Presbyterian ministers are declaring them legitimate inferences. Damage is being done by the outgivings of radical revisionists. The church is suffering, and will continue to suffer in name and in accomplishment, with years of revision agitation. *Her interests would be far more advanced, in our judgment, by standing by the old standards of faith and by their reaffirmation by our Presbyteries and General Assembly.*"

What does this language mean in plain English? Is not the following construction a reasonable one?

For a long time now our ministers and religious editors have presented a solid front to the world, and by claiming that black in the creed is white they have succeeded in convincing Presbyterians, at least, that the black parts are at very most not darker than grey or mist and fog color. But now this discussion is in danger of disillusionizing the people. Already it is giving us great trouble and is likely to cause more disturbance and dissatisfaction, not only with our Diana, but also toward us, the well-paid and honored shrine-makers and servers. We are not thinking about the truth and its service, nor about the interests of the true church, whose names are written in heaven; we are merely considering the interests of our sect, the Presbyterian church, and how these matters will affect her interests and worldly prosperity. We feel provoked that Presbyterian ministers who have stifled their consciences for years should be so weak, so pusillanimous, as now to show the white feather and confess that they and we all have for years been hoodwinking and deceiving the Lord's flock who gave us liberally of their golden fleece to lead them into pastures of truth. As for us, we are committed to the prosperity of Presbyterianism—all of our name and title and earthly hopes are attached to it, and hence, false though the Confession be to every instinct of justice and love, we must stick to it—sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish!

Does the foregoing seem to be an uncharitable paraphrase of the *Presbyterian's* position? Let those who so think read carefully the following extract from the Confession and decide then whether anything better or nobler than policy leads it to defend and call for a reaffirmation of those sentiments of a darker period. We have too much respect for the *Presbyterian's* brains to suppose that it does not comprehend the language and too much respect for its heart to suppose that it at heart endorses the presentation as true and just: hence we can only conclude that its advocacy is insincere and for policy's sake. The policy, as already suggested, is worldly-wise and will serve to keep together a little longer one of the most respected of the human organizations falsely styled churches; but the end of all such is not far distant, as clearly shown in God's Word and pointed out in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. III., Chaps. 4 to 7, and VOL. IV., Chaps. 11 to 13.

The following is the referred to—

EXTRACT FROM THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH

"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it can not be either increased or diminished

"Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, *without any foresight of faith* or *good works* or *perseverance in either of them*, or any other thing in the creature, as *conditions* or *causes moving Him thereto;* and all to the praise of His glorious grace.

"As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath He, by the eternal and free purpose of His will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by His power through faith unto salvation. *Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved, but* THE ELECT ONLY.

"The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."

DEFECTIVE EDUCATION OF MINISTERS

Rev. D. S. Gregory, D. D., says:—

"In a ministerial body of say seven thousand there are perhaps several thousands of us that nobody will hear preach: many more that are heard by good people under stress of duty; and comparatively few that are heard gladly. . . .

"The psychology of the average educator is fundamentally defective, and hence his pedagogics must be fatally false. He recognizes the existence of a *cognitive faculty*, the power of acquiring the simple elements or raw materials, so to speak, of knowledge, in perception external and internal; of a *conservative faculty*, or memory, the power of keeping knowledge so acquired for future use; of a *comparative faculty*, the power of thought for working up the knowledge acquired and conserved into conceptions, judgments, and reasonings. But just there his psychology of the intellect strikes a dead wall which it seems powerless to pass. He fails to recognize the existence of the supreme intellectual faculty, to which all the others are merely subordinates and for which alone they exist—*the constructive or systemizing faculty*. He does not find it in his text-books; it has been practically ignored in educational aims and methods. . ."

This is too highflown language for the majority of readers; we give its sense in few words thus,—The average minister learns at college to collect certain facts and theories, and to memorize them; but he never learns how to *systemize* what he has learned.

We reply that this is true; nevertheless, it is the bulwark of Churchianity; for had honest ministers or laymen attempted to systemize their theology (the errors so largely predominating) they would have found long ago that all their theories are as irrational as they are unscriptural. No theology but the old theology of the Bible—the divine plan of the ages—can be systemized; and it is system and plan and order and beauty throughout, and thus bears the impressions of its divine Author, Jehovah.

EPISCOPAL HIGH CHURCH PERFORMANCES

The Christian Commonwealth (London) describes a mass recently performed in St. Michael's Church, London, as follows:—

"The mass 'for the repose of the soul' of the deceased was celebrated, and at the funeral service in the church all the accessories of Vatican mummery were observed. Each of the congregation of ten received a little candle, which was lighted before the Gospel was read, and blown out after the reading. The people's candles were rekindled at the Sanctus, after incense-burning. After mass the celebrant left the chair, and

at the sedilia changed his chasuble for a black cope with yellow orphreys and then headed a procession with a crucifix. The catafalque was sprinkled with holy water, and censed, while petitions were mumbled for the soul of the deceased. After the clergy were gone the people were invited to asperse the catafalque with the holy water."

CALAMITIES—WHY PERMITTED

The inundation of the city of Galveston, Texas, accompanied by great loss of life and property, has shocked the world. And no wonder; it was surely a great calamity that five thousand human beings should so suddenly be swept into death—the grave. Yet the real horror, affecting many minds in connection with this matter, is never even hinted at in the great headlines of the daily press announcements. What a shock it would give if these papers were edited in so-called orthodox style, thus:—

JESUS CAME TO 5,000 GALVESTON PEOPLE.
OF THE NUMBER HE FOUND ONLY ABOUT 100 SAINTS FIT FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.
THE REMAINDER, 4,900,
HE BANISHED TO ETERNAL HOPELESS AGONY IN TORMENT,
PREPARED FOR THEM,
ACCORDING TO HIS FOREKNOWLEDGE AND LOVING DESIGN,
BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.

If our dear friends who profess to believe such blasphemous things respecting our Heavenly Father's plan would come out honestly and state their views thus plainly we should be glad of it. It would be a great service to the truth. It would act upon many as an *emetic*, and help them to get rid of the unhealthy mass of error which now sickens them and hinders their appetite for the true heavenly manna of the divine Word, which then would be to all the Lord's true people "sweeter than honey."

Tract No. 2, of the 'Old Theology" series, treats this subject of "Calamities and Why God Permits Them." We recommend its liberal circulation at times like this when great calamities awaken thoughts respecting divine providences, etc. And we might here remark that we will not be surprised if the next fifteen years shall witness an increasingly large number of calamities. To our understanding there are physical changes necessary to the full introduction of Millennial conditions: these will probably come about gradually, and incidentally cause great trouble and losses. These we understand are so timed as to form a part of the great time of trouble with which our age is to end, which, however, the Lord designs shall prepare man as well as the earth for further, future blessings. "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."

"ZION'S GLAD SONGS"

Our dear Brother McPhail, who has quite a talent for music, has collected a number of new and beautiful hymns,—the music to the majority being his own composition. These, fifty-four in number, are well printed, and appropriately bound in paper covers,—price 10 cents each, or $1 per dozen, *postage free*.

This little book, entitled "Zion's Glad Songs," has another feature which we are sure will be appreciated by many, viz., the addition of the *music* for twenty-eight old tunes, long, short, common, and peculiar meters. These are inserted in the interest of our regular hymn book, "Poems and Hymns of Dawn," the tunes of the remainder being copyrighted.

It is not at all the thought that the new book will supplant the old one: for many of the grand old hymns cannot be equaled by any new ones, either in words or tunes. The thought is to make it supplementary. As such we recommend it to you all. Our first edition of 6,000 is now ready and orders will be filled as received.

THE VOLUNTEER WORK

This branch of the service has lagged a little during the hot weather, because of small attendance at church services. Now that cooler weather has come we expect that it will revive. Some who have finished their own cities are branching out—endeavoring to serve nearby towns. This is commendable. Every faithful soldier of the cross is sure to receive blessings both now and hereafter from "the Captain of our salvation." Let us be faithful.

THE DALLAS, TEXAS, CONVENTION

——SEPT. 29, 30 & OCT. 1.——

We do not expect many from outside the State of Texas at this Convention; for the special excursion rates are restricted to near-by territory. Oklahoma, Indian Territory, Arkansas and Louisiana we believe participate, in whole or in part. As Texas is a very large state we endeavored to arrange for two Conventions, but could not obtain the excursion rates except for Dallas.

Our Convention will take advantage of the cheap rates of fare granted on account of the "Dallas Fair," and such tickets should be called for. If you desire to attend, inquire of your ticket agent at once for rates, train time, etc., and as soon as possible let us know on which road and train you expect to arrive; and how many will be of your party, males and females; if colored, mention it. State if you desire room and board at one dollar per day. Those who cannot afford even this moderate expense will please say so, and some comfortable arrangement will be made for them also.

"WOODMEN'S HALL" has been secured for the use of the Convention. It is centrally located at No. 349 Main Street. It is an easy walk from all depots, but those who desire can use electric car direct from the depots to the hall.

A RECEPTION COMMITTEE will so far as possible meet all who arrive on the morning of Sept. 29th; but any failing to be recognized near the Ladies' Waiting Room door can readily find Woodmen's Hall as above and should proceed there at once.

We hope for a good attendance and warrant a warm welcome and a rich blessing to all true soldiers of the cross; and to those seeking to find and put on the whole armor of God Come, intent upon doing good unto all—especially to the household of faith, as well as praying a blessing upon yourself, and you surely will not go away empty.

Arrangements for water baptism will be complete, robes towels, etc. Yes, "Bro. Russell" will attend

THE CHRISTIAN'S COURSE DELINEATED

David, the Prophet, in the first Psalm, has significantly marked out the proper Christian course and its blessings and outcome. In the first verse he designates three classes from whom the Lord's people should stand aloof—three classes with whom if they have fellowship, it will be to their detriment. (1) The ungodly, or more properly, the wicked (margin, Leeser, Young). (2) Sinners. (3) The scornful. "Blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful"—Psa. 1:1.

Applying this Psalm prophetically, it is proper that we should determine what classes of persons are meant by the *wicked*, the *sinners* and the *scornful*. We suggest that under the terms of the present Gospel age, not murderers and thieves, etc., can be meant by the wicked, for such, generally at least, are deluded and "binded by the god of this world" so that they have never seen the true Gospel light; and not seeing it they have not had such responsibilities in connection with it as would properly brand them as wicked from the divine standpoint. The "wicked" are to be looked for in the church, and in harmony with this thought is our Lord's parable which, referring to the church and the talents bestowed upon its members, declares respecting the one who received the talent of the Lord but failed to use it—"Thou wicked and slothful servant." The "wicked" of this age would seem to be those who have enjoyed the light of divine favor, who have come to a knowledge of the truth, been made partakers of the holy spirit, etc., and who then, despite all these favors and

blessings, and despite their covenant with the Lord to be his servants and to lay down their lives in his service, neglect the same

The Apostle also points out a certain class in the church as wicked, saying of them that if they fall away "it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance" (Heb. 6:6), "for it had been better for them that they had never known the way of righteousness, than that having known it they should turn from the holy commandment." (2 Pet. 2:21) The same class is again described as those who sin wilfully after receiving a knowledge of the truth, and for whom, consequently, no further share in the sacrifice for sins remains; and consequently no hope for them in the coming age. (Heb. 10:26) In a word, then, the wicked class of the present age would seem, from the Lord's standpoint, to be those in the church nominal who have received clear light and knowledge respecting the divine plan, and who have either sinned wilfully by turning away from a life of righteousness to a life of intentional sin, or those who repudiate the precious blood of Christ and the atonement made for them by the same, counting the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified a common or ordinary thing.

If then we have found a class denominated "the wicked," let us consider what can be meant by the injunction that the blessed of the Lord should not walk in the counsel of these wicked ones—should not follow their guidance, their suggestions, their instructions, their leading.

Every man and every woman has more or less of an influence which attracts others to walk in his way. And all who repudiate the ransom, all who deny original sin and its sentence of death, and the necessity for our redemption from sin and death,—all who thus deny the foundation of the Gospel, the "wicked" above described, seem to make it their special business to endeavor to seduce the minds of others—to lead others astray by their evil counsel. If they cannot secure prompt attention, they invariably suggest.—Walk with us awhile, keep our company, and see whether you will not *gradually come to believe as we do, that we were not bought with a price,* even the precious blood of Christ—that man needed not to be bought; that he did not fall from perfection; that he was not sold under sin by our first parents; and, hence, that he needed not a redemption in any sense of the word, and therefore the Scriptures are false and misleading in making this the centre and pith of the Gospel.

Their false suggestion is that our only need was a good and holy *example.* They are blind to the fact that all through the past there were many noble examples, and that there are many today, far beyond the ability of the average natural man to follow, and that we needed something decidedly more helpful and efficacious than an *example.* They seem blind to the fact that an example would never justify to life one who was justly condemned to death. They do not seem to realize that God was just in pronouncing the penalty against our race, and that he could by no means clear the guilty through any process of injustice; and that, therefore, it was necessary that a ransom, a corresponding price, should be paid before the resurrection and reconciliation were possibilities. (Rom. 3:26) But they say, Walk with us in our counsels and see; and, as the Apostle suggests, many follow their pernicious ways, denying the Lord having bought them.—2 Pet. 2:1, 2.

Those who would be of the class pronounced "blessed" of the Lord, in our text, must not follow the counsel of these "wicked," but, on the contrary, should stand firmly by the Gospel of the redemption and seek no other. Let all who desire to be blessed of the Lord mark well this counsel and follow it, and have no fellowship whatever with the "wicked," nor in any degree walk after their counsels.

"Sinners" are mentioned as another class, separate and distinct from the "wicked" above referred to, and they are evidently a class whose transgressions are much less heinous in the sight of the Lord: these sinners we must look for in the church also not in the world. Since the world is not yet on trial there is nothing to demonstrate the standing of any of its people. The "sinners" of our text we would understand to be those who, without repudiating the covenant, without denying the Lord that bought them, and thus falling utterly from divine favor, are nevertheless failing to live according to the terms of their covenant, their consecration. These would seem to be sinners against the covenant they have made—those who fail to carry out the covenant of self-sacrifice. This class possibly includes some who are described by the Lord as "overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches," and who for these reasons are sinners against their covenant, violators of it. The Lord's people who would be of the "blessed" of the Lord, and receive his ultimate "Well done," are not to stand with these covenant-violators even. To stand with them might imply to treat them as companions, to enter into their plans and schemes; and surely all who would thus do would be likely to become partakers of their spirit, and to become careless of their consecration vows, and overcharged with earthly cares and ambitions.

The "scorners" are designated as a still different class, and might possibly represent some not of the church, but possessing more or less knowledge of holy things and rejecting them, speaking of them lightly and scornfully. The Lord's people are not to be intimately associated with such, nor make them their companions and friends. They cannot have fellowship with such without receiving injury, hence, so far as possible the Christian is to avoid this class, in business partnerships, in society, and especially in marriage. No one who could speak lightly or scornfully of our Heavenly Father or of our Lord Jesus or of the exceeding great and precious things set before the Lord's people in his promises, could be other than a hindrance to those who are seeking to gain the prize of our high calling. He therefore who would be blessed of the Lord, and who would attain that for which he was "called," should take heed to the instructions and avoid the scornful.

This does not signify, however, as the Apostle points out, that we are to have no dealings in the world with any but saints, for, as he tells us, in that event we would needs go out of the world (1 Cor. 5:10); but it does imply a recognition of the principle that evil is contagious, and that the Lord's people cannot be too careful to avoid every contact with evil. They should separate themselves to the Lord, to holiness, and seek to place themselves under influences in harmony with their holy and true and pure aspirations, begotten by the holy Spirit.

The Prophet implies that those who have fellowship with the scornful and with covenant-breakers and with the wicked who deny the precious blood of the covenant, cannot be blessed of the Lord, because they are in a wrong attitude of heart; for, as his words imply, those who are in the right attitude of heart to be blessed of the Lord can readily find something much better, much more interesting, much more profitable, than fellowship with any of these classes; "Their delight is in the Law of the Lord, and they meditate in his Law by day and by night."

This does not imply a reading over of the Ten Commandments, nor of the Mosaic ritual, but to the Christian it implies a delight in the law of righteousness, which law is briefly comprehended in the word "love." The right-minded Christian who is in the line of heavenly blessing now, and of heavenly glory by and by, has found and will continually find in the great law of love something well worthy of his time and his study. He finds this law applicable to every relationship between the heavenly Father and himself; he sees that all of his conduct, his every service toward God as a son, adopted into his family, must be the result of love. He sees also that love is the law which must govern all of his conduct toward the brethren in Christ and toward all men; and he finds in this abundant and satisfactory food for reflection in his leisure hours, so that he is interested neither in the speculations and quibblings of the "scoffers," nor in the worldly matters which overcharge the "sinners," nor in the false Gospel which engages the attention of the "wicked," who deny the ransom.

He finds that this Law of God contains, or is related to, every feature of the divine plan; and hence his meditations and studies of its various ramifications lead his thoughts hither and thither, in contact with all the exceeding great and precious promises which God has bestowed upon them that love him, both as respects the life that now is and also that which is to come. And the more this is his attitude the more is he blessed of the Lord; and the more blessed he is of the Lord the more surely will this be his attitude and experience.

Such an one, the Lord declares through the Prophet, will be like a tree planted near rivulets of water, which will always be abundantly refreshed and never fail in his yield of the fruits of the spirit, which under such circumstances must grow and flourish exceedingly. And as his fruit will be abundant, so his leaf (his hopes) will be ever green; he can and will have faith in him who promised the coming blessings, and whose riches of grace he comes to appreciate more and more daily.

"All that he doeth shall prosper." This is literally true, though not, perhaps, in the way in which the world might view the subject. But what is it that such a child of God doeth? What is his aim? What is his object in life? Wealth, fame, worldly honors? No, none of these. His aim, that which he doeth, that which he seeketh, is to glorify his Heavenly Father and eventually to attain to the glory, honor

and immortality which God has promised to them that love him. (Rom. 2:7) If then the Christian but attain these his objects, surely all his experiences will have been prosperous, and that abundantly. What matters it to him if under divine providence he was permitted to err in judgment respecting some business venture, so that instead of earthly prosperity it brought financial loss, if it worked out spiritual gain? To this blessed man the loss was prosperity, and he proved the truth of the divine promise, that all things shall work together for his good. Under such a promise, under such guidance of divine wisdom in his affairs, guaranteeing him just such experiences, trials, difficulties, earthly disappointments and disadvantages as will, under the Lord's providence, bring him richest blessing in the attainment of the great prize of the future which he seeks, and for which every other thing, interest, hope and aim has been sacrificed, how could any be considered otherwise than prospered? (Rom. 8:28) Surely indeed, all that he doeth shall prosper—not because of his own wisdom, not because of infallibility in the management of his affairs, but because his infallible Lord is supervising his interests, and outworking them for good to him.

It is this same class of blessed ones that our Lord addresses, saying, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake"—things may seem to be going contrary to your welfare, and hence to be working out incalculable harm; but have faith—"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven:" and it is this heavenly reward for which you have been called, and for which you have entered the race, and the attainment of which will be exceedingly abundant above all that you could ask or think.—Matt. 5:11, 12; Eph. 3:20.

TIMES OF REFRESHING

The gathering at Saratoga Springs, N. Y., was not expected to be a large one; because the railroad excursion rates extended over only a very limited area. It was therefore a *local* rather than a *general* meeting; but as such it served its purpose grandly, and brought to many clearer views of the divine plan, and fresh energy in its service, because of renewed consecration to the great Giver of all good.

About one hundred were in attendance, and these were nearly all visitors from abroad, as only about three WATCH TOWER subscribers reside there, and few outsiders attended. The Lord was with the Convention and blessed the two days of its session greatly; and we believe that the grace there experienced will not only be a lasting blessing to those in attendance, but that its overflow upon others not privileged to attend, will be a lasting joy and benefit.

En route we spent Sunday at Toronto, Canada, where another local Convention of about one hundred had gathered. This also was a feast to our souls. We thanked God for the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love—and realized afresh that—

"The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

The home route permitted a meeting between trains with some of the dear friends at Washington, D. C., where about thirty were hastily convened, to whom we spoke on "Pressing toward the *mark* for the prize of our high calling." Departing, we thanked God for the fulfilment of Mark 10:30; and felt that if faithfulness to the truth had gained us many bitter enemies, it had also brought us such devoted friends as very few in this world could boast of.

We arrived home, at Allegheny, in good season for Sunday services (Sept. 9), where our joy further abounded in addressing about two hundred of the home congregation, and in receiving their hearty welcome back after an absence of two Sundays. We can only wish and hope that each of the one thousand dear brethren and sisters "scattered abroad," with whom we communed and shook hands during the past two weeks (beginning with the Chicago Convention and ending at Allegheny), experienced one-half the blessing that has come to your pastor. He most heartily thanks you all for your many kindnesses and expressions of Christian love extended to him and the associated "Pilgrims;" and he thanks God for the privileges enjoyed in serving his flock, in Jesus' name.

"A table God has furnished me
In presence of my foes;
My head he doth with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows."

SABBATH DINNERS AND HOW TO UTILIZE THEM

LUKE 14:1-14.—OCT. 7.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"*Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*"

So far as we know, our Lord Jesus never refused an invitation to feasts, banquets, etc., to which he was asked, with his disciples. The present lesson tells us of such a banquet, probably specially arranged in Jesus' honor, by a Pharisee high in social position as a ruler in the synagogue. The feast was appointed for the Sabbath day, as was frequently the case, many of the Sabbath feasts being quite sumptuous; but the viands were always served cold, it being a part of the Jewish code that fires should not be kindled nor vituals cooked on the Sabbath day. And although we, as Christians, are entirely free from the Jewish law, including the fourth commandment as well as all the other commandments of the Decalogue, but are under a new commandment, the perfect law of love, to God and to man; nevertheless, we concede that considerable blessing might be experienced, and additional opportunities for spiritual development enjoyed, if Christian people were to cook a double portion on Saturday, and thus leave themselves freer from domestic responsibilities on the day which, according to the laws of the land (tho not according to any law of the Scriptures) we appropriately observe by abstinence from the ordinary business of life, utilizing the leisure for worship, study and spiritual communion.

Evidently before entering the dining room, probably in the court-yard, our Lord, while surrounded by many notables of the scribes and Pharisees, noticed a man afflicted with dropsy; and it would appear that our dear Redeemer was so full of love and sympathy that he had a desire to bless and to heal every such person with whom he came directly in contact. The loving character thus manifested gives us assurance that when the kingdom comes and our Lord shall take unto himself his great power and reign, he will assuredly bless and uplift so many as will accept his favors in a proper manner—so many as really desire to be blessed by him. Thus our Lord's general character fully substantiates and corroborates all the prophetic statements made respecting him and the character of his Millennial work of blessing all the families of the earth.

Our Lord well knew the extreme of fanaticism to which the Jews had gone, especially the outwardly pious and formal ones, representatives of whom were now gathered about him. He knew that they would regard the healing of the dropsical person as a violation of the Sabbath. Indeed, as illustrating the sanctity of the Sabbath, the Jewish Talmud tells of an instance in which a house took fire, and three young girls were burned to death, simply because their friends and neighbors interpreted the law against making a fire as implying also that it would be wrong to quench a fire on the Sabbath day, and when expostulated with respecting the matter, the answer was that it was "a sacrifice acceptable to God, who would reward them for having allowed their dear ones to perish rather than break his commandment!"

Jesus wished not only to correct such a false interpretation of the law, but also, in harmony with his custom, to do a large proportion of his miracles on the Sabbath day; because that day typified the coming Millennial day, the great seventh thousandth-year day in which, his Millennial kingdom being established, he will scatter blessings of healing, mental, moral and physical, amongst all the people. By way of instructing his disciples and the Pharisees respecting the improper view of the Sabbath generally entertained then by religious teachers, our Lord enquired of the Pharisees what they had to say on the subject: Is it or is it not lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? They made no reply; no doubt feeling themselves somewhat incompetent to discuss any question with one whom they had all learned to recognize as a great Teacher, however much they rejected his Messiahship.

Then Jesus, as showing his own understanding of the matter, that it would be right, that it would be in full harmony with the spirit of the Law to heal a man on the Sabbath day, touched the dropsical man and healed him. Then, by way of pointing out to his auditors the inconsistency of their line of thought on this subject, he reminded them that it was a recognized privilege and duty of every Jew to deliver his ox or his ass, fallen into some pit or difficulty, and to consider this a

work of necessity and mercy, not forbidden by the fourth commandment of the Jewish law. He allowed his auditors to draw the inference from this illustration, that as it could not be wrong to assist a dumb animal out of difficulty on the Sabbath, much less could it be wrong to relieve the distress of a human being made in the image of God. Thus he would show that God's laws are not arbitrary, but that it is always proper to do good.

THE PROPER KIND OF TABLE TALKS

Every Christian family should utilize the excellent opportunities afforded for social converse at meal-times. Not only does pleasant and profitable conversation assist digestion, and thus prove physically helpful, but, additionally, these regular family gatherings should be recognized as opportunities for mental profit and for growth in knowledge respecting both temporal and spiritual things. Particularly for the last fourteen years this has been the custom of the Bible House family at Allegheny,—and a very profitable one. Our topics are usually propounded in the question form, the privilege of questioning being open to all at the table. Answers to the questions are sought from each one present, thus stimulating thought and a proper expression of it, very helpful to all, as subsequently they may be called upon to answer such a question before others in public or in private. We commend the plan to all of our readers, suggesting that in such a gathering the one supposed to be most conversant with such matters reserve his reply for the last.

Where the family is composed wholly of "new creatures" the question would properly differ somewhat in general character from what they would be if it were a mixed company: nevertheless, appropriate subjects should not be refused from anyone present; as, for instance, questions respecting table etiquette, good breeding, proper language, the events of the day that do not partake of the nature of gossip, etc. It is a shame that Christian people, even in the humblest walks of life, and when perhaps surrounded by poverty, have no thought of what valuable opportunities are afforded at such times of breaking of bread—to break to their families mental or spiritual food also, strengthening and elevating.

In proportion as Christian people realize their privileges and duties in such matters they will find that coarseness and rudeness at the table will disappear, refinement and intellectuality gradually displacing them. And one of the features most conducive to true table etiquette, and the drawing together of hearts and minds in true fellowship and intellectual enjoyment at the times of physical repast, will be found to be the giving of thanks to God—the recognition that every good and every perfect gift cometh down from our Father. The family which at table neglects to return acknowledgement to the Giver of every good, will scarcely succeed in properly recognizing each other and having intellectual fellowship one with the other.

That our Lord was prompt to avail himself of all such table-talk opportunities, is very manifest. On each occasion of his attendance at a banquet we find him utilizing the opportunity for the inculcation of some truth—natural or spiritual. In the present instance he evidently did not consider his hearers to be in a favorable condition for high spiritual teachings, and hence his table-talk was on a lower plane, adapted to the natural man, yet nevertheless inculcating lessons which, if learned, would prepare the learners for the heavenly things. And this should be the thought in every family circle,—that the tendency of all conversation should be ennobling as well as instructive—leading upward as well as outward.

The guests had been invited to the table, and our Lord noticed how they were each seeking the seats of chief honor, thus showing the pride and ambition of their hearts. We may safely assume that our Lord and his disciples took the less distinguished seats, in harmony with the Scriptural injunction, "In honor preferring one another."

A favorable opportunity offering, our Lord indirectly called attention to the wrong self-seeking course,—not by saying anything against the action in this particular case, but by suggesting a propriety of conduct in a general way; he based his illustration upon a marriage feast, at which, more than any other, distinctions as to title, honor and position, received much consideration. As was his custom, he taught by a parable, permitting his hearers to draw the inference and make the application in some measure to the banquet to which they were then gathered; and he wound it up by making this a great lesson on a general principle; viz., that "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted"—a lesson of vital importance to all who would be ready for and enter the kingdom.

This is a great lesson applicable, not only to the natural man, seeking progress back to fellowship and harmony with God, but there is in it also a lesson to the "new creature" all through life's journey,—that if divine favor is desired and to be expected it must be sought; not in pride, not in self-sufficiency, but in humility. The Lord resisteth the proud, the self-sufficient, the boastful, and showeth his favors unto the humble. The Apostle James likewise calls attention to the importance of this grace of humility, assuring us that no true progress can be made in the way to God, except by the humble. (James 4:10) And the Apostle Peter, after exhorting to humility, saying, "Yea, all of you, be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility," adds, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—1 Pet. 5:5, 6.

If the hearers had received the message and been corrected by it, it might indeed have worked considerable difference in their standing amongst their brethren, the Pharisees, but it would also have worked a considerable difference in their favor with God. By receiving such a spirit of humility they would be coming into that relationship with God and the truth which would have divine approval, and be thus the stepping-stone to further favor, by preparing their hearts to receive the good things which God has to give, but which cannot be received by any except the humble-hearted. Indeed, we know of nothing today that is so great a stumbling-block to the majority in nominal Christendom as the prevalent spirit of self-seeking. It is a great barrier before the minds of many, in and out of the pulpit, continually hindering them from seeing, hearing and obeying present truth—they love the approval of men rather than that of God.

The table-talk later turned in another direction, probably considerable being said in the interim that is not recorded, not pertinent; but before the feast was ended an appropriate opportunity came for the Lord to present some words of counsel to his host, and this was done in so kind and so wise a manner that it surely could give no offence, but, on the contrary, must have led the thoughts of all the hearers to higher and heavenly things. He advised that the banquets of the well-to-do in this world's goods be extended to their poorer, less fortunate neighbors and friends; assuring his hearers that such a course would bring the greatest blessing, as every good deed brings its blessings, forthwith—in the consciousness of having done good; and in the reactionary effect upon one's own heart of every good deed, every benevolence. And, in addition to these blessings, our Lord pointed out that for such an one there would be a blessing in the future also—a reward that would fully compensate every such benefaction.

Our Lord's words were in part a commendation of the course pursued by his host in inviting himself and his apostles to dinner, for they were poor. Indirectly his remarks meant that if that very feast were given with a proper sentiment of heart, as we have every reason to presume was the case, his host might expect a reward for his conduct in the future—besides the blessing that had already come to his house through our Lord's presence and words of instruction.

Sunday School lesson comments will be found to misinterpret the blessing which our Lord declared would come to those who received the poor. One of these commentaries says on this point, that "Our Lord refers to the first resurrection, mentioned in Rev. 20:4, 5, assuring him that he would be raised in that resurrection as one of that glorious class. He would have the rewards that God gives, and can give only, to those who are righteous."

This is a grievous mistake, a misapprehension of our Lord's meaning. The first resurrection is not to be attained merely by the doing of kind acts to either the worthy or the unworthy poor. As explained in the connection (Rev. 20:4) none will have part in the first resurrection except those who have been "*beheaded* for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God." And, although this beheading is figurative and not literal, it nevertheless has a deep significance, implying much more than making a feast to the poor. It signifies, not only death to *self-will*, but also to be cut off from all other heads, governments and law-givers, and to recognize no "head" but Jesus, whom God hath appointed to be the Head of the church which is his body—the head of every member of it.

It means, not only to be *cut off* from institutional heads and authorities, but also to cease to have heads and wills of our own, and to accept, instead, the headship, the will, of our Lord Jesus. It is the same thought that is drawn to our attention by the Apostle in Romans 6:3, where he declares that we are baptized into the *body* of Christ, as members of that body, under the one Head, Christ, by being baptized into his death,—a full consecration of our wills, and ultimately a full laying down of our lives, faithfully unto death. The attainment of this first resurrection and its joint-heirship with

Christ in the Millennial kingdom was clearly understood by the Apostle Paul, and was his aim: and respecting it he said, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. . . . That I may know him, and the power of *his resurrection*." (Phil. 3:8, 10) Had St. Paul understood our Lord's words as the above quoted Sunday School lesson commentator did, he would have chosen the easy and pleasant plan of feasting the poor, rather than the years of privation and self-sacrifice in the narrow way which he pursued. And to this, St. Paul's words on another occasion agree. "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the kingdom."

What, then, did our Lord intend to promise as a reward for a good deed—done without hope of reward in the present life? We answer, that he meant to promise the same thing that he promised to anybody who would give even so much as a cup of cold water to one of his disciples. He wished to assure them that all such would by no means lose their reward. (Matt. 10:42) Not a reward of glory, honor, immortality and joint-heirship in the kingdom of God, but a good reward, more than compensating for the kindness they performed. This rewarding of everyone who has done good, either to the poor of this world or especially to the Lord and his faithful brethren walking in his foosteps, will come to them, not *in* the first resurrection, but *at* that time;—after the first resurrection shall have glorified the church and inaugurated the kingdom, then Millennial blessings and the reign of righteousness beginning will bring rewards to everyone who has done kindnesses, helping them forward and abundantly rewarding them; while all who have done evil shall have some measure of "stripes" in compensation and retribution

A ROYAL BANQUET DECLINED

LUKE 14:15-24.—OCT. 14.

"Come, for all things are now ready."

Jesus continued his table-talk of our last lesson at the Pharisee's dinner. Our Lord had led the attention of his associates, not only to the proprieties of life, but to future things, by the suggestion that feasts should be given in the interest of the poor, whose inability to return the favor would insure a divine blessing more than compensating in the future —in the kingdom. This led one of the company to a remark which we loosely paraphrase, thus,—Ah, yes! that kingdom, for which we hope, will be a blessed time. How blessed it will be to share the bounties which God has promised in the great feast which he shall spread! The speaker probably was well acquainted with Isaiah's prophecy respecting the kingdom (Isa. 25:6) in which God's mercies and blessings to the world are figuratively represented as a feast, in the words, "In this mountain [kingdom] shall the Lord of hosts make unto all the people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow."

Thus gradually the minds of the company present had been led from earthly things and from commonplace matters and social chit-chat, which might have occupied their attention, to the consideration of the gracious promises of God. And undoubtedly this was our Lord's very object in accepting the Pharisee's invitation, and in leading the conversation gradually in this direction. Now he had an opportunity to teach something respecting this kingdom and its blessings and the call to share it; and he improved it. His hearers, if they had in mind Isaiah's prophecy and God's promise to Abraham, would understand that the kingdom or mountain of the Lord would be the house of Israel, in some glorious and exalted condition under Messiah, and that it was in and through his kingdom that the *feast* of divine blessings, for all nations, was to be spread. Our Lord now, by a parable, drew attention to the Gospel call of great blessings and privileges, and would have his hearers note the fact that while in a general way they would all assent to the statement that the kingdom would be a blessed one, and the feast there something to be greatly desired, nevertheless when the offer of that kingdom would be made them temporal things closer to their hearts would make it of no effect to the majority.

The parable represents a great feast, with a large number of friends of the host invited in advance, that they might be ready at such a time as the feast would be ready and announced. God himself is the host in this parable, and the Jewish nation were his friends to whom, as a people, he had given much advantage every way, chiefly in that to them were committed the oracles of God,—much knowledge of the divine plan for human salvation and the promises that if they, as the seed of Abraham, were faithful, they should have the invitation and privilege and opportunities of this great feast. The Lord addresses them through the Prophet, saying, "You only have I known [recognized] of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2) Israel only was invited to this feast; but the feast was not ready until our Lord's day, and hence the invitation to partake of it did not go forth until then. Finally, however, the time had come; Christ, as represented in the bullock of the sin-offering, had already given himself,—the sacrifice being counted as accomplished from the time of its offering, when our Lord presented himself to John at Jordan, making a full consecration of his entire being, even unto death. In view of this sacrifice for sins, God could begin at once to call the already promised guests to the great feast of blessing and manifestation of divine favor toward those to whom he had promised it so long before, through their father Abraham.

And thus it was that when Jesus came and called his disciples and sent them forth, the message was, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand;" the great feast of fat things for this nation, that God has so long promised, is ready; and whosoever wills may come and be received and participate in it. The message of Jesus and the twelve, and later the seventy, throughout all Judea, was the invitation of that favored people to come and enjoy the great feast for which they had impatiently waited and hoped and prayed for over sixteen centuries,—the great privileges and opportunities of the kingdom.

But as the parable shows, when the offer of the kingdom was really made, when the invitation to partake of the blessings of the great feast was really put before them, it proved that they loved the kingdom and the future things far less than they and others might have supposed. On the contrary, the unanimity with which the invitation to the kingdom was rejected made it appear almost as though the rejectors had acted in concert in the matter. Their excuses for so little interest in the things which God had promised and which they claimed to be eagerly longing for, were the apparent pressure of other duties which they *must* attend to, and which left no time for responding to the divine invitation to the kingdom. With one the pressure came in the direction of seeing to his farm, and thus being not slothful in business; another felt that it might do very well for people who had nothing else to do to give attention to a spiritual feast, but as for him, his time was fully occupied with his property, his oxen, sheep, store-business, and what not. Another felt that his duties, social ties, wife, children, etc., demanded all of his attention, and that therefore he could not accept the kingdom privileges.

And this, which was the sentiment of fleshly Israel, is largely that of spiritual Israel, also, now that the spiritual kingdom is announced. Many seem to feel that what they would call the real and practical things of life need all of their attention. They want to "get along" in this world's affairs, and to be somebodies in it, and they find such interest in social and material matters a great hindrance to any response to the divine invitation to a share in the glorious Millennial kingdom, as joint-heirs with Christ,—the great feast, the high calling which has come to us. Well, in one sense of the word this is all right, for it merely keeps out of the kingdom a class which the Lord does not desire should be in it, and which if it did come in would need to be sifted out, later Although God has bidden many, he is seeking for this feast only such as will highly appreciate it above all other privileges—those who would be willing to sacrifice any and every other thing in order to share it.

The first invitation to the feast, recounted in the parable, represents the first years of our Lord's ministry, which were specially directed toward interesting the scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, who, as the leading men of that nation, and as our Lord said, occupying Moses' seat, really represented that nation as a whole; and the rejection of the invitation by these meant the rejection of it by that nation as a whole. Thus our Lord was careful to bring before the priestly class of that time the evidences of his Messiahship, so that when, for instance, he healed the ten lepers, he charged them to tell no man, but go and show themselves to the priests. Thus the priestly class was informed respecting the miraculous work of our Lord, perhaps more particularly than others. They therefore had the invitation to the feast more particularly than others. However, the fact that the chief

representatives of Israel were unready for the invitation was not permitted to hinder, and our Lord, through his disciples, subsequently extended the invitation to another class.

The trial of the nation as a whole, represented by its leaders, ended at Calvary, or rather five days before Calvary, when our Lord rode on the ass and wept over the city of Jerusalem, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee· how oft would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!" As a nation, as a people, you have rejected the divine invitation to the great feast, and as a nation you cannot taste of it. Nevertheless according to divine intention and promise through the prophets, God extended mercy to various individuals of that nation, after the nation as a whole had proven itself unworthy of the kingdom privileges. The apostles were sent to gather not the nation, but such individuals as were of humble mind, to share in the feast, and this calling of individuals, instead of the nation of Israel was responded to exclusively by those who realized their own unworthiness,—the lame, the halt the blind, who confessed that they were not perfect, but who desired perfection and who rejoiced in the call to partake of the kingdom privileges and gladly forsook all else for it. Amongst them we are assured there are not many wise not many great, not many learned but chiefly the poor for although the poor are not always humble by any means, yet amongst them proportionately more were found who were of acceptable character; amongst the rich and the great humility would appear to have been at all times correspondingly scarce.

This second invitation to the poor, the halt and the blind, in the streets and lanes of the city, as a picture would be very difficult to appreciate in our day of hospitals and almshouses, etc., provided by general taxation; but in the days of our Lord it would be very easy indeed to have collected a large crowd of indigent and infirm in short order.

It will be observed that both of these first calls belong to the city—that is, Israel, the nominal kingdom of God. But the two calls failed to find the sufficient number which God had predestinated should constitute the kingdom class. He could indeed have induced others to come in, but, on the contrary, he purposely put the invitation to the feast in such a form as would repel those who were not of the right attitude of heart—in such a form as would attract Israelites indeed, who felt and acknowledged their own unworthiness, and who would be glad, on entering the feast, to have on the robe provided for the guests (symbolical of Christ's righteousness), to cover the filthy rags of their own imperfection. But now, because a sufficient number was not found in Israel to complete the elect number, the message must be sent outside the city, outside of Judaism,—to the Gentiles; and thus the third message was, "Go ye into the highways and whosoever you meet, compel them to come in." The word "compel," however, gives a wrong thought here: it should properly be rendered, urge, persuade.

And thus it has been that throughout the Gospel age, since the bringing in to the Gospel favor of as many Jews as were ready for it, the message has been turned to the Gentiles, "to take out of them a people for God's name," to partake of the great feast with the remnant of Israel. As the Apostle Paul said to some of the Jews in his preaching: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles; for so the Lord hath commanded us." (Acts 13·46, 47) They showed themselves unworthy of this great blessing or gift, in that they were interested more in the things that perish than in the glorious promises of the everlasting future.

The Apostle Paul calls attention to this fact in Rom. 9:27: "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant [only] shall be saved." The Apostle further shows that the call of the Gentiles to be sharers in the kingdom is merely the continuation of the original call, and that we are called in to take the places of those who neglected so great salvation and privilege. He illustrates this by the olive tree, saying that the natural branches were broken off that we, who by nature were wild, might be grafted in and become partakers of the root and fatness of the olive.—Rom. 11:17.

This third call to the great feast of the kingdom blessings and privileges has progressed throughout this Gospel age, and to our understanding is now nearly complete—nearly all the places at the table have been provided with guests; only a few are yet vacant; and so soon as these places are filled, the great feast will begin, and we shall indeed enter into the joys of our Lord, and not only be privileged to feast ourselves, but to carry of its bounties and blessings to all the families of the earth.

The same matters which hindered the Jews, under the first call, from accepting this invitation, have hindered to a large extent also many of the Gentiles who have heard the third call. It is impossible to be thorough-going business men, wealthy, influential, etc., and at the same time follow in the footsteps of Jesus, giving all of our hearts, talents and energies to the Lord in acceptance of his invitation to this feast. The acceptance of the invitation to this feast means a deep interest in it, beyond everything else, so that all other matters, whether houses or lands, father or mother, wife or children, shall be secondary to the interests of the kingdom, and to our responsibilities to the terms and conditions of the invitation. Consequently, what was true respecting Israel has been true as respects the Gentiles, viz., that the call to the kingdom has been generally, rejected by those who had a considerable measure of this world's blessings and advantages—those who are rich, either in honor of men or social position or talents or reputation or money, have found it difficult to leave these all to follow Jesus in the narrow way: and, consequently, the Scriptural assurance is, not only that those elected in the end of the Jewish age were chiefly the poor and lowly, but that the same has been true amongst the Gentiles, and is true today: "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble;" but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith.—1 Cor. 1:26; James 2:5.

This does not debar those who have riches of any kind, but really gives them all the greater privilege and opportunity; for they have that much greater talent which, if they will, they may sacrifice, and thus the more fully demonstrate their appreciation of the invitation and of the feast, and be correspondingly appreciated by the Host. Let us all, like the Apostle Paul, lay aside every weight, every hindrance, every besetment, everything precious to us of an earthly kind, that we may run with patience the race set before us, in response to this invitation to the great feast of joint-heirship with our Lord in the kingdom.—Heb. 12:1, 2; Rom. 8·16-18; 12:1, 2.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE BIBLE TRIUMPHANT

Evidences corroborative of the Bible's truthfulness accumulate Genesis notes Nimrod as the founder of the Chaldee or Babylonian empire before Abraham's day. (Gen. 10:8-12) These and other features of the narrative have been doubted and considered mythical; but explorations in Babylonia seem to confirm the Bible record at every point.

We have already mentioned the exploration of the ruins of ancient Nippur, once the royal capital, commenced some years ago by the representatives of the University of Pennsylvania, U. S. A. The past year, it seems, has been a very fruitful one, the ruins yielding to the searchers vast literary treasures,—the once National Library of Chaldea. The *Biblia* gives the following interesting description of the find:—

"The most surprising feature of the discovery is that the persons who collected the tablets and placed them originally in the pot was an old priest, who lived previous to and during the time of Belshazzar, and who was evidently a scientist of no mean discrimination. The pot was, indeed, his archaeological museum, not portentious in size, but the first museum known to man, and therefore more important for the bearing it had on the history of civilization than any of the great museums in existence today. Among the articles found in it were the following tablets:

"1. One of Sargon, which gives his titles. This particular piece of baked clay may give information concerning the doings of centuries. It was the custom in those days for each king to inscribe a memorial tablet not only with an account of his victories, but with his pedigree, showing where he was born, who were his ancestors, the god he worshiped, and in fact, anything else that might serve to impress posterity with his personal glory. These tablets, therefore, reveal the names and origin of many of the writer's contemporaries, predecessors, and, as the accounts of the successive kings dovetail into one another, they will all in the end constitute an unbroken history of this early civilization. There are, however, compara-

tively few of these tablets yet found which date so far back as 3800 B. C., hence the vast importance of this tablet.

"2. A tablet written in the reign of Ur Gur. This king is famous for building and remodeling the old temple of Ekur, dedicated to the god Bel. This stone tablet states specifically that he rebuilt the temple wall, which had originally been erected by Narim Sin. He also erected many other buildings in Nippur.

"3. A tablet, excellently preserved, stating the great hall of the temple was called Emakh. It also stated, to Professor Hilprecht's great amazement, that there were forty different shrines in Nippur, each of which was dedicated to a distinct god. This important fact will amaze Babylonian scholars, because it has hitherto been supposed that there was but one god, *i. e.*, Bel, worshiped in Nippur.

"4. A text inscribed by Ashur-etil-ilane, a king who ruled a short time over Assyria.

"5. An important text of Assyria's last king, Sin-shar-ishkun.

"Near the spot where Professor Hilprecht found this wonderful little museum there was picked up a peculiarly shaped barrel cylinder recording King Samsu-iluna's restoration of part of the Temple of Bel. This was about 2000 B. C. Near by lay a curious truncated barrel cylinder marked with the name of Assur-bani-pal, a king whose name is well known to the explorers. In addition to these, two hundred Hebrew bowls, excellently preserved and some of them quite large, were unearthed in another part of the mounds. But these were quite modern, having been left by the Jews who lived on the mounds of Nippur as late as 700 A. D.

"No one can read an account of the work of Professor Hilprecht without being struck by the fact that the people of 7,000 years ago lived very much as we do today. There was the same appreciation of literature and art, as shown in the cuneiform scripts and in their sculpture. Wealthy people lived in the cities and employed attorneys to manage their tenantry who lived in the country on farms. When they bought jewelry a written guaranty went with it. In the archive room of Murashu Sons, attorneys of ancient Nippur, there was found a tablet guaranteeing that an emerald set in a ring would not fall out for twenty years. Houses were built on an extensive, not to say modern, plan, and were furnished more or less magnificently, as evidenced in the palace above mentioned above. Fortifications were built, wars were carried on, conquests were made, and heroes were glorified. People, when they died, were not thrown hastily into the earth, but were laid away carefully in clay coffins, which are found today still covered with the beautiful blue glaze with which they were decorated by the ancient undertaker. And for the benefit of posterity, science was studied and museums were planned that they might be found in the dawn of the twentieth century, and the history of the race read as a sermon in stones."

Commenting on these discoveries, the *London Daily News* says:—

"The find has been much more important than could have been anticipated. In the course of three months no less than 17 200 tablets, covered with cuneiform writings, have been recovered. These are not of the character mentioned in my former notice of the discovery of tablets, namely, the recovery of private business contracts, conveyances, letters, and the like, but bear more resemblance to the contents of an ordinary library. The tablets are historical, philological, and literary. They treat of mythology, of grammar and lexicography, of science, and of mathematics. There is reason to believe that they will for the first time enable the world to form an adequate idea of life in Babylonia such as could be possible only by the discovery of a national library, recording the national progress in literature, science, and thought generally. No document is found in this collection of a later date than 2280 B. C. As this date marks the invasion of the Elamites, the fact adds confirmatory evidence that the library was destroyed during this invasion.

"The unexplored remains of the library are even more extensive than those already examined. The tablets are generally arranged with regularity on clay shelves around the rooms of the library, and Professor Hilprecht estimates that at their present rate of working five more years will be necessary to excavate and examine the contents. He thinks it probable, judging from the contents already found in the rooms excavated, and from various other reasons, that the unexplored part will yield 150,000 tablets to be added to those already discovered. As the library was one of great renown, the chief glory of the temple in early Babylonia, the chief college for instruction in law and religion, which, as in all early systems, were inextricably bound together, and, indeed, in all studies judged worthy of attention, it is evident that no examination of the contents can be too careful. It is, in fact, hardly too much to say that if the unexplored parts should prove as rich in results as that already found, there will be no example in the world's history, not even in Egypt, of so complete a recovery of the records of an ancient civilization. . . . .

"In the course of the present excavations a palace belonging to the pre-Sargonic period was uncovered beneath an accumulation of seventy feet of rubbish on the southwestern side of the Shatt-en-Nil, dividing Nippur in two parts. Professor Hilprecht himself, having never been doubtful as to the actual site of the temple library at Nippur since his first visit to Babylonia in 1889, considers the discovery of this large building, with 600 feet frontage, which will probably turn out to be the palace of the early priest-kings of Nippur, as the most important result of this year's campaign. Already the few rooms excavated have given valuable results in the shape of pre-Sargonic tablets, of seal cylinders of the earliest type, and clay figurines of early date and great interest. The palace was very extensive, and at least two stories high. . . . .

"Beyond doubt the greatest success of the year is that accomplished by the American expedition. The importance of the discovery of the pre-Sargonic palace and of the library of so famous a temple as that of Nippur was at once recognized. The systematic and thorough examination which it is hoped will be made next year promises to give a full and detailed picture of life in what the author of the Book of Genesis regarded as one of the oldest cities in the world, and one whose origin, even in his time, was attributed to the famous hunter whose name has become mythical. The results of the explorations will probably show that Nippur was as important in the fifth millennium before Christ as it was in the third; that it anticipated the civilization and the period when Babylon took the lead by at least two thousand years, and that at this early period the human race in Babylonia had acquired arts and knowledge which hitherto have only been attributed to a much later period.

* * *

How does this agree with the claim of Evolutionists that Adam was but one remove from the highest type of monkey, and too ignorant at first to wear clothing? On the contrary, how these evidences of intelligence amongst the ancients corroborate the old Bible, at which "higher criticism," falsely so called sneers! The Bible's declaration is that the first man was *up*, high up in intelligence, in the very image of God, and that he fell *from* that high estate because of sin. The fact is that during the 1656 years to the flood, the *fall*, the depravity of mankind, was very great; and that in Abraham's day, about 400 years later, the race was still further enervated, through climatic and other influences, as shown by the fact that Arphaxad, born two years after the flood, lived 438 years, while his children, during those four centuries, gradually declined in vitality and years, so that Terah, Abraham's father, died at two-hundred-five: and it is reasonable to presume that the mental vigor suffered equally with the physical. And yet the Scriptures show us Abraham, every way a noble specimen of humanity: and now ancient Nippur's libraries, then in process of formation, show us that a high degree of intelligence was then prevalent among the sons of Ham, as well as in the family of Shem.

But we caution all to beware of the *dates* ascribed to these ancient tablets, cities, etc.; for they are only scientific guesses: and since they are contradictory to Bible chronology, we know that they are unreliable The worldly-wise, depressing the Bible as unscientific, and relying on their own "findings," endeavor to reconcile such archaeological testimonies with their previous errors instead of with the Bible. And scientists, misled into reckoning on "evolution" lines, have given to human history an age much beyond that declared in God's Word, which we accept as the only authority;—some of them going to more absurd extremes than others.

Blessed is the man who putteth his trust in the Lord and in his Word.

MANNA FOR THE FAMISHING OF INDIA

"The strange appearance of manna on the stems of the bamboo, was reported last March by the divisional forest officer, Chanda, Central Provinces, and notices of this phenomenon have been published in the local papers. The bamboo forests of Chanda consist of *Dendrocalamus strictus*, the male bamboo, a bushy plant from twenty to thirty feet in height, and affecting the cooler northerly and westerly slopes of Central and Southern India. This is said to be the first time in the history of these forests that a sweet and gummy substance has been known to exude from the trees. The gum has been exuding in some abundance, and it has been found very

palatable to the natives in the neighborhood, who have been consuming it as a food. The occurrence of the manna at this season is all the more remarkable, since the greatest famine India has known is this year visiting the country, and the districts where the scarcity is most felt are in the Central Provinces."—*Nature.*

WHAT WILL BECOME OF PROTESTANTISM IN JAPAN

"*The Japan Advertiser* has it upon the best of authority that one of the American mission boards is next month to withdraw from Japan its only remaining representative, and is to leave its work, henceforth, entirely in the hands of the Japanese, who have become interested in it. 'The latter (says our contemporary) are to have the use of the buildings and property (of no inconsiderable value), and some pecuniary aid will continue to be granted them, but the work itself will be practically free from foreign guidance.'"

A literary man, residing in Japan, Mr. Penman, makes comment on the above as follows:—

"This extract shows clearly the failure of Protestant Christianity in this country; for it is failure. and not large-hearted trust in the Japanese Protestant, that has caused this retreat. There are at present independent Protestant churches in Japan; but, in the first place, their Christianity has become so vague that it can hardly be called Christianity at all; and, in the second place, they are not making headway. A Japanese journalist, who relates his experiences in the columns of the *Kirisuto Tokyo Shimbun*, says that he examined the roll of one of these churches some time ago, and found out of a total membership of 323 no less than 86 persons were marked absent. He was informed that out of the remainder, 123 persons were Christian only in name, so that the work of the church had to be carried on by a little over 100 converts; and even out of these the average attendance at church meetings did not exceed 77. And the last report of the *Kumiai* (Independent Japanese churches—Protestant, of course,) shows that the number of self-supporting churches has fallen from 40 to 34, and, if the truth must be told there are not more than 24 or 25 of these that are self-supporting in reality.

"Not only are the 'Independent' churches thus going backward in point of numbers, they are, as I have just hinted, going woefully backward in regard to doctrine as well. I shall give a concrete example of what I mean. The Doshisha is a fine educational institution established by a Japanese Protestant who was, I believe, a sincere and able Christian. It was run for a number of years as a religious establishment in connection with the American Mission Board, and of course the trustees were all Christians of good standing, and generally clergymen. For some time they *were* Christians, but changes—mental and otherwise—occur rapidly in Japan, and only last year they had progressed so far toward Agnosticism that a breach with the American Mission Board occurred. I visited personally some of the leaders of the movement, and they told me that they certainly did not believe in the divinity of Christ; in fact, I failed to discover any one point of Christian belief that they did believe in. . . . . Ten years ago Protestantism had a very good outlook in Japan, and many highly educated Japanese embraced it. But it took the 'advanced thinkers' among the converts only a year or two to out-Spencer Spencer, and today the vernacular Protestantism of Japan is getting on as best it can without any burning or shining light whatsoever. The burning and shining lights—in other words, the leading native ecclesiastics—became all of them 'philosophers,' and, while still professing to be Christians, attempted to call in German and other materialism to their aid. The English and American missionary bodies to which they belonged, naturally objected. The American Episcopal church of Japan fell foul of Dr. Sagiura, a Japanese minister (who has had, by the way, the advantage of an excellent American education), who denied the miraculous birth of Christ. Many of the leading Japanese clergymen resigned, and, in another direction, the organ of the Lutheran Church in Japan, a magazine which maintained that the Bible is a revelation, was discontinued because 'no suitable editor could be found who was prepared to defend such a theory.'"

Mr. Penman quotes a Japanese writer in a Tokyo magazine as follows:

"Can it be said that our Christian philosophy has been more successful than our preaching of morality? I trow not. After attempting to call in German materialism to the aid of Christianity with poor results, our philosophers fell back on the ultra-idealism of Brahmanism and Buddhism, with the outcome that they have gradually explained away the personality of the Christian God, reducing him to a mere controlling force, or to a fixed law called *Temmei.* What possibility is there of building a system of morality on belief in the existence of such an entity as this? . . . . If we ask what amount of real faith in Christianity there exists in this country, the answer must be discouraging. Christians dispute about opinions and discuss this doctrine and that, but beneath it all, it seems to me, there is little real *belief.* Christianity, in coming to us, has had the advantage of being associated with a system of civilization whose merits are acknowledged. It has been represented as part and parcel of that civilization, and hence has in the past received a certain amount of prestige that it is no longer likely to retain. The feeling of the nation in reference to the various elements composing what is called Western civilization has changed, and hence Christianity is no longer likely to be regarded as an inseparable part of that civilization. If things proceed thus, in thirty years Christianity in Japan will be effaced."

We cannot vouch for the correctness of these pessimistic views of the Protestant situation in Japan: doubtless honest people view these things through various spectacles. We do know, however, that Mr. Penman's picture corresponds well with what we see right here at home—that the colleges and theological seminaries of this so-called Christian land are hot beds of infidelity called "advanced thought," "higher criticism," "Evolution," etc. We cannot wonder, then, that the same spirit has reached Japanese institutions; nor can we wonder that the Japanese, less bound to the Bible by traditions of the past, should be more free to speak and act out of their unbelief—especially when popularity, the masses of the people, etc., would all favor such a course.

Surely the shaking and sifting will be thorough (Heb 12:26); for it is the Lord that is back of it, wishing to thoroughly separate the little handful of wheat from the vast quantity of tares constituting nominal "Christendom," "Babylon." We may be sure, however, that not one grain of the true wheat will be neglected by the great Reaper—Matt. 24:24

SEEKING 2,000,000 HEADS OF WHEAT AND TARES FOR "METHODISM'S BIG FLOCK"

The public press has the following announcement

"Methodists Seeking 2,000,000 Converts—The Twentieth Century Movement has Opened Offices in Chicago—200 000 Workers Enlisted—Greatest Harvest of the Year's Revival Expected in the Large Cities

"CHICAGO, Sept. 8.—The twentieth century movement of the Methodist Episcopal church to save 2,000,000 souls is well under way.

"Bishop James M. Thoburn proposed the plan at the General Conference of the church in May. It has been the chief topic at the ministers' meetings. The order has gone to the Bishops and will be handed down to each member of the church. Briefly, the scheme is to have 200,000 members each pledge themselves to bring ten converts into the church before Dec. 31, 1901. The Methodist church is so thoroughly organized that the movement will be carried out without a hitch throughout the country.

"W. W. Cooper, secretary of the movement, has opened an office in the Methodist Church block in Chicago.

"'A large part of the work ought to be done in the big cities,' says Mr. Cooper. 'This is the beginning of a revival that will extend through the first half of the coming century Every organization connected with the church will be utilized to further this grand plan. There is much dead timber in the church, which, it is hoped, will respond to this invitation to extend the influence of Christ.

"'It is quite true that church membership is not increasing in ratio to the census, so the Methodist church has decided to start a great agitation.'"

Last year witnessed a decrease in Methodist numbers, and this and other offsets are proposed. No doubt *results* will follow. It is as much a part of this harvest work to gather the tares into "bundles" and "bind" them, as it is to gather the "wheat" into the light and liberty wherewith Christ makes free and safe in his "garner." Should any ripe "wheat" be gathered into these "bundles," we may surely expect them to be gathered out again, speedily; for "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and is calling in a voice which all his true ones will hear and recognize and obey, "Come out of her, *my people*, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues!"—2 Cor. 6:17; Rev. 18:4.

No doubt this "Twentieth Century Movement" will spread among all denominations, and favor the "Union" movement. No doubt also it will lead to an increased bitterness against present truth and all who are loyal to it as the true gospel. It would not surprise us if this led to persecution, for no doubt many now, like Saul of Tarsus, will verily think that in persecuting the truth and its servants they are doing God service.

REV. R. A. TORREY'S ARRAIGNMENT

At the convention of Christian workers, Chicago, Sept. 19, Rev. Torrey, as reported by the *Chicago Evening Post*, said:

"Unbelief is rampant. Many regard it as a mark of intellectual superiority to reject the Bible, and even faith in God and immortality. It is about the only mark of superiority many possess, and perhaps that is the reason they cling to it so tenaciously. Many of us who are professedly orthodox ministers are infidels. Worldliness is rampant among church members. Many church members are just as eager as any in the rush to get rich. They use the methods of the world in the accumulation of wealth, and they hold just as fast to it as any, when they have it. Many do not believe in the whole Bible. The book of Genesis is a myth; Jonah is an allegory; and even the miracles of the Son of God are questioned. The doctrine of prayer is old-fashioned, and the doctrine of the holy Spirit is sneered at. Conversion is unnecessary, and hell is no longer believed in. Then look at the fads and errors that have sprung up out of this loss of faith. . . . Praylessness abounds among church members on every hand. Many Christians spend twice as much time every day wallowing in the mire of the daily papers as they do bathing in the cleansing waves of God's holy Word."

ZIONISM PROSPERING SLOWLY

While the last Zionist Congress (London, August) was a success as respects numbers and enthusiasm, it revealed no progress on the part of its leaders in the accomplishment of its aims, or steps thereto. The *London Spectator* says of it:

"The main arguments of the speakers are the horrible position of the Jews in countries where, as in Roumania, they are actively persecuted, and the benefit they may be to Europe, as the vanguard of an army of intelligence for penetrating Asia. Both are sound arguments, but some hotter impulse than either would seem to be required before the majority of Jews will quit countries to which they are accustomed, for a country which has for ages been represented to them as desolate beyond experience. The English Jews in particular are too comfortable to move; the Jews in professions on the Continent fear to be declared foreigners; and the poor majority have no means of influencing the Turkish government, which is not favorable to the movement. Some day or other, when the Seraglio is in acute want of money, a great experiment will be tried; but meanwhile Zionism is rather the highly interesting aspiration of a great race, than a practical design for the restoration of the Jews to their own land."

Addressing the Congress and speaking on the "General Position of the Jew," Dr. Max Nordau is reported to have said:

"'Since they began to review the position of the Jew among the nations, during the sittings of the Congress, the drama had developed before their eyes, and every act was progressively heartrending. The book of Job must be taken to be the picture of the Jewish position. Anti-Semitism was growing more virulent. The press of Europe bore testimony to Jews being cast in prison for a crime to none so revolting as to the Jew. In Prussia these ridiculous charges had received their quietus, and the energetic action of the government deserved the best thanks of Jewry.

"'Why are we thus treated? Are we not as human as our neighbors? Are we not as innocent? Is our desire to support our wives and children less laudable in us than in them? There have been other religious persecutions, but none so gruesome.'

"One historical parallel occurred to his mind. In 1729-31 all the Protestants in Salsburg, Austria, were expelled from their homes on account of religious intolerance. They took all necessary comforts with them. Church dignitaries offered them valedictory blessings, and even accompanied them some distance towards their new land. King Frederick William I. of Prussia offered them a home, and their new neighbors vied with each other in the heartiness of their greeting. But the poor 270 000 Jews exiled from Roumania carry nought but the rags on their backs; for their sick there was no medical consolation; and their future was as uncertain as their past was dark. They are accompanied on their rough road with suspicion and hatred; are met with repulses and rebuffs, and with the cry, ever growing sterner, 'Go further, further.'"

ARE THE HEATHENS SAVED OR LOST?

Inconsistency seems to be stamped on every doctrine and practice of "orthodox" Churchianity. For instance, point out to them that only one-fifth of the world's population make the slightest claim to be Christians, in the most formal sense, and that therefore the four-fifths who are professedly heathen can in no sense be *saved in Christ*, and that unless there be hope for them in the future, by an awakening from death to "a resurrection by judgment," there can be no other hope; and they will at once reply, Oh, no! we believe and teach that the heathen can be *saved* and go to heaven if they believe in Mohammed or Buddha or Confucius or some other divinity, if they do the best they know how.

You ask them, Will not *heaven* then be a place of common rather than choice spirits, with such a preponderance of heathen? and, What advantage then have Christians? and they are sorely perplexed, but generally not sufficiently perplexed to start a fresh investigation of the divine Word to see where the difficulty lies. When we further ask, Why the expenditure of millions of dollars annually, and the sacrifice of many lives of missionaries, if the heathen are *saved* anyway? they are confused at their own inconsistency. And if we then inquire, Do you not claim that the *hearing* of the Gospel, with the natural ear, brings condemnation to eternal torment if it be rejected? And do you not admit that the vast majority of those who thus hear do reject the Gospel? And putting this part of your faith with the other, do you not admit that one or the other must be wrong, or else that missionary effort is keeping millions of heathen people *out of heaven?*—Then they are confused and want (not to search for the truth but) to change the subject and stop thinking lest they lose their "faith." Poor things, they hold fast to their nonsensical delusions, calling them *faith!*

But now, in line with the above, we have another question to propound to so-called Orthodoxy, based on the following clipping from the daily press:

"POPULATION ANNIHILATED

"Five Thousand Chinese Driven into the Amur River, Where They Perished Miserably—Shot if They Attempted to Land

"LONDON, Sept. 21.—'Authentic accounts have been received here,' says the Moscow correspondent of the *Standard*, 'of a horrible massacre at Blagovestchensk, which was undoubtedly carried out under direct orders from the Russian authorities, and which then let loose the tide of slaughter through Amur.

"'The entire Chinese population of 5,000 souls was escorted out of town to a spot five miles up the Amur, and then, being led in batches of a few hundred to the river bank, were ordered to cross over to the Chinese side. No boats were provided and the river is a mile wide. The Chinese were flung alive into the stream and were stabbed or shot at the least resistance, while Russian volunteers, who lined the bank, clubbed or shot any who attempted to land. Not one escaped alive. The river bank for miles was strewn with corpses.'"

It is the claim of certain religious journals, and of many ministers of the gospel, that the present war in China for the protection of ministers and missions is a holy war in the interest of Christianity and its civilization, as against heathenism and its civilization. Now our question is whether this war is adding to the population of heaven or of hell, according to "orthodoxy?" It is surely a very important and proper question from their standpoint. Let us see; the succoring of the ministers and missionaries (every one of whom no doubt would have been passported to heaven by his own denomination) has cost the lives of probably 50,000 persons thus far, about 5,000 of the number being soldiers representing Christendom (as the Russians of the above clipping). Now did the entire 50.000 go to heaven?—the heathen because they did not know of Christ and the soldiers of "Christendom" because they were "soldiers of the cross?" If so, then the war already has *saved* 50,000 and should be prosecuted vigorously.

If our question be answered negatively—that the heathen 45,000 went to torment, and the "Christian" 5,000, being no more "saints" than the heathen, went to the same awful fate, then another question would be in order, namely: Would it not have been more Christ-like for the few rescued ministers and missionaries to have taken death as martyrs, in their faith of an immediate entrance to heaven; and to have allowed the 50,000 thus far slain in the war, to escape the *torture* for a few years more at least? How inconsistent "orthodoxy" is in its every proposition respecting the very subject it professes to know all about; *viz.*, the divine plan of salvation!

But how consistent the Bible teaching on these subjects.—(1) That only consecrated believers in the atonement are Christians—"saints." (2) That the vast majority of those killed on both sides were merely "children of this world," and not to be reckoned among the "children of God," whose trial for "glory, honor and immortality" is *now* in progress. (3) That the hour is coming in the which not only these, but "*all that are in their graves* shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth," the masses "*unto* [*i. e.*, to have an opportunity for] a resurrection [raising *fully* out of death, in perfect and everlasting conditions] by judgments,"* dis-

* The word in this text (John 5:29) rendered "*damnation*" is very improperly translated. It should be "*judgment*," as in the *Revised Version*, and in verses 22, 27 and 30 of this same chapter and many other places in the Scriptures where this word *krisis* occurs.

ciplines, corrections in righteousness, which will prevail toward all men during the Millennium.

CAN RESTITUTION CHANGE THE ETHIOPIAN'S SKIN?

The following, from the *New York World*, is the third we have seen reported. These suggest and illustrate the process of restitution soon due. The item reads:

"From Black to White He Slowly Turned"

"PARKERSBURG, W. Va., Sept. 8.—It has fallen to the lot of the Rev. William H. Draper, pastor of the Logan Memorial church, of Washington Conference, A. M. E. church, of this town, to give a living affirmative answer to the famous Biblical question, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?" Though once as black as charcoal, the Rev. Mr. Draper is now white. His people say that his color was changed in answer to prayer. Many years ago Draper was employed by a fair-skinned man, and he was often heard to remark that if he could only be white like his employer, he would be happy. While in the white man's service Draper 'experienced' religion.

"From that day forward he prayed constantly and fervently that he might become white. Thirty years ago his prayer began to be answered. He first experienced a prickling sensation on his face, and upon close investigation found a number of small white spots scarcely larger than the point of a pin. He became alarmed, thinking he had some peculiar disease but he did not suffer, and aside from the prickling sensation felt nothing unusual. Gradually the white spots became larger and extended themselves, until now, after the change has been in progress for over thirty years, Draper has not a single dark spot on his body.

"Many years ago, before this strange metamorphosis took place, Mr. Draper was in charge of the same church he has now. He was popular with his flock and his departure was a source of great regret. When he recently returned to Parkersburg there was great rejoicing among the churchmen because their favorite pastor was coming back. When, however, Draper appeared in the pulpit the first Sunday, not one of the congregation recognized him. In fact, it was all he could do to convince them that he, a white man, was the same old black preacher they had years before."

DIVINE CARE FOR THE LOST

LUKE 15:1-10.—OCT. 21.

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

Lost, as used in connection with mankind, has quite a different meaning in the Bible from that commonly given it in modern theology. The latter uses the term "lost" in connection with reprobates, for whom there is no hope; it implies, according to "orthodoxy," hopeless, endless, eternal torment. But from the Scriptural standpoint the word "lost" is used in an almost opposite sense, as will be noted in the lesson before us.

Our Lord, holy in word and in conduct, naturally would draw to himself especially the holiness people of his day, and these were the Pharisees, amongst whom, however, were many whose holiness was of a hypocritical character—delighting in outward show rather than in purity and holiness of heart. Recent lessons showed us our Lord the guest and companion of prominent Pharisees, and how he improved the opportunity to preach the gospel to them as well as to others. But the Pharisees, accustomed to thinking of themselves as the holier class of the Jews, had gradually separated themselves from the lower elements of that people, so that in our Lord's time the two classes mingled very little; the Pharisees refusing to acknowledge the others as brethren and fellow-heirs of the divine promises. Consequently, when they perceived that the lower classes of the Jews were interested in Jesus' teachings, and that Jesus did not hold himself aloof from them, but mingled with and taught them just the same as others, they wondered, and this inclined them to repudiate Jesus, whom they would have been glad to have had as one of their number if he had been willing to be known as a Pharisee and to conform to their customs. It was to correct the wrong ideas of these Pharisees that Jesus gave five parables, which we are about to consider—two of them in this lesson.

The parable of the true shepherd who, loving his sheep and caring for them, left the ninety and nine well cared for by under-shepherds in the wilds (not in a desert) and went after the one lost sheep until he found it, gives us an illustration of the divine care. Possibly our Lord meant no further lesson than this to be taken from his words; but if we shall suppose that the parable was intended to be applied in its varied particulars, and to illustrate features of the divine plan of salvation, we would be obliged to suppose that the one sheep that was lost represented Adam and the human family, and that the ninety and nine never lost, but remaining under the shepherd's care, were the angels and other spirit beings, who never wandered into sin and away from God; and who always have been under his supervision and care. In this view the shepherd going after the straying sheep would represent our Lord Jesus, leaving the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and coming into human conditions in the interest of mankind.

To take any other detailed view of the parable than this would seem inconsistent; as, for instance, to suppose that the lost sheep represented the degraded element of humanity, and ninety-nine sheep a holiness class, would be inconsistent in two ways: (1) "There is none righteous, no, not one," is the Scriptural declaration; and again, as the prophet has declared, "we *all* like sheep have gone astray." (Rom. 3:10; Isa. 53:6) (2) Even if it should be claimed that the ninety-nine represented some who are relatively whole, tho not actually so, the illustration would be inapt; because it will not be questioned that only a small minority—one in ten thousand, or one in a hundred thousand of earth's sixteen hundred millions, is even in a condition of reckoned and relative harmony with Jehovah, the Great Shepherd.

Viewing the one sheep as representing the whole of humanity, fallen in Adam and straying far from paths of righteousness, and viewing Jesus as the Good Shepherd, the representative of the Father, the Great Shepherd (Psa. 23:1), we see that the work of going after the lost sheep began at our Lord's first advent. We see the cost to our Saviour incidental to his start for the recovery of the sheep, but we do not yet see the sheep recovered; for in no sense of the word is mankind brought back into harmony with God. We do, however, see that during this Gospel age God is selecting from humanity an elect church, to be the body of Christ—members of the Good Shepherd, under Jesus as the Head; and we see that it is costing every member of the body something to prepare to join in this work of seeking the lost sheep—humanity in general—during the Millennial age.

Already the sheep is found, in the sense of being located; indeed, in that sense of the word it was not lost. But as it was lost, in the sense of having wandered from God into sin and degradation, in the same sense of the word it must be recovered or brought back, by processes of *restitution* (Acts 3:19-21) out of degradation, out of the mire of sin, and the horrible pit of iniquity and death. It will require the entire Millennial age to bring back the sheep in the full, perfect sense of the parable; but meanwhile our Lord assures us that every step in this great plan for human salvation is viewed with interest by the heavenly host, the sheep who strayed not from the Father's fold: and the figure changing a little in our Lord's explanation, and no longer represented by one sheep, but by many (even as the human family, tho originally one, is now many), he declares that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth—that returns to the fold, to harmony with God.

Those now returning to harmony with God are accepted in the Beloved, and justified freely from all things by the grace that was in him, and are, in the language of the Apostle, "returning to the Shepherd and Caretaker of their souls" (1 Pet. 2:25); and called to be co-laborers with the Good Shepherd, as members of his "body."

In the case of Father Adam, the one original straying sheep, as in the case of many of his posterity, the lost condition is not the desirable one—far rather would he and many others have gone back again to the fold from which he strayed; but in the degradation and mire of sin, they became so degraded and helpless that it was impossible for them to *return* in their own strength by the way in which they went. They needed a Savior—one able to save them unto the uttermost—able to recover them fully from all condemnation of sin, and to bring them back completely into the fold of God; and just such an one the heavenly Father has provided in our Lord Jesus: "He is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto the Father through him."

True, there will be a class, as the Scriptures clearly show, who, after having received at the Lord's hands all the blessings and opportunities which his love has provided for their recovery, will still persist in wilfulness—self-will, and thus

spurn the Good Shepherd's proffered assistance. These, in the Scriptures, are said to "sin wilfully after they have come to a knowledge of the truth;" for such, the Apostle declares, there remains no longer an interest in the great sacrifice, and "it is impossible to renew" or recover them. Respecting the course of such it is written, "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that ye should pray for it." Whoever thus sins wilfully and persistently puts himself beyond the reach of the Good Shepherd, and dies the second death, and thus ceases to have any part or lot in the divine plan. (Heb. 6:4-6; 1 John 5:16) It was not for the "goat" class that the Good Shepherd gave his life, and seeks in the desert; nor for the "wolves;" but merely for those who retain something at least of the "sheep" nature, despite their degradation in sin. Adam was a "sheep," or, as the Scriptures declare, a "son of God" (Luke 3:38); and while his transgression was a wilful one, in some respects, we have no reason to suppose that it was more than a *wandering* of the "sheep" from the fold, into ways of self-will: it did not mean a change of nature from a sheep disposition to that of a goat or a wolf. It did not mean that Adam preferred to be a "child of the devil."

Had Adam at heart become intelligently and wilfully an enemy of God and of righteousness we cannot suppose that the all-wise Shepherd would have sent his Son after him as a "sheep." True, many of the children of Adam today have attained marked characteristics of goat nature, and, as the Apostle declares, are "enemies of God through wicked works." (Col. 1:21) Nevertheless, the Apostle also explains that many of these are in this condition, not wilfully, but because they have been deceived by Satan into putting light for darkness and darkness for light—the eyes of their understanding have been deceived. He explained that the "god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them that believe not" lest they should see the glorious light of truth. (2 Cor. 4:4) Many of these, then, who through association with the adversary have become goat-like in many respects, still have something of the sheep nature, which, under proper enlightenment, would assert itself and be glad to have the Good Shepherd restore them fully to divine favor and the fold.

From this standpoint, which we believe is the true one, and the only one in harmony with the various features of the parable, we perceive that God takes no account whatever of those who will go into the second death; they will have no existence whatever, so far as God and his plan are concerned, from the moment they lose the sheep nature. And the one sheep which our Lord will recover during restitution times, and by the close of the Millennium bring fully back into the fold of God, will be *the human family* as God has recognized it from the first; *viz.*, those created in God's image and likeness, and who never fully lose that image and likeness, and in whom his image and likeness will be revived and restored during the Millennium. The lost sheep, which originally was represented in one (Adam and Eve) in its recovery will be represented by hundreds of millions of the redeemed and restored of mankind.

THE LOST PIECE OF SILVER

The parable of the woman who, having a bracelet on which were hung ten pieces of silver—a marriage token—on losing one of these set diligently to work until she found it, is another representation of the same thought expressed foregoing. The woman's energy in seeking for the lost piece of silver is given by our Lord as an illustration of *divine energy* on behalf of *lost humanity*. And here again we see that the Scriptures use the word "lost" in reference to the original loss, and not at all in respect to those who will be destroyed in the second death—the latter are not said to be lost; they cease to exist; they are not reckoned in the divine calculations at all, and not worthy to be mentioned. They are not at all like the original that was lost, which God recognized and proposes to recover.

The ten pieces of silver were not only of value, but each had stamped upon it, as is the custom with coin, a certain image or likeness. And so with all the sons of God, angels, archangels, and we know not how many other orders of spirit beings, were made in the *image* and *likeness* of God. It was one of these that was lost—the human one, man. And it was that which was lost that was sought, and ultimately found.

The houses of olden times, lighted mainly through the doorway, with the floors of earth (clay or sand or stones) more or less littered and defiled, well represented the condition of sin and degradation in which mankind was lost, as represented in father Adam, who bore the image and likeness of God, as represented in the lost coin of the parable. The parable does not represent the processes of restitution, but merely the original loss and the ultimate recovery of the *same thing that was lost*, and the energy put forth to this end. The lighting of the candle and the sweeping diligently represent the work of God through the Christ, which will be accomplished by the end of the Millennial age, when that which was lost and sought for, will have been fully recovered.

The restored race, when returned to the heavenly Father at the close of the Millennial age will, each and all, be as perfect in his image and likeness as was Adam in his creation, with the added benefits of larger knowledge and fuller appreciation of the divine One, whose likeness they will bear. No account is taken in this parable, either, of the increase in the numbers of the human family, nor of those members of Adam's posterity who, by reason of wilful sin (the love of sin more than righteousness) will be "destroyed from amongst the people." (Acts 3:23) They have no standing in the Father's sight; indeed, the Father takes no cognizance of any except that which was lost, and that which will ultimately be restored to him by his faithful representative, Christ, who seeks and finds.

The great time of rejoicing, both in heaven and in earth, will come at the close of the Millennial age, when all things in heaven and in earth will be heard praising Him that sitteth upon the throne, and the Lamb; but now, in advance of the complete rejoicing, our Lord assures us that all the heavenly host rejoices in every evidence of the accomplishment of the great work; rejoices over one sinner that repenteth—who fully turns from sin to harmony with God. And if the angels in heaven rejoice, so, in proportion as they are in harmony with God and the heavenly beings, will all who profess to be God's people on earth have rejoicing in the recovery of fellow-creatures out of the snare and blindness of sin and Satan.

This was the particular lesson which our Lord sought to impress upon the Pharisees—that instead of holding themselves aloof from, and feeling offended at, those who were hearing Jesus gladly, they should, if they were in harmony with God and the heavenly holy ones, have rejoiced to see any evidence of repentance and reformation; and should have been glad to assist back into harmony with God those who, as the Apostle expresses it, were "feeling after God, if haply they might find him."—Acts 17:27.

And this must be the attitude of all the Lord's people today: if they have not this sentiment of heart it is an evidence that they have not the spirit of the Lord. And to have such a feeling of loving interest in the recovery of others out of sin, and a disposition to assist them back to harmony with God, not only is an evidence of a condition of heart which is in harmony with God, but will be found to be an aid to such themselves, an assistance in making straight paths for their feet, that they themselves, under the Shepherd's care, may ultimately reach the fold in safety.

So then, let all of the Lord's dear people who have already been found by the Good Shepherd, and who have accepted his loving care and assistance back to God, cultivate more and more the spirit of sympathy for others, and of helpfulness and coöperation in the work in which the Good Shepherd is engaged—not yet in seeking for humanity as a whole, but now specially in rendering assistance to those whom the Lord is, in the present age, seeking out as the "first-fruits" of his work and victory—edifying one another, building one another up in the most holy faith, encouraging one another: helping one another to put on the wedding garment, and to be meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, as joint-heirs in the kingdom.—1 Thess. 5:11; Jude 20; Col. 1:12; Rom. 8.17

THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN

LUKE 15:11-24.—OCT. 28.

"I will arise and go to my father."

Having given in the foregoing parables of The Lost Sheep and The Lost Coin, an outline of God's general dealing with the human family, our Lord now gave a third parable as illustrating God's special dealings with the people of Israel. He wished not only that his hearers should have the general illustration of God's goodness and care for the recovery of the lost, but now he would give a special lesson that would bring the matter close home to his hearers—both Pharisees and publicans—and show to all the real situation and the proper line of conduct for each to take.

It will be noticed in this connection that while our Lord was known to be friendly toward sinners, he was never known to condone sin. The friendship of the publicans was not gained through our Lord's falsifying matters to them and claiming

that they were not sinners; but on the contrary, by his declaring them to be sinners, by showing his sympathy and love, and that their case, so far from being a hopeless one, as the conduct of the Pharisees would imply, was hopeful, if they would but repent and turn to God. The "father" in the parable represents Jehovah God, and the "two sons" represent two classes in Israel, the elder son representing Moses and the prophets, and all who "sat in Moses' seat," as representatives of the law, with all who sought to conform their lives to its requirements, Pharisees, etc. The younger son represents the remainder of that people Israel—the class which was inclined to wilfulness and waywardness as respects the divine law.

These two classes, all Israel, were inheritors together of certain wonderful blessings and promises—the blessings being equally divided between them, but the promises remaining for those who would be faithful to the will of the Father. The elder son represented the class which, having respect to the promises, enjoyed the blessings at home with the Father, that is, in fellowship with God as his people. The younger son represented the class which ignored the promises, took its share of present blessings, and departing from God wandered afar from him, in sin and disregard of the law.

The latter class had anticipated much pleasure in the wayward course; but as a matter of fact found, as all transgressors do, that "the way of the transgressor is hard." And in this respect the sinner-class of Israel was no different from any other class of sinners at any other time living in violation of the known law, it is an attitude of want, of hunger, of dissatisfaction, discontent, it is a condition of slavery to sin and of receiving of sin's wages; in the present life, wages of unhappiness, melancholia, heart-aches as well as body-aches. The parable represents this son as thoroughly disgusted with his condition, resolving to return to his father's house—not expecting to be an inheritor of the great promises, the rights to which were admittedly forfeited, but merely hoping to have the privilege of being admitted to the house as a *servant*, not hoping to be received as a *son*.

Our Lord thus illustrates the condition of some of the publicans and sinners hovering about him and listening to his teachings, respecting whose reception and instruction the Pharisees were finding fault. Our Lord would have them see the attitude of the heavenly Father toward these returning ones, and in the parable pictured him as seeing the repentant prodigal a long way off, and as having compassion for him, and great willingness to receive him. How this must have touched the hearts of the publicans who heard—to think that God was willing to receive them back again, not to spurn them as the Pharisees did! Our Lord proceeds with the picture further, to show that the Father not only received the prodigal, but, beyond his expectations, received him as a son, not as a servant—providing for him a new robe of righteousness, and making for him a great feast of welcome.

Then, as illustrating the attitude of the complaining Pharisees, the elder brother is pictured in the parable as disappointed at the return of the prodigal brother. Thus our Lord revealed to them how different was their attitude of heart from that of the heavenly Father; and thus he gently reproved them. The parable shows the attitude of the Pharisees in declining to call the prodigal "brother," saying—"This *thy son*," while the view of the heavenly Father to the contrary is expressed in the words, "This *thy brother* was dead and is alive again."

The Pharisees and others of the Jewish nation who sought to keep the law—to be faithful to God's requirements, were, so far as that was concerned, in the right attitude; and up to that time and point were heirs of all that God had promised, and had to give; and had they been not only outwardly religious but religious in heart also, they would have been fully prepared to have received at our Lord's hands the great blessings of the kingdom privileges which being in a wrong attitude of heart, they despised and rejected and lost. This their loss is represented in the parable by their refusal to go in to the feast made by the Father, to which they were as welcome as the returned prodigal, and in which feast, had they been in a proper attitude of heart, they would have had a prominent place with the Father in bestowing the welcome on the returned one. But as they were not in the right attitude of heart to receive their repentant brethren, neither would they have been in the right attitude of heart to be the Lord's instruments of general blessing in his kingdom. He selects for joint-heirs with himself in the kingdom, not the self-righteous, who despise others, but such as are of an humble heart, and who, receiving divine mercies and favors as a grace, are filled with thankfulness, and having the spirit of humility and of harmony with the Father, rejoice to co-operate with him in all of his benevolent plans for the recovery of the lost.

To hitch this parable on to the general theme presented in the two preceding, we might view the prodigal son as representing, in a secondary sense, all the remainder of mankind outside of those few in Israel who were seeking to do the Father's will; and from this standpoint we can see that the feast of fat things provided for the sinners in Israel corresponds to the feast to be opened ultimately to the whole world of mankind under the kingdom (Isa. 25:6), that all may return to the Father's house and that all who thus return will be received of God through Christ, not as slave-servants, but as sons.

The two preceding parables make no reference to the human will in the matter of the recovery of the lost; but this parable makes the human will very prominent. It was the *will* of the elder son which for a time kept him in the Father's house; it was the *will* of the prodigal son that led him forth, his wilful going into the depths of degradation not being hindered by the Father. Likewise, it was his own *will* that led him to retrace his steps to the Father's house; and it was only the *will* of the elder son that hindered him from entering into all the joys of the festal occasion with which the parable closes.

This parable also ignores the second death, and the class that will ultimately be cut off therein. The son that was lost, and subsequently was found, was lost in his going away into sin, and not lost in eternal torment. He was found in his return to God. He was dead, so far as the Father was concerned, when he was away; but he was alive again when he willingly returned.

The lesson to the Pharisees, in this parable, like the others, was in respect to their proper duties toward their brethren, who in receiving Jesus were showing evidences of a return to God. Indeed, so far as we know, few, if any, of our Lord's disciples were of the religious class of that time, who claimed to sit in Moses' seat, and to be in every sense of the word the favorites of the Father in that covenanted nation. That the Pharisees did not profit greatly by the parable seems evident; few from that class were willing to abandon their position of vaunted superiority, and to acknowledge that in everything they were wholly dependent upon the Father's grace, and of themselves could do nothing.

Some parallel to those conditions which obtained in the end of the Jewish age might be found now in the end of the Gospel age, even as we have found that in every particular the Jewish people and their harvest time were a pattern or figure or illustration of the Gospel age and spiritual Israel. Amongst spiritual Israelites today, in our Lord's second presence, a message is going forth to the groaning creation, a message respecting the Father's love, and its lengths and breadths and heights and depths; a message respecting the ransom given by our Lord Jesus, that it was "a ransom for all," and that his death was "not only a propitiation for *our* sins [the church's] but also for the sins of the *whole world;*" a message that the whole world, thus redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, is to have full opportunity of returning to divine favor during the Millennial age, "the times of restitution of all things, spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."

Now, how is this message received by nominal Christendom, as to some extent corresponding to the elder brother of the parable? Does it not appear that the message of restitution for a "groaning creation" (Rom. 8:22) is received in much the same manner that evidences of God's grace toward the Jewish prodigal were received? Does it not appear that many of our dear friends, whom we would have expected to rejoice to find the heavenly Father willing to receive back the repentant world, and that he has made full provision for their return to fellowship with himself through Jesus, and full preparation to let them all know of his grace in Christ,—does it not seem that this gracious message of "good will toward men," "good tidings of great joy to all people," should be to all Christians a gladsome message?

It surely should be such to all who have the Father's *Spirit;* to all who love their neighbor as themselves. But we know how bitterly the message is rejected by some who, to outward appearances, have long been favored of the Heavenly Father, and who are well versed in his law, and who have been seeking to keep close at home, in the sense of outward obedience to the laws of righteousness. What would their course of conduct in respect to his message of present truth imply? Would it not imply that outwardly they had been sons of God, in obedience to the laws of righteousness, but that they had at heart been far from him, even when with their lips they drew nigh unto him, and when they bent their knee in prayer to him?

Would it not seem that if they had the Father's spirit of love and kindness and generosity and justice and truth

they would be glad, yea, rejoice exceedingly to know that after the selection of the church of this present age to be the bride and joint-heir with Christ in the kingdom, the Heavenly Father had a great and wonderful plan of *restitution* for the world of mankind in general? If they had the Father's Spirit, if they had the spirit of him who left the Father's glory and humbled himself to our conditions, even unto death, to be a co-worker together with the Father in the great work shortly to be accomplished for the recovery of the lost, it certainly should fill the Lord's "brethren" with joy to know that it will be a part of their privilege as members of the body of Christ to join with him in this great work of bringing back the lost sheep, of sweeping diligently and finding the lost coin, and, in every sense of the word, of welcoming back to the Father's house the lost brother.

It is not for us to judge the hearts of men; that is beyond our power; but the Lord seems to be using his truth in such a way that it shall become the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts, and that, sharper than any two-edged sword, it shall separate, shall discover, shall manifest, who have the spirit of the Lord, and who have not his spirit. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his."—Heb. 4:12.

AN INTERESTING QUESTION

HEB. 12:23.

THE SPIRITS OF JUST MEN MADE PERFECT

Question.—How should we understand the statement of Heb. 12:23, respecting "the spirits of just men made perfect?"

Answer.—To appreciate this we must take the statement in its connections: The Apostle is contrasting the introduction of the Law Covenant with the introduction of the New Covenant; and let us remember that altho the church is justified by the blood of Christ, which seals the New Covenant, nevertheless, the New Covenant itself is not considered as having gone into effect during this Gospel age; it is a covenant for the world of mankind, and the putting of it into effect brings the times of restitution of all things at the second advent. The church, altho justified by the sacrifices which sealed the New Covenant, is really accepted under the Abrahamic covenant—accepted as the Seed of Abraham—members of the body of Christ—through which Seed all the families of the earth are to be blessed under the New Covenant, sealed at Calvary, during the Millennium.

The Law Covenant, of which Moses was the Mediator, and which was given at Mount Sinai amid the thunderings and lightnings and voices, etc., was typical of the New Covenant of which Christ (Head and body) is the Mediator, and which is to be introduced to the world of mankind after the whole body of Christ has shed its blood and been completed and glorified.—Acts 3:22; Col. 1:24.

The Apostle draws a parallel between the marching of Israel from Egypt and the Red Sea, up to Mount Sinai, where, under the leadership of the priesthood, they came under the Law Covenant, and all who hope to become God's people, marching under the lead of Christ and the "royal priesthood" toward another mountain—to Mount Zion, the kingdom of God, the Millennial kingdom. Following under the banner of the antitypical Mediator, will come all of God's Israel, all who are willing to be delivered from the power of the antitypical Pharaoh, *viz.*, Satan.

When we consider how the Israelites approached Mount Sinai as a host, and that they did not all get there at the same moment nor the same hour, nor even in the same day, we find the parallel of this in the fact that the Lord's people throughout this age have been gradually approaching this kingdom—not all at once, but one after another throughout the age. The last members of the royal priesthood are only getting close to the kingdom, Mount Zion, now; and are to be followed in turn by all the hosts who *will become* true Israelites during the Millennial age, when light and knowledge shall be freely granted.

With this picture before the mind, and reading the Apostle's words as translated in the *Diaglott*, we see a beauty in the expression: We have not approached the natural mountain with the terrors of the law, the smoke and the clouds and thick darkness and lightnings and voices of words that spoke condemnation and death to any who erred; but we are approaching, and all of the church throughout the age have been approaching, the glorious Mount Zion, the kingdom of God, the kingdom of blessing.

And what shall we find in this kingdom when we have fully reached it? We shall find the heavenly city, God's kingdom of power and great glory. We shall find ourselves introduced to a new company of brethren—the heavenly host; and we shall find our loved ones who have traveled with us in the narrow way, in that first general assembling of the church of the first-borns, whose names are written in heaven There we shall find our heavenly Father, the great Judge of all; there we shall find the spirits, the new natures of the justified ones fully perfected in the likeness of their Lord and Head—"We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." There we shall find in due time perfected human beings fully restored to the divine likeness in which father Adam was created; and there we shall find Jesus, who mediated the New Covenant; and there we shall ever appreciate the blood of sprinkling which cleansed us and presented us faultless before the Father in love.

But altho we are approaching these grand and glorious things, we are not to expect that they will all be ushered in in a peaceful manner; on the contrary, as the Apostle points out (verses 26, 27), there will be a correspondence between the great time of trouble, with which the Millennial age and its New Covenant for mankind will be ushered in, and the way in which the Law Covenant to the Jews was ushered in—only that the New Covenant will be ushered in on a much grander and antitypical plane. There will be a shaking here, as there was a shaking there; but instead of its being the physical earth that will shake, it will be the symbolical earth—society. And not alone the social structure, but also the heavens, or ecclesiastical structure, is to be shaken here. As the Apostle's words clearly intimate, the shaking will be a much more wonderful one than was its type, even as every antitype is much greater than its type. He explains that the shaking here is to be so thorough that it will shake everything that is shakeable, and that only the fixed, permanent, righteous things shall ultimately remain. And those things that shall be permitted to remain, he declares (verse 28) pertain to the kingdom of God, which is immoveable, unshakeable.

It is this kingdom toward which all of the Lord's people march throughout this Gospel age, that will then be fully attained amidst all that great shaking and confusion of the great day of trouble which is just before us. And as Moses went up into the quaking mountain, and was lost to the sight of the people below, so at, and in conjunction with these mighty manifestations of the time of trouble the entire church will be "caught up," gathered to the Lord, changed to his likeness—passing through the portals of death, though they shall not sleep, but be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

ENCOURAGING WORDS FROM FAITHFUL WORKERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Some time ago Brother Woodworth witnessed my method of handing out the Volunteer TOWERS and was so well pleased with it that he made me promise to write to you about it. I don't consider it anything out of the ordinary, but for the sake of my promise I will give it to you.

With a bow and a smile I say, "Sample—WATCH TOWER;" or "Free sample WATCH TOWER." If any questions are asked, I say, "An unsectarian religious magazine." My reasons for this method are, I seek to interest them thus, or rather to arouse their curiosity in knowing what the paper is; rather giving them the impression that I am seeking subscribers. In this way they will read with an unprejudiced mind—it does not arouse their antagonism my giving them the impression that you have something to refute the arguments they have just been listening to. If any know of the WATCH TOWER and do not care for it, they can refuse to take it, and thus one is saved for some one else. I think I am justified in giving the impression that I am seeking susbscribers; if anyone becomes interested, he *will* become a subscriber, and it is for such that we specially labor. With much love, I am,

Yours in the best of bonds,

JOSEPH L. HOAGLAND.—*Pennsylvania.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—The TOWER for Aug. 15 is at hand and read, and I cannot resist writing to you on the subject, but by no means for the purpose of getting an answer as I well know the value of your time. When first, in the great joy of having received the truth, I hastened to tell my dear brothers and sisters in Holland, I met with terrible rebuffs. My very dear youngest sister sent me a tract, in which a parson, Cjeharsi—hireling (whose the sheep are not) warned his flock (pen) against the "soul-damning doctrines of MILLENNIAL DAWN." "It added," said he, "and lopped off Scripture," and to prove that *he* never did such a thing he went on to say that "the wages of sin is death and eternal torment."

Ever since '94 I have quietly but persistently spoken of my Lord as I know him now. Lately my sister's notice has been drawn to the fact that I was concerned about her "soul's condition," and I pointed out to her how she, knowing that I had imbibed "soul-damning doctrines," had never taken a step to prevent my going into the tortures of hell fire, while she would give her time to, and get concerned about the welfare of some man in prison, who had merely transgressed the "traditions of men." My letter was largely prompted by one from a second sister, who has youth, beauty, wealth, talent and society in her favor, but who gives all to nurse the sick. She has worked her way to be directress of the Reformed hospital in Amsterdam, our native city. Hers is a life of actual service, and, tho still in orthodoxy, she confessed that she was touched by the evident love and interest I manifested in Christ's teaching, and that I had the "gift to analyze thought." Oh, how glad I will be if I may have stepped out so far past myself to show them my only Head and Master! Souls full of love and consecration, but yet of the heart "slow to understand." Just think of lives like those clearly seeing, so that they too may receive the "gift to analyze (order) thought."

Oh, how dearly I hope I may have sufficient light in me that it may shine clearly enough for others to see! I fully appreciate what you say about sudden deaths. The fact that we have an understanding of the plan of the ages is not a guarantee that the mind of Christ is in us. If, in one sense, it is a sign of exceeding love and benefaction, it brings with it no less a responsibility. Not all those who understand these truths are destined for one office and one purpose. I do not care for the reward, I do not ask for one; all I ask and all I care for is to render efficient service to at least some sin-laden, faltering one for His Name's sake. The 15th Psalm has been my choice one from childhood; and from it I learned, amid the luxurious surroundings of a banker's home, to ask why I had received so much when others had so little, others whom I loved and honored, and who were more worthy than I. Good as my father was, both as man and Christian, I saw that he did not earn his wealth, and that the world was but little better for his being in it. I made up my mind (I can easily remember) at the age of 12, that I would right the wrong if I could, and today I am still laboring towards that end. I feel that I swore then—and whether to my hurt or not I do not know—and I have not changed since. I do know that, according to the Psalm, I have been blessed far beyond my deserts, for "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation;" yea, I behold Canaan's glittering shores. It is therefore quite immaterial to me, reverently speaking, what occurs. The kingdom cometh not by observation, that they should say Lo here, or lo there, and I would pluck my right eye (that wherein I thought I saw aright) rather than lose the kingdom.

With prayers, brother, that the spirit of meekness, love and humility may be increasingly yours, that so you may prove faithful to the last, I am

Yours in the service of the truth,

DANIEL F. BOISSEVAIN,—*Canada.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I take the first opportunity to personally thank you for your attendance at the Saratoga Convention. I realize that to be present costs you some sacrifice and inconvenience, perhaps, but if you could have heard the expressions of satisfaction at its close, and the expressions of regret that it was so soon over, I know that you would have felt well repaid. But, dear Brother Russell, your reward is in the hands of him who is the "rewarder of all those that diligently seek him," and our thanks are feeble indeed when compared with the satisfaction which he gives in this life, and the hope which he sets before us to be given us in the life to come. All the brethren expressed themselves in these words, "'A feast of fat things' if ever there was such a feast," and I found it in my own heart to echo the same words. I was very sorry to miss the sessions during the day on Tuesday, but it could not be avoided. However, it seemed that my cup of satisfaction was full.

It seems, as one brother expressed it, that every Convention is a little better than the preceding one, and that this must be true is indicated by the fact that we are in the end of the days, and the end draws on apace. How good our Master is to so freely disclose to us things which are intended for our consolation and hope and purification.

As we comprehend more and more of the plan of the ages and of the love of God, which he manifested in his Son, we exclaim, "Who is a God like unto thee; great and marvelous are thy works!" And as we come to comprehend also that the plan and the love, both, include even us, we feel constrained to adore such a God, and to spend our lives in his service. Remember me, as I remember all saints, before the throne of grace.

Yours in his service,

R. H. BARBER.—*New York.*

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Just a word to tell you that all our plans are turned over,—no doubt with the Lord's permission. I cannot go to Giengen: just today I received a letter from Sister Finkh, in which she informs me that the fact of renting a dwelling for me has aroused such an excitement and hostility amongst church people there that the people who rented me the rooms are so afraid as to annul it. Two ministers came three or four times to the woman, and finally told her that she would bring a curse upon herself, if she would take me in her house, they would write to the church authorities, and went to the police, etc. Sr. Finkh was attacked in the street by a woman, who cried aloud after her ugly words, and the ministers themselves used such expressions in speaking of me as would be punished here, if spoken publicly. Sr. Finkh and the other three seem to be most earnest, and will follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, even unto death. There is already such hatred as to kill the Lord's true people, if they were permitted at all.

I do not know, at this moment where to go, but trust the Lord will show me soon, as I wish with all my heart to follow his leading only. Pray for me, dear brother, and for the dear sisters in Giengen.

Yours in our glorious hope,

M. E. GIESEKE.—*Germany.*

[It is remarkable what an antagonism the truth awakens among the preachers and church officials of Babylon. We hear much of Christian union and liberality and fraternization of Catholics and Protestants, but such things apply to and among those who preach "bad tidings," and is not considered applicable to us who proclaim the "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." Strange, is it not? And yet how it reminds us of the bitterness of the hatred of the church officials of Jewry at the first advent. As our Lord declared, they "hated the light," and the greater the light the more was their hatred, until they attempted to extinguish the Light by killing him. The hatred above described indicates the spirit of murder (1 John 3:15): will it ever lead to literal murder?—How soon?—EDITOR.]

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VIEWS FROM THE TOWER

WORLD MOVEMENT TOWARD DENOMINATIONAL UNION

A contemporary thus sums up the recent tendencies toward union on the part of Churchianity,—in full harmony with what our pages for the past twenty years have shown will be the procedure of "Babylon" just prior to her fall "as a great millstone into the sea." We quote as follows:—

"The question of denominational union is fast becoming one of the most important questions of the day in all Protestant lands. In Germany, as we have lately pointed out, a strong movement exists for the federation of the state churches, amounting to nearly fifty in number; and federation is one step on the road to organic union. In Scotland, the Congregationalists and the churches of the Evangelical Union—sometimes called Morrisanians—amalgamated their forces a short time ago; and the Free and the United Presbyterian churches are to become organically one next October, as already mentioned in these pages. In South Australia the three leading Methodist denominations, and in Canada all the various Methodist bodies have for some years been one. This is an encouraging record.

"Besides this measure of union already attained, there are promising movements under way in England. All the great Protestant churches outside the Establishment have for some years had a strong federal organization, as we have several times pointed out. During several years past an attempt has been made to unite organically two of the Methodist bodies—the Princeton Methodists and the Bible Christians. Both are offshoots of the original Wesleyan parent stock, but separated from it on questions of church government."

CHRISTIAN THEORY AND PRACTICE CONTRARY

The following is from *The Orient*, a Japanese journal:

"Japan enjoys the unique distinction of being the only non-Christian power that has been admitted into what is called the comity of nations on a footing of perfect equality, and, to judge from the utterances of the European and American press she is by no means the least respected power. Unfortunately the cause of this respect is not such as to satisfy all Japanese. Japan has made great progress in the arts of peace; but that is not really why she is respected. That respect was earned in a short nine months by the achievements of the Japanese army and navy. Now that sort of thing is pleasing enough to a nation's *amour propre*, but on calmly thinking the matter over some Japanese would wish that the respect of Western nations had been earned by something else than by mere proficiency in the art of slaughter conducted on modern scientific principles. Russia, too, is respected and feared. Yet she is the only non-constitutional country in the comity of nations. The liberty of the individual and of the press is under the tyranny of mere administrative orders in Russia, and official peculation is nearly as rife as in China. And this gives rise to strange misgivings. Are the so-called Christian nations really followers of the religious cult they so ostentatiously and proudly profess? . . .

"Without going so far with Count Tolstoi as to say that his rendering of the real meaning of Christianity is the correct one, we do go so far as to say that the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount are the most important in the so-called Christian code of morality. And these precepts, unquestionably, are against war, and all against according honor to any nation or any man on the mere grounds of success in the exercise of brute force, much less of success in slaughtering enemies. And yet it is precisely on these grounds that non-Christian Japan has been accorded the respect of so-called Christian Europe and America!

"We can very well understand the old Hebrews respecting us for success in war, for the old Hebrew God was a God of battles. But we have always understood that the Christian Father in heaven was no mere tribal war-god, but a God of love. The present situation is not a little puzzling to us poor benighted heathens of Japan, who have earned the respect of those who profess to follow the precepts of Christ on the Mount, by success in slaughtering our enemies, and by that alone. Will real Christians kindly explain what it all means?"

* * *

In our "View" of last issue we made a typographical error, in stating that Terah, Abraham's father, died at seventy. It should have read—two hundred and five years.

THE CHRISTIAN'S GOAL

THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE CHICAGO CONVENTION

Perfect love—the mark for the prize;
How shall I reach it, O Lord?
The way thou hast walked is a narrow way,
So we read in thy precious Word.
We eagerly start in the way with joy,
Thinking our love is pure;
But the Father, seeking our perfectness,
Purgeth us more and more.

Till, by dint of strokes and of tears
Made to look back o'er bitter years
Our hearts in anguish deep exclaim
"Woe is me!" "Wretched man that I am!"
We know that in us dwelleth no good thing,
But in the Beloved do we stand;
O glory and honor and praises to him
Who holdeth us in his hand!

Perfect love! O Lord can it be
Thou in infinite mercy canst see
In one so unworthy, so helpless as I,
A heart that unto thee would draw nigh?
Perfect love! Lord, can it really be
Thou hast so loved and cared for me,
That when in me did sin so abound
Thy grace more abundant was found?

Perfect love—the mark for the prize
Thou hast placed beyond the skies!
O yes, our dear Lord, we will patiently run,
With our eyes on thee alone;
Not looking back on the way we have come,
Battles fought, and victories won;
But forgetting those things which are behind
Press along our reward to find.

Perfect love—we do see it in him,
Who gave his life, our poor lives to redeem;
That we might as sons to our Father draw near,
For in Jesus we've nothing to fear,
As in the light of his glorious face
We press to the end of the race;
Standing complete in his Righteousness,
He alone our perfect dress.

—MR. C. A. OWEN.

SEASONS OF REFRESHING

As the time for the Dallas, Texas, Convention drew near, it became evident that it would serve only a small proportion of the Texas friends who would desire to attend, and so arrangements were made for two other gatherings in that large State—about 300 miles apart;—namely at Houston and at San Antonio. And another local convention of nearby friends was held at Columbus, Ohio, on the Editor's return trip. All were seasons of refreshment in spiritual things, profitable, we trust, to all who attended.

At Dallas the attendance was about 300; from all parts of Texas, from Oklahoma, Indian Territory, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama and California. The three days were practically one continuous meeting with necessary intermissions for food and rest. Fifteen brethren and seven sisters symbolized their real baptism into Christ's death, by immersion in water.

At Houston we had only a one-day meeting, but it was a good one; full of love, joy, fellowship of kindred minds; its influence will abide, with some at least, through life, yea throughout eternity, no doubt. The attendance was about one hundred and twenty-five, chiefly local.

At San Antonio we had great refreshment during two days' meeting with about one hundred and fifty of God's dear people, mostly from local points. Two informed us that they had driven over one hundred miles in a wagon, there being no good railroad connections, and, anyway, the expense being a consideration. The Lord's blessing was with us all in bountiful measure as we considered together the grandeur of our high calling, and the "mark" to which all must attain if they would win it.

At Columbus we had but one day, but it was one full of refreshment, as we met about one hundred dear brethren and sisters from local points, and communed together concerning the exceeding great and precious promises and arrangements of God for the elect, and through them for all the families of the earth, in God's due time.

The arrangements at every point were most complete, and with the cordial reception accorded ourself and all visiting brethren, bespoke—amongst all—a

"Love divine all love excelling."

We shall cherish fondly to the end of our pilgrimage the remembrance of the hearty greetings and many kind atten-

tions, great and small, lavished upon us by loved ones whom we had never met before, but who, for all that, were far from strangers. We accepted these attentions as done "unto the Lord" and to us a representative of him and his truth; and not as personal tributes. If, as our Master promised, even a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple shall be rewarded by him, surely these many kindnesses to us as his servant will bring showers of spiritual blessings to many; and in this we rejoice.

Much as we enjoy these conventions and realize that they are spiritually profitable to many, we feel nevertheless that they must not be indulged so freely next year, nor until the concluding two volumes of the DAWN series are prepared. The conventions of this year have retarded VOL. VI. a full year. We have not as yet gotten started on it, and yet our daily increasing mail clearly shows its need. We have in mind for 1901 a convention at Buffalo, N. Y., to which point the Pan-American Exposition will undoubtedly secure low excursion rates.

"THY SAINTS SHALL GLORIFY THEE"

"They shall speak of the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his Kingdom."—Psa. 145:5-12.

Various are the view-points from which mankind regards its Creator. The world of mankind in general notes merely his mighty acts, without appreciating his glorious character. This is suggested by the Prophet, saying, "I will speak of [meditate on] the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous deeds, and men shall speak of thy terrible acts: but I will declare thy greatness." (Vss. 5, 6) The world speaketh of its own, and according to its intelligence respecting the Almighty; but the Lord's people, specially instructed by him and taught of the holy spirit, know of the Lord and his greatness in a sense that the remainder of mankind know them not

As the Apostle declares, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. . . . But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." (1Cor. 2:14, 10) As our Lord again declared, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom." "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." (Mark 4:11; Matt. 13:16) We are not, then, to be surprised at the wide difference of understanding of God and of his mightiness and of his character, as viewed by the saints and by the world; rather we are to expect such a difference of view. The Apostle explains the reason, telling us that the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, so that the glorious light of God's goodness, shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, does not shine into their hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the divine character and plan. (2 Cor. 4:4) And he explains again that we who were at one time in darkness, are now enlightened by the Lord, having been translated out of the dominion of the prince of darkness, into the dominion of God's dear Son. (Col. 1:13) And it is this enlightened class that the Apostle urges should make progress in the knowledge of the Lord, growing in grace, growing in knowledge, and thus growing in the love of God and in the appreciation of his character. He urges this, saying that it is necessary, to the intent that we may comprehend with all saints, the lengths and breadths, and the heights and depths, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth all [human] understanding.—Eph. 3:17-19.

Alas! the great majority of Christian people, while they have escaped from much of the blindness of the Adversary, are still subject to his confusing errors and misrepresentations of the truth and are thus blinded still in great measure to the divine plan; looking at things more from the human standpoint than from the divine standpoint, and framing their creeds and confessions accordingly. Ah, they forget how the Lord has declared, "My plans are not your plans, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans than your plans." (Isa. 55:8, 9) Because of this measure of blindness that rests upon the mass of the nominal church—even amongst Protestants—it follows that, not seeing the divine character and plan in their true light and beauty, the vast majority of Christian people cannot take the standpoint of the *saints* in this prophetic testimony before us, but they take rather the standpoint of the natural man: when they think of the Almighty they think rather of his wonderful and terrible acts than of his own greatness, because they know comparatively little of the glorious honor of his majesty, and do not see how his wonderful deeds declare his greatness.

From the standpoint of the average Christian, God is anything but gloriously honorable in his majesty; indeed, thinking of the Almighty from the standpoint of their creeds, the majority of noble-minded Christian people feel ashamed of God and of his plan. One class declares that his glorious honor and majesty is manifested in his election of the church to glory and eternal life, and in the passing by of the great majority of others, condemning them to an eternity of torture—and that since "known unto the Lord are all his works," God foreknew and foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, and thus purposed the eternal torment of the vast majority of his hundreds of millions of human creatures before creating them. Can these dear Christian friends declare the honor and majesty, the greatness and goodness, of their Creator? No! Hindered by such a false view of God's plan and of his mighty works, they cannot discern in such a course either justice, or love, or any other great or honorable quality, that they should honor or reverence it. Hence, like the world, they merely take note of the mighty power of Jehovah, and fear him, but are unable to take the position of the saints and to glorify his name and declare his righteousness.

Another large body of Christian people repudiate the foregoing false view, asserting another equally untrue, and almost equally dishonoring—tho their thought is to glorify God, and to relieve his character of the stain of injustice, inequity and lovelessness with which the foregoing view would besmirch it. These, therefore, claim that God loves every member of the race, and is doing and has been doing since the fall everything within his power to rescue Adam's fallen race from their difficulties. But with such a view how could they extol the greatness and the honorable majesty of the Almighty? If for six thousand years he has been unable to accomplish anything, where is the power, where is the honor and majesty to be seen?

Surely all would confess that any bright, honorable man if granted the one-hundreth part of the omnipotent power of the Creator could accomplish more in one hundred years than all that has been accomplished in six thousand years, toward the rescue of the race from ignorance, superstition and sin! How, then, could these dear Christian friends who, with good purpose of heart are nevertheless blinded by a false theory—how could they tell forth the glorious honor of the divine majesty, and show this and his greatness from his wondrous deeds? Surely they would be dumb in any such effort.

THE SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB

Only those who see the divine plan of the ages, and the relationship between the past, the present, and the future, are in any degree able to make known the greatness of our God, his glorious power, and his honorable majesty. This class is referred to by the Revelator as singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb—they sing in the sense of declaring in harmonious and beautiful cadences the relationship of the types and figures of the Law and the Prophets of the Mosaic dispensation with the antitypes of these of the Gospel dispensation; showing that all things written in the Law and in the Prophets are finding glorious fulfilments in the Lamb of God and in the great plan which the heavenly Father is working out through him.—Rev. 15:3, 4.

The Revelator tells us the substance of this song: namely, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!" But what great and marvelous work has God performed, and how shall we see that he is both just and true in all his ways and dealings? From the standpoint of those who can sing this song everything must be clear as noonday!

First amongst the great and marvelous works of the Almighty was the sentence of death upon father Adam and his posterity because of disobedience—not a sentence of eternal torment, which would be as unjust, and unreasonable, as it is untrue and contrary to the Word of God—not the false presentation respecting this divine act that is held forth in all the creeds of Christendom,—but the great and marvelous act

which God declares he accomplished when he let fall upon our race the sentence of death, which has brought in its train all the various disasters and difficulties mental and physical, to which our fallen flesh is heir, all of which are tending to, and resulting in death, the penalty. As we look at this marvelous work, we must concede that it was just (in that it was merited), that it is true (in the sense of not being an unreasonable penalty), true in the sense that it was exactly what God forwarned father Adam the penalty of disobedience would be. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

But Jehovah's first great and marvelous work of condemnation was, after four thousand years, followed by another great and marvelous work; *viz.*, the work of redemption. How stupendous this work of the ransoming of all Adam's race of hundreds of millions by the sacrifice of one man! How great and wonderful indeed this act, and how just and true, and how fully in harmony with every feature of divine justice and love! Even the philosophy of the ransom is explained to the Lord's people,—how that all mankind were included in one man's sentence, to the intent that in due time the penalty of sin could be paid on behalf of all mankind by the one sacrifice for sins, "the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." (1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Rom. 5:12, 18, 19) Was not this a great and marvelous work? Who that realizes the lengths and breadths, and heights and depths of this manifestation of divine justice and divine love, can do aught else than sing this song of Moses and the Lamb, declaring to all who have ears to hear it, "Great and marvelous, just and true are thy ways, Lord God Almighty"? But few see it clearly; and hence few can sing this wonderful story to others.

But there is still another feature to this song, and it is glorious also tho it pertains not to the things that are past, but to the things yet to come. It declares, "Who shall not reverence thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?" It looks forward to the time when this great redemption, accomplished by the blood of the Lamb, shall be made available to every member of the human family. It looks forward to the glorious Millennial age, to the time when, under divine providence, the knowledge of the Lord, essential to faith, and to any acceptance of his favor and mercy through Christ, shall be extended to every creature—who indeed will not reverence the Lord and glorify his name? Surely, as the Scriptures have declared, at that time, "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess," and while this bowing and confessing may at first be compulsory, and not with all the volition of the heart, yet the Scriptures assure us that ultimately all who will not come into heart harmony with the Lord and with all his gracious arrangements and provisions, shall be cut off from amongst the people,—in the second death. (Acts 3:23) So that ultimately, instead of the universe being filled with hundreds of millions who to all eternity will wail and gnash their teeth and blaspheme God's holy name in agony—instead of this the time shall come when every tongue in heaven and in earth shall be heard praising God, and giving honor to him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb, forever; for by that time all evildoers, all lovers of unrighteousness shall be cut off from amongst the people.

But this song continues, and has yet another strain. It declares, "Thou only art holy"—all holiness, all perfection, wherever it is found, must proceed from God, the great fountain of holiness. How strange, then, that any of God's dear people (and we ourselves were once amongst this number) should so misunderstand the divine character and plan as to misrepresent the same as being the very essence of unholiness, injustice, unkindness, inequity, lovelessness, toward the great mass of God's creatures! It will indeed be a glad day when all shall reverence God's name, and when all shall recognize that he is indeed the fountain of holiness.

But there is still another strain in this song, and it is a grand one also, like all the others,—reaching down into the Millennial age. It declares, 'All nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." "All nations" will include, not only all the nations then living, but all the nations of the dead, just as does the promise which God made to Abraham, saying, "In thy seed [the Christ, Head and body] shall all the families of the earth be blessed"—all nations.

How few, how extremely few, are able to *learn* this song! How extremely few learn it so well as to be able to *sing* this song to the glory of God! How many who supposedly were trained to sing "the good tidings of great joy" for all people, are in the pulpits today singing totally different songs; some of them songs of "Evolution," declaring that there was no fall, consequently no redemption from a fall, and consequently that there is to be no recovery from a fall; but that man is grandly climbing up, up, up, and proving to be his own Savior, and hoping to attain they know not what,—they know not when.

Others are singing the song of Calvinism, predestination, foreordination and election. Others are singing the song of Arminianism, and hoping that God will be able to accomplish much in the future through their assistance,—which they hold he has unsuccessfully been trying to do for six thousand years. Others are singing the song, "In union there is strength," and seeking to combine for what they term a "social uplift," or "the salvation of society." Others are singing the song of works and universal salvation. But how few are able to sing this song of Moses and the Lamb, or to see how God's great and marvelous works of the past reflect gloriously upon his character, both for justice and love, and give us the best of all assurances for the working out in the future of the glorious plan which he has already outlined and begun!

And we are told the reason why so few can sing this song—that it is only *for those* to sing who have "gotten the victory over the beast and his image and his mark and the number of his name." These symbols, representing earthly institutions which now hinder and bind and enslave the Lord's people to creeds, must be overcome by every soul that would hope to be able to appreciate this song, and to sing it in his daily life to others according to his opportunities. Those who try to sing this song while yet in Babylon find their mistake.

PROCLAIM LOUDLY THE MEMORIAL

Coming back to the Prophet's testimony respecting the message, showing forth the Lord's honor and majesty, we find in the 7th verse a wonderful testimony to the central feature and greatest manifestation of the divine character and plan. The Psalmist says (Leeser's translation), "The memorial of thy abundant goodness shall they loudly proclaim, and they shall sing joyfully of thy righteousness." What *memorial* has God given us of abundant goodness? Which of all his great and wonderful works could be thus termed a *memorial* of divine favor? We answer that this memorial, this great act, was none other than the gift of God's dear Son, to be our redemption price, as the Apostle declares, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." (1 John 4:9) But as very few realize the great act of justice accomplished in the sentencing of father Adam and his race to death, so very few can appreciate, as a special manifestation of God's abundant goodness, the death of Christ as the full offset for Adam's sin, the full ransom, the full payment of his penalty and that of his race.

The reason for this is that they esteem that the ransom was paid only for the church, a little flock. From this standpoint it was not a manifestation of the abundant grace and goodness of God, but of a very limited grace and favor for a very limited number, a handful, as it were, out of the great mass of humanity. But when we come to see that our Lord Jesus' sacrifice was "a propitiation for our sins [the church's sins] and not for ours only, but *also for the sins of the whole world*," and that this "*ransom for all*" is "to be testified in due time" to all and made available to all, that ultimately all may benefit thereby if they will, and return to harmony with God and to eternal life.—from this standpoint only can we see the greatness of that transaction, finished at Calvary, and how it is a "*memorial*" of God's abundant goodness. And only such as see this can heartily and loudly proclaim it, and sing joyfully of the righteousness of God, which not only was manifested in the righteous penalty against sin, but which again manifested itself in the righteous payment of that penalty on behalf of every creature.

The Psalmist continues, "The Lord is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger and of great mercy. The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works" (vs. 8). Is not this just what we should expect in our Creator, if we recognize him to be the full embodiment of justice and of love and of wisdom and of power? And yet how different is this description of the divine character from the general view, as held by the masses of Christian people, blinded by the adversary and misled by their creeds! Instead of thinking of the Lord as gracious, do they not think of him as awfully ungracious, and have they not pictured him, not only in their creeds but also in their hymns of praise, as being awfully bitter and malignant against his creatures, ungracious, pitiless, full of anger and of no mercy?

Have they not, on the contrary, represented that Jesus our dear Redeemer must plead with the Father, and show his wounds and appeal for us, ere any compassion could be exhibited, and then only in the most limited degree?

But not thus false was the Prophet's view of Jehovah, given by inspiration. Jehovah is gracious and full of compassion; he knows that the motions of sin are in our flesh, tending downward, and in his great mercy and compassion he has provided in Jesus for our every difficulty, our every trial, for the covering of our every weakness and imperfections, and with those who become his people, and who even haltingly seek to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, he is slow to anger and of great mercy. False ideas of the divine character and the divine dealings with the world of mankind have not only perverted the hopes of God's people as respects the world, but have also inculcated in their hearts misconceptions of God's sentiments toward his church, so that the majority of his people do not appreciate the kindness, the mercy, the love, the compassion of our Father in heaven, and failing to appreciate these they have more or less of the fear of which the Apostle speaks, saying, "Fear hath torment," and correspondingly they lack "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" to rule in their hearts. It is only when by the grace of God the eyes of our understanding are opened to see how our heavenly Father is not against us, but *for us*, and how under his providential arrangement all things are working together for good to those who love, and who are seeking to attain to the gracious things which he has offered them in his Word,—only then are we enabled to know him, appreciate him, and to offer him, in the best and fullest sense of the word, the tribute of our hearts and the praise of our lips.

Now we come to the climax, as it were, of our text, and note that while the Lord's saints see his greatness and honorable majesty connected with every feature of the divine plan, and while they are telling these good tidings to others, and speaking of his mighty doings in the past, their message would not be complete without a testimony respecting his glorious kingdom. "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom"—the Millennial kingdom. They cannot tell of the majesty of the divine plan and not tell about the kingdom. To tell of the fall, and to tell of the righteous sentence upon the fallen race, and to tell of the redemption accomplished through the precious blood of Christ, and that it was paid on behalf of every member of the Adamic race, would not finish the good tidings of great joy. It is necessary, therefore, to speak of the glory of God's kingdom, and to talk of his power as it will be manifested in that kingdom. As the sentence and the execution of the sentence manifest the justice of God; and the redemption through Jesus manifests the love of God, so the kingdom of the Lord will manifest his power to save to the uttermost all those who come unto the Father through the Son.

The glory of the Lord's kingdom will not consist, as some have supposed, of some saints sitting with the Savior on a bright cloud and looking over the battlements of heaven to see the remainder, the numberless millions of mankind, writhing in agony. O no! If this were all that we could say of the kingdom of our God we should rather prefer to say nothing. There would be no glory in such a kingdom; it would be an everlasting reproach to the King that he had conceived a plan which had resulted so horribly, so indescribably bad, that it should mean the eternal torment of hundreds of millions of his creatures. Nor will the glory of the kingdom consist, as some others of God's dear people suppose, in a manifestation of a handful of saints, the glorified church, with the Lord, and with the remainder of the race blotted out of existence without ever having had knowledge and a full opportunity under favorable conditions to avail themselves of the great *memorial* of God's love, the redemption. O no! There would be no glory, but a discredit to such a kingdom and to so meagre an outcome to the great "memorial."

Nor will the kingdom be, as some others of God's dear people have conceived it to be, one in which Christ and his church shall, during the Millennial age, bless merely the living nations of the world, and bring to them the blessings which God has promised, but leave all the remainder of the race who have died for six thousand years, from Adam down to the present time, in darkness, in ignorance, in death, without any opportunity under that kingdom. O no! A human plan might thus favor the millions living at the time of the establishment of the kingdom, but forget or ignore or pass by the hundreds and thousands of millions who have gone down into the great prison-house of death; but God's ways are not as man's ways nor his plans as man's plans. The glory of the kingdom of which we are authorized to speak, is a kingdom which is to bless all nations, the dead who have gone down into the tomb, as well as those who have not yet gone into death. It is a kingdom in which God's power will be most marvelously manifested.

Let us "talk" together now of his power as the Prophet has suggested. It will be a mighty power which will overthrow the reign of sin, which will bind the power of Satan that he shall deceive the nation no more, and which will establish the Lord Jesus and his glorious church in power and great glory, with dominion over all the earth, with authority to execute judgment,—to punish sin and to reward every effort toward righteousness. But the power of God as it will be manifested, will be still greater than all this; it will be a power which will lift up out of the miry pit of sin; out of the weaknesses of the flesh, out of his imperfections, mental, moral and physical, every member of the human family who desires to make progress and to return to the grand perfection of human nature represented originally in father Adam, and from which he and all in him fell, through disobedience. In this sense of the word it is a resurrection *power*, raising up, up, up, from the low conditions of sin and death to the high conditions of perfection and righteousness. It not only will thus take hold of the people who will not at that time have fallen asleep in death, but this mighty power of the kingdom will take hold also of those who have gone down into the tomb, and who are in the great prison-house of death; even as our Lord declared, that he will open the prison-doors and say to the prisoners, "Show yourselves; come forth." "And all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth" (John 5:39), and the coming forth shall be unto a resurrection by judgment—that so many as will, may avail themselves of the blessed privileges and opportunities of that great judgment day (the Millennial age), and profit by the stripes and corrections in righteousness which will then be administered, and grow in grace, grow in knowledge, grow in love and grow in perfection of being, until by the close of the Millennial age, if they will, they shall have arrived back again into full harmony with God, and received fully all the perfections of human nature lost through the fall, and redeemed by the great "*memorial*" of divine favor.

No wonder, then, that the saints, when they glorify God, speak of the glory of his kingdom and talk of the mighty power of God which shall then be manifested, and how then shall be made known to the sons of men God's mighty acts; how they shall then see clearly the meaning of the original sentence as they do not now see it; how they shall then see clearly the meaning of the great redemption, as they do not now see it, and how they shall then see clearly the provision of divine power in the kingdom for their blessing;—that seeing these mighty acts of God in their true light, they also may glorify the Father which is in heaven, and they may appreciate the majesty of his kingdom.

"THY SAINTS SHALL BLESS THEE"

The Prophet intimates that *all* the saints shall have the privilege of thus declaring the kingdom, and of thus honoring the name of our God; and this seems to be literally fulfilled today, for the Lord seems to be bringing to the attention of all of his saints (his consecrated people everywhere) the present truth; to the intent that they may have its light upon their pathway, making manifest unto them the glorious character of our God, through a knowledge of his great plan of the ages. Moreover, the Lord seems to be putting it within the power of every one of his saints to thus glorify his name and to speak forth the truth to others. To some he has granted the talent of oratory and opportunity to use it and to speak forth his praises in this way; to others he has granted a talent for private conversation, that they may thus tell of his kingdom and speak of his glorious majesty and make known his plans to such as have hearing ears. To others still he has given the privilege of declaring his message through the circulation of the printed page; and to some he seems to have given opportunities for using all of these various methods of *singing* the song of Moses and the Lamb. And we may rest assured that none can be of the company of the Lord's saints in this time, and know of his goodness and his wonderful honor and majesty, and not have a desire to tell the good tidings of great joy to all who have an ear to hear; and those who are most earnest, most zealous in proclaiming the message, are sure to have the most blessing in their own hearts, and in their own experiences, and to grow the most in grace, in knowledge and in love.

"I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous deeds. Thy saints shall glorify thee; they shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power, to make known unto the sons of men thy mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of thy kingdom."

FOLLOWING THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE

A brother writes us interestingly as follows:

We omit names for obvious reasons.

I want to thank you for your last letter. The Lord has poured out upon my distracted mind a great blessing since I fully and unreservedly gave up all. So far as I understand my present attitude toward the dear Master, I am now "beheaded," having bowed reverently and joyfully to his will. It seems that the mere unconditional resolve to separate wholly from Babylon brought me a blessing. But I have not yet sent in my contemplated letter to the Presbytery. The same meets in regular session the 9th of Oct. I shall endeavor to have it ready to go before that meeting for action. The pastor of the local church (Presbyterian) here has promised to help the matter along and to defend my case, should a defence be called out. This promise he made after I had explained to him, one day this week, my reasons for the step. At first he tried, by arguments and persuasion, to induce me to change my mind.

"Wait a while," he said, "until you see the outcome of the revision movement. The Confession of Faith will, and must be changed. I am out of harmony with several of its doctrinal statements myself, and the brethren of the Presbytery know it too, and some of them hate me for it like poison. Let us stand by our guns and fight the thing out, brother."

"No," I said, "I cannot follow your advice, brother, tho I know it is well meant. My mind is so fully made up that I cannot be induced to take a backward step."

"Well then, if that is the case, where do you wish to be dismissed to—what church, or association? We cannot dismiss you at large or at random, you know. Our *book* makes no provision for such a case. In fact, I have never heard of such a case before."

"My request is, and must be, for unconditional dismissal" I answered. "I wish to be absolutely free from ecclesiastical bondage. I recognize no human organization as *the* church of Christ. All of them exist without the authority or recognition of the Lord Jesus Christ; hence none of them are his. His church has no name on earth. But I can conscientiously say this of the Presbyterian church as I know it: In practice it is the best of the denominations and sects, but in doctrinal teachings it is nearly as bad as the Roman Catholic system."

Not one word of comment in reply! Instead he gave me this item of confidential information:

"Brother I will tell you something by which you can see how most of our brother ministers stand on the Westminster Confession: At our last meeting a young man from the German Theological Seminary in Iowa came to us for examination and ordination. Dr. ——, our Stated Clerk of Presbytery, was chairman of the examining committee, and I was also on the same. After Dr. —— got through with him and expressed himself as satisfied, I took the *book*, and turning to the statements on election and reprobation I read the whole chapter to him, and then asked him solemnly, 'Do you believe this?' He looked at me a minute, and then said: 'If you will let me explain it, I will show in what sense I believe it.' 'No, no,' I said, 'you cannot and you must not try to explain it; you must believe it or you are not entitled to ordination according to our form of government. Now let me ask you once more, Do you accept this doctrine as it stands?' Brother, that young man answered very emphatically, 'No!' Dr. —— said, 'And neither do I!' And I also said, 'Neither do I!'"

"Did the Presbytery ordain him on such a confession as that?" I asked.

"Not one dissenting vote in the committee."

"Such inconsistency is inexcusable, and wrong before God," I said. "It is only another strong argument in favor of my decision to get out and be free." Then we parted, he cordially offering me his assistance if needed, as above stated.

Your counsel with reference to the *spirit* of my letter of request for dismissal, is appreciated and fully approved. I believe the Lord will suggest to my mind the words he would have me say. I will send you a copy of the letter when I write again. I think of you daily, and my love goes out to you as a brother high above a brother by birth.

THE UNJUST STEWARD

LUKE 16:1-13.—Nov. 4.

"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

While the previous parables of this dinner-table talk were addressed specially to the Pharisees, this parable, and the one following it, concerning a rich man and a poor man (Dives and Lazarus), were addressed not so exclusively to the Pharisees, but, as the first verse of our lesson declares, to the disciples *also*, as well as to the Pharisees at the same table. The reason why the first three parables were addressed to the Pharisees only, and not to the disciples, is evident—the disciples needed no such instruction, having no prejudice against the poorer classes, recognizing themselves as amongst the "lost" who were glad to be found by the Good Shepherd.

The steward of this parable corresponds to the elder son of the preceding parable, and to the rich man of the succeeding parable; it applies specially to the scribes and Pharisees, who, as our Lord declared, on another occasion, "sat in Moses' seat"—represented Moses, and the Law Covenant of which Moses was the Mediator, and the blessing obtained through that covenant, of which Moses was the original steward, and they now the steward, as his representatives. In what did this stewardship consist? The Apostle Paul asks this question, and answers it, saying, "What advantage then hath a Jew? Much every way: chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God," the knowledge of God, with typical justification and at-one-ment with him, and an interest in the promises made to the fathers.

The Jews, as represented in Moses and his successors, failed of their stewardship—failed to use in a manner satisfactory to God the favors committed to their care. Nor, indeed, were they wholly to blame for this, as the Apostle Paul points out; they were weak through the fall, incompetent to be administrators of so great a trust; and God knew this when he gave them the stewardship—he knew that they would fail to keep the Law perfectly. He had fully intended that in due time he would depose them from the stewardship and give it to the one whom he had foreknown—to Messiah.

Now the time had come when this change of administration was about to be effected, and God was calling upon the representatives of Israel to give an account of their stewardship, and informing them that a new dispensation was about to be ushered in. Our Lord Jesus in this parable wished to point out to them what would be the wisest course for them to pursue under the circumstances. He shows them what an earthly steward would do under such circumstances, and tells them there is wisdom in such a course, saying, "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light:" you, as God's people, more favored than any others with light on the divine character and plan, are not acting as wisely as you would do if you were earthly stewards.

Here we are met with the difficulty that the majority of people do not clearly comprehend—the scope of a steward's privileges in olden times. We have no such office today amongst civilized people. A steward's office was a confidential one; he had the liberty and full authority to do anything and everything that the owner himself could do with his goods. He could make presents, or cancel debts, or use in any manner he chose the goods under his care, and could not be held responsible as a culprit before the law, because the nature of his office as a steward was such that he fully represented and acted for his employer. The latter could discharge him from the stewardship as a penalty for unfaithfulness, but this would be his only punishment, because in making him steward he fully authorized him to use his judgment.

In the parable the unjust steward—unjust in his previous use of his master's affairs, that is, unrighteous, unsatisfac-

tory, imperfect—as soon as he realized the situation, made no attempt to defend himself, nor to claim that he had done perfectly; but before rendering up his accounts he dealt leniently with some of his lord's creditor's, remitting parts of their indebtedness. (This may have been a wise course, as, for instance, today bankruptcy laws similarly release debtors from obligations which they could not pay; and similarly creditors frequently, in their own interest, agree to accept sixty per cent, fifty per cent, forty per cent, or some other proportion of the original sum as for the whole of a debt, seeing that the debtor is unable to pay the account in full, and with a view to his encouragement to do the best he can. The Jewish Jubilee year of full release from all debts was along the same line of leniency and wise business policy represented in the "Bankruptcy Law" of today.) It is not because of this last conduct of the steward that he is called unjust (unrighteous) in the parable, but because of his previous stewardship, not having come up to the full, perfect demands of his master.

Now, applying the parable to all of the Jewish nation, especially to those who sat in Moses' seat and had the control of matters, and who decided what was and what was not the proper interpretation of the law, our Lord intimated that if they were as wise as earthly stewards they would make use of their opportunities in a somewhat similar manner. Now how could they have done this—supposing that they recognized the fact that they had not fulfilled the requirements of God under the Law, and supposing also that they realized that the time had come for a change of dispensation, and that God was demanding an account of them and informing them that a new steward would take possession of matters—under such circumstances how should these in Moses' seat have acted? We answer, that in harmony with the lesson of the parable, they should have said to themselves: We realize that we ourselves have not kept the law of God perfectly; indeed, that it is not within our power to do so. We realize that a change of dispensation is impending, and that we are called upon to make an accounting, and that we can only admit before God that we made a failure as respects the carrying out of the demands of his Law and the gaining of eternal life under it,—and as respects the use of the many advantages every way which God has given us. We have used our advantages in some respects well, but we failed on the whole to accomplish anything in the world, or to gain eternal life, either for ourselves or for any,—and we cannot dispute, therefore, that "By the deeds of the law no flesh should be justified in God's sight."

Since, therefore, it must soon be evidenced to all that our stewardship has resulted in failure and that we are dispossessed, the wise thing for us to do is to turn about at once, and deal kindly and generously with these sinners (the prodigal son class) and, instead of denouncing them as sinners more than ourselves, we should say to them frankly, We cannot keep this perfect law of God, and we know also that you cannot do so, but now, instead of being hopelessly discouraged and cast down, do the best you can; we will remit part of the exaction of the law, admitting that you are unable to keep it perfectly, and will merely require of you that you keep it to the best of your ability—fifty per cent., or eighty per cent., according to your circumstances and conditions—according as you are *able*, keep the law.

Had the scribes and Pharisees taken this position they would have healed the breach as between themselves and the people, and their honesty in admitting that they themselves could not keep the law would have been a distinct advantage to them, subsequently, in connection with the new dispensation. And this very conduct of candid admission and of sympathy for others, and assistance in lifting their burdens would have brought them into such a condition of heart that they would have been ready for the *Gospel;* and the lower classes, from which they had hitherto held aloof as sinners, would have had a kindly feeling toward them, and as a result they would have retained a measure of their sympathy, at least, in the time of trouble which came upon them when their polity was overthrown.

But did the scribes and Pharisees follow any such course? By no means. On the other hand they put on a brassy front, made broad their phylacteries, made still louder claims respecting their own perfection of heart and life, deceiving their own selves probably as much as or more than they deceived others. They boasted that they should ever continue to be stewards of the manifold grace of God; and, as our Lord declares, so far from lifting the burdens and condemnations of the law from the shoulders of the people, who were honest enough to confess inability to keep the perfect law, these scribes and Pharisees, on the contrary, bound upon the people heavy burdens which they would not assist to lift with their little finger.—Matt. 23:1-4.

Thus doing they became more and more hypocritical and case-hardened, until, in his later descriptions of them, our Lord declared them to be whited sepulchres, outwardly fair and beautiful, inwardly full of corruption, dishonesty, hypocrisy; knowing themselves to be infractors of the law they were outwardly claiming and boasting perfection. This not being said to the Pharisees alone, but to the disciples "also," implies that they were to notice how the parable fitted and how unwisely this steward class was acting. Even at the table the Pharisees, perceiving to some extent at least the trend of the parable, "derided"—being covetous. But our Lord pressed the lesson home to them saying, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts." You are the unjust steward and soon all will witness your rejection. "The law and the prophets [of which you are the representatives] was [recognized of God] until John [the Baptist]; since that time the kingdom of God is preached [the new, the Gospel dispensation], and every one [should] press toward it." (Verses 14-16) You, leaders of the people, however, not only will not enter yourselves, but those desiring to enter you hinder. (Matt. 23:13) You should see that your institution is bound to Moses and the law as a wife to her husband—so long as it liveth. It is needful therefore, that the law which you represent should die, that Israel may be liberated and thus be prepared to be united (married) to Messiah by a new covenant.—Verses 17, 18. Rom. 7:1-4.

We are not informed that this parable had special application in the end of this Gospel age, but since we know from other Scriptures that natural Israel and its harvest time were a pattern or illustration of spiritual Israel and this age and the present harvest time, therefore we are justified in looking for some parallel as between the condition of the unjust steward in our Lord's day and a similar class in this present time. And looking about us today for a class corresponding to those who sat in Moses' seat, we find a class today sitting in Christ's seat, as respects the Gospel church. This class is composed of elders, Sunday School teachers and superintendents, ministers, bishops, archbishops, etc. These as a whole are representing a great stewardship of divine favor as respects the Lord's people today. They perceive that a change of dispensation is upon us, that their creeds and traditions from the past are being called in question, and that they are being required to render up an account. They perceive that the account will not be a very flattering one, and that if the whole truth were known to the people as it is known to God, they would be found derelict, unfaithful to their stewardship in many respects. They fear the crisis; they put off the day of reckoning as far as possible; they hush the murmurs of the people and the questions respecting creeds, and as the Lord said of the steward of his day, so it will be true of these: "That which is highly esteemed amongst men is an abomination in the sight of God."—Verse 15.

These representatives of the nominal church, who hold a position of stewardship as respects the masses of the Lord's people, are disposed, as were the Pharisees, their prototypes, to put a bold face upon matters, to brave it out rather than to confess the truth. As for instance, in the matter of creeds that are being called in question: Many, even of those who were at first disposed to demand the revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith, have concluded that this would be showing the white feather, and admitting that they had been in error in the past, and imperfect in their interpretation of the divine Word, and hence calculated to discredit them with the people; and now the tide is rapidly turning and the same ones who were demanding a revision are now voting to the contrary, that the creed is good, thoroughly satisfactory to them, that they would not change it for anything. They are so anxious to be highly esteemed of men that they seem to forget altogether the one from whom they received their stewardship, and who is about to take it from them.

What would be the proper course for this steward class of the Gospel age? We answer, that the proper course would be to do what our Lord recommended to the Jewish stewards; *viz.*, they should candidly confess to the people the errors of the creeds and their own imperfection in attempted exposition of the divine Word, and their own failures in the past in respect to a proper use of the oracles of God and a proper

application of the exceeding great and precious promises. And while acknowledging their own errors and shortcomings, they should modify the demands made of the people and bring them into conformity with their ability. For instance, they should say to the people, How much did we say that you owed to God, and what penalty did we say would be imposed upon you? If we said that you were to receive a penalty of eternal torment, count that now as being an error, and write down instead, "A just recompense of reward." If we taught you that your obligations to God are according to the Jewish law, and as represented in the Ten Commandments, and that unless these were kept *perfectly* in letter and in spirit you would have no hope of eternal life, alter and amend that feature of your faith, and write instead that under the *New Covenant God will accept the most imperfect works of those who have consecrated themselves to him, providing those imperfect works are the best that they are able to offer; and providing they are offered in the name and merit of him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood.

If the present stewards would follow such a course they would undoubtedly be respected through the future, but following their present course, the time is surely coming when they will be despised as hypocrites and blind guides, who mislead their confiding flocks into the ditch of skepticism and the great time of trouble.

This parable may be considered as ending with the eighth verse, the instructions which follow being separate and distinct, and along a somewhat different line, and addressed specially to those who accepted the Lord's teaching, his disciples.

"YE CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON"

This after-lesson is on the subject of the impossibility of having two masters, God and Mammon. Mammon represents earthly riches, not only financial wealth, but honor amongst men, etc.—the thing which was particularly hindering the Pharisees from taking the proper course and acknowledging their error and seeking for and obtaining mercy. Mammon still is a great hindrance to all who desire to be the Lord's disciples. Whoever worships Mammon—and it may be self or wealth or fame or position and honor amongst men, one or all of these—whoever worships Mammon cannot at the same time be a true worshiper of God, a true follower of Christ, because God and Mammon are rivals before our hearts. If we attempt to divide our love and attention, and to give part of it to God and to his service, and part of it to Mammon, the results will be unsatisfactory to God, unsatisfactory to Mammon and unsatisfactory to ourselves.

We must, therefore, decide either to live for self and earthly things or to renounce and sacrifice these in the interest of God and of heavenly things. The worshipers of Mammon may have certain advantages as respects the present life, in the way of earthly prosperity, but Mammon cannot give eternal life. It is the gift of God, and those who would have God's gift must be God's friends, God's children; and he demands of such that they shall manifest their love and devotion to him by renouncing Mammon, by joyfully sacrificing earthly name and fame and favor and interest, thus showing their higher appreciation of his love and favor, the riches of his grace, and the exceeding great and precious things which he has promised to give them in the life to come.

These are to "make to themselves friends;" in other words, to lay up treasures in heaven, by the sacrifice of the Mammon of unrighteousness;—that is to say, the sacrifice of the various interests of this present time of unrighteousness, "this present evil world."

Some may have very little of Mammon at their disposal to sacrifice; but the Lord encourages us all by saying that he that is faithful in that which is *least*, thereby gives evidence of how faithful he would be if he had *much;* and the Lord accepts the little sacrifices which we are able to make as tho they were greater ones. "She hath done what she could" is the best of testimony as respects the use of present opportunities in the Lord's service, whether it refer to a mite or a million, a little influence or a great one. It is not the *amount* that God is seeking, but the character, the disposition of heart; and whoever has the right disposition of heart and is careful in the small affairs of life, to serve the Lord with all that he possesses and to the extent of his ability, such an one will have committed to him the true riches—the heavenly riches. Not merely may he expect to enter into the glories of the heavenly kingdom, but even in the present life he will begin to get a first-fruits of those riches in his own heart, in his own experiences; for it is unquestionably a fact that the heirs of glory, those who are in the right relationship with God and running faithfully in the race, not only will get the prize at the end of the race, but already get blessing which the world can neither give nor take away;—the joys of the Lord, the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruling in their hearts; so that they can sing for joy, even in the house of their pilgrimage—even in the present unsatisfactory tabernacle condition, in which we groan also, being burdened with its weaknesses.

But if we are not faithful in the little things which confessedly are not our own, and merely given to us as a stewardship—the things, the opportunities, the talents, which are merely put within our grasp as stewards of the Lord,—if we are not faithful in using these with an eye single to the Lord's glory, how can we expect that he will ever give us true riches of grace, to be our own forever, either in the future or in the present life.

The sum of this lesson to the disciples, then, is that as no man is able to serve two masters and satisfy both, and do justice to both, their interests conflicting, no more can we serve God and righteousness, and at the same time be pleasing and acceptable to the adversary and those who are in harmony with him who now rules in this present dispensation, the "prince of this world." All of the Lord's consecrated people, those who would lay up treasures in heaven and be rich toward God, must be willing to become of no reputation amongst those who are not consecrated, and who, whatever their possessions, are really serving Mammon, selfishness, the present life, and not sacrificing these interests to the attainment of the heavenly kingdom.

*See June 15 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants

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THE RICH MAN (DIVES) AND THE POOR MAN (LAZARUS)

LUKE 16:19-31.—Nov. 11.

This parable is a continuation of the series, a part of the table-talk at the banquet at the Pharisee's house. It is the culmination, so to speak, of the entire series of parables. The first represents mankind in general, as the lost sheep, and the Lord's interest therein, and its final recovery to the fold; the second respecting the lost coin, represents the same thought, with the additional feature of the diligent sweeping and bringing in of the light in order to the recovery or restitution of the lost race. The third applies this same principle to the Jewish nation, and reproves the Pharisee class, the elder brother, for not having the Lord's spirit of love and mercy in respect to the sinner class, the prodigal. The fourth represents the unwisdom of this Pharisee class in hypocritically pretending to others that they kept the Law and were acceptable stewards, whereas they themselves were well aware that they came short of the glory of God, came short of fulfilling their stewardship, and must therefore be ejected from it; and points out to them a proper course, which they did not, however, take. And now, finally, this parable of Dives and Lazarus, the fifth of the series brings the instruction to a climax by picturing the favored class as the rich man, who enjoyed, but did not rightly appreciate the blessings showered upon him,—selfishly shutting up his heart against the poor sinner at his gate; not acknowledging that he himself also was imperfect and came short of the glory of God and the perfect keeping of his law.

This parable shows what the results would be as respects both classes—the final outcome. We will not deal with it here, since we have already treated it with considerable elaboration in our issue of March 15 and April 1, 1900. But inasmuch as some may have loaned or given away that copy, and since we have a good supply of them on hand, we conclude to send an extra copy of that one with this issue to supplement this lesson. Those who find themselves possessed of two copies will no doubt have good opportunity for using the extra one to the Lord's praise and to the blessing of some who in more or less darkness are "feeling after God [his plan], if haply they may find him."

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

STILL DEBATING INFANT DAMNATION

In debates on creed revision among Presbyterians no feature has called forth such heated discussion as that relating to "elect infants dying in infancy." This clause of the Westminster Confession, with those clauses which have popularly been taken as interpreting it, follow:—

III. 3. "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.

III. 4. "These angels and men thus predestined and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it can not either be increased or diminished.

. . . . . .

X. 3. "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved through the Spirit, who worketh when, where, and how he pleaseth; so also are all other elect persons who are incapable of being called by the ministry of the Word.

X. 4. "Others, not elected, although they may be called by the Word and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come to Christ and, therefore, can not be saved. Much less can men not professing the Christian religion be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the law of that religion they do profess; and to assert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious and to be detested."

From a *remote period* these statements have been popularly supposed to teach, by implication, that non-elect infants dying in infancy are damned. However, the recent General Assembly of the Presbyterian church (South) claimed that no such interpretation could rightly be put upon the clause, and refused to consider a proposition to alter it. For instance, Dr. Warfield, of Princeton, says, "I think we may characterize the interpretation of Chapter X., section 3 [of the Westminster Confession], which finds a body of non-elect infants dying in infancy implied in its statements, as one of the most astonishing pieces of misrepresentation in literary history." Rev. Dr. Eugene Daniel also asserts that it is unjust to say that the Confession implicitly teaches the damnation of non-elect infants. He points out that it teaches *positively* the salvation of elect infants, but makes no attempt whatever to solve the Creator's intentions with regard to non-elect infants.

It seems peculiar indeed that anyone claiming to believe in Calvinistic *predestination* of adults could dispute that the same conditions prevailed in infancy. But hearken to other interpreters of the Westminster Confession, as follows:—

Rev. Dr. Horace L. Singleton (*The Homiletic Review*, September), states that prior to the Westminster Confession all of Christendom had believed that infants dying without baptism are *damned*, but that Confession took a step forward in asserting that *elect* infants, even if unbaptized, are saved. He says:—

"The sacramentarian doctrine of the papal and other prelatical churches, and the logical conclusion of Arminianism, left no other provision for infant salvation than baptism. To die without it was to be lost forever. This detestable doctrine the Confession of Faith was designed to destroy. It does destroy it. The Christian church and the world are debtors to it for removing the gloom which surrounds the death of babes. The Assembly divines were all Calvinists, in entire accord with the second Scotch Confession, which on this subject 'abhors and detests among the doctrines of the Roman Antichrist his cruel judgment against infants dying without the sacrament.' The Calvinists of the Westminster Assembly who indorsed or approved that Confession, would surely not frame an article on infant salvation which would imply that any dying in infancy were without the pale of God's grace and redemption. So they made provision for all by referring all to the sovereign will of him 'who worketh when and where and how he will.' Only Calvinistic theology and a Calvinistic Confession can say that. The phrase contains the essence of Calvinism. What is that? Why, the grace of God is sovereign both in its source and application.

"As to the device of the doctrine of infant damnation, not one of the other denominations can point at the Presbyterian church and say: 'Thou didst it.'

"The Roman Catholic church in the Council of Trent decreed, and the decree still stands:—

" 'If any denies that new-born children must be baptized, or says that they do not derive from Adam anything of original sin which makes the washing of regeneration necessary to cleanse them for an entrance into everlasting life, let him be accursed.'

"The Lutheran church did not rid itself altogether of Roman sacramentalism. Its Augsburg Confession teaches that 'Baptism is necessary to salvation.' It condemns all 'who affirm that children are saved without baptism.'

"Archbishop Cranmer, the first primate of the English church, said in his 'Catechism': 'If we should have heathen parents and die without baptism, we would be damned everlastingly.'

". . . . The founder of the Methodist Episcopal church, John Wesley, in his 'Treatise on Baptism,' 1756, says:—

" 'If infants are guilty of original sin, then they are the proper subjects of baptism, seeing in the ordinary way they can not be saved unless this be washed away by baptism. It has already been proved that this original stain cleaves to every child of man, and that they thereby are children of wrath and liable to eternal damnation.' "

The Independent (August 30) says:—

"It is a mere evasion to assert that 'elect infants' can mean all infants. It would be as easy to say 'all infants', as 'elect infants' if that were intended, and if it were not contradicted by the doctrine clearly expressed in the Confession, that original sin is worthy of eternal death. That the plain meaning of the Confession and its implications throughout includes infants among those who are lost, is sufficiently proved from the language of Dr. Twiss, prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly, who says distinctly in his 'VINDICÆ' I, 48 —

" 'Many infants depart from this life in original sin, and consequently are condemned to eternal death on account of original sin alone. Therefore, from the sole transgression of Adam condemnation to eternal death has followed upon many infants.'

"What Dr. Twiss said was the belief of the rest and the teaching of the Confession."

The Rev. Henry Frank quotes John Calvin himself, saying:—

"John Calvin says with his accustomed clearness: 'The children of the reprobate [*i. e.*, the non-elect] whom the curse of God follows, are subject to the same sentence' (Opera II.) Again: 'You deny that it is lawful for God, except for misdeeds, to condemn any human being. . . . Put forth your evidence against God, who precipitates into *eternal death harmless, new-born children* torn from their mother's bosom.' (*'De Occulta Dei Providentia'*). 'As the eggs of the asp are deservedly crushed, and serpents just born are deservedly killed, though they have not yet poisoned any one with their bite, so infants are justly obnoxious to penalties' (Molineaux of France). . . .

"Once again hear John Calvin: 'Very infants themselves bring in their own damnation with them from their mother's womb; who, although they have not yet brought forth the fruits of their iniquity, yet have the seed thereof enclosed within them; yea, their whole nature is a certain seed of sin; and therefore it can not be otherwise than hateful and abominable to God.'

"Now let us learn what the framers of the Confession themselves said concerning this damnable doctrine. William Twiss: 'If many thousands, even all the infants of Turks and Saracens, dying in original sin are tormented by him in hell-fire, is he to be accounted the father of cruelties for this?' For a vivid picture of the disposition of these eternally damned infants by this mild and maudlin Presbyterian God, read Samuel Rutherford, one of the Scotch commissioners who assisted in framing the creed. 'Suppose we saw with our eyes a great furnace of fire, ... and all the damned as *lumps of red fire*, and they boiling and louping for pain in a dungeon of everlasting brimstone, and the black and terrible devils, with long and sharp-toothed whips of scorpions lashing out scourges on them; and if we saw our own neighbors, brethren, sisters; yea, *our dear children*, wives, fathers, mothers, swimming and sinking in that black lake, and heard the yelling, shouting, crying of our young ones and fathers. . . .' "

* * *

It will now be quite in order for some very conscientious Presbyterian brother to tell us that John Calvin knew nothing about *Calvinism* anyway; or to assure us that though there were damned non-elect infants in times past, there are none today, though God and his Word have not changed in the interim.

If, instead of saying elect and non-elect infants, Brother Calvin had said the children of the non-elect are damned when they are born, he would have come much nearer stating the matter truthfully, however erroneous his conception of the facts. For the word *damned* in plain English simply signifies

condemned, and the same is true of the Greek word translated in these two ways in the Bible.

No one can dispute that the Scriptures plainly teach that *condemnation* (*damnation*) passed upon all men because of father Adam's transgression (Rom. 5:12), and hence the declaration that mankind are "born in sin." (Psa. 51:5) The only exceptions to this rule of being born *condemned* (*damned*) being in the case of children one or both of whose parents are believers.—1 Cor. 7:14.

But then, the great difficulty of "Orthodoxy" lies in the fact that it has accepted theories respecting this original *condemnation* (*damnation* or curse of God) framed in "the dark ages," that it means *condemned* (*damned*) to everlasting torture, either in fire and brimstone or something worse: a thought as opposed to the Scriptural teachings as to sound reason and common sense. If, however, the Scriptural thought be attached to the *condemnation* (*damnation*) and it be seen that all of Adam's race are born aliens and strangers from God, his enemies and under *condemnation* (*damnation*) to death is imperfect beings unworthy of God's favors, including everlasting life,—then all is plain, all is reasonable.

It will then be seen that as Adam's sin and its penalty were entailed upon his children, so the harmony with God of a believing parent would properly and consistently attach to his children until they shall have reached years of discretion and ability to accept or reject divine favor for themselves.

However, the children of unbelievers have the opportunity of accepting God's grace when they come to years of discretion, provided they have the necessary "ears to hear"—ears of the heart. And even such as, under Satan's influence, are deaf to the voice of God now speaking to us through his Son—and who therefore continue through the present life under *condemnation* (*damnation*), we have the assurance will in the Millennial age have the *ears of their understanding* opened and then have opportunity to obey and be blessed with the gift of God—eternal life.

N. B. We will send FREE, as a sample, on receipt of a Postal Card request, a ten cent pamphlet, "*What Say the Scriptures About Hell?*" It discusses every occurrence of the word hell and every passage generally supposed to teach eternal torment.

DEAD BODIES AND QUICKENED BODIES

"O wretched man that I am: who shall deliver me from this dead body? I thank God [for deliverance] through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with my mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

Rom. 7:24, 25.

Much perplexity has been caused to many Christian minds by the statements of the seventh chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Some have concluded that he here teaches that he lived a life of sin, according to the flesh, but a life of righteousness according to his mind; and yet they are ready to concede that this is rather a perplexing, unreasonable and unsatisfactory view of the matter. Others reach the conclusion that the Apostle must here be describing his condition of heart and mind before conversion, while he was still a sinner; yet these also find difficulties, and confess that many features of such a view are quite inconsistent with the Apostle's language. We submit the following interpretation of the chapter, as proving itself correct by its harmonizing with all the Apostle's statements in this chapter and elsewhere.

The Apostle is addressing believers at Rome, "beloved of God, called saints" (1:7). Some of these were probably converts from amongst the Gentiles, while undoubtedly a considerable proportion were converts from Judaism. This is implied by the fact that the Apostle in this Epistle so particularly explains the Law, not as to Gentiles having no knowledge of the Law, but as to Jews having full knowledge of it. The Epistle is a very comprehensive statement of the entire plan of God. The Apostle begins in the first chapter by showing that God was not responsible for the prevalent degradation, ignorance, sin, etc., throughout the world, and concludes with the crushing of Satan under the feet of the saints during the Millennial reign of the Christ. He explains that at one time God gave to mankind in general certain knowledge and blessings, but that "when they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools." He explains that thus gradually men came down to idolatry and bestiality, dishonoring and degrading themselves, and "perverting the truth of God into a lie;" "for which cause God gave them up to vile affections and to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not proper;" and they became filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, dispute, deceit, malignity, etc., etc. Thus he accounts for the various degrees of degradation, ignorance and superstition prevalent throughout the world.—Chap. 1:21, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29.

Proceeding, he shows that while Israel had received God's law, under a special covenant, and with special favors at his hands, they had not been *saved* by the law, any more than the Gentiles had been saved without the law; and that therefore both Jews and Gentiles needed just such a Savior as God had provided. Answering the supposed argument of the Jews, he declares, "Not the *hearers* of the law are just before God, but the *doers* of the law," and he argues that the Jew who rested in the law, and made his boast of being of God's favored people, and who by reason of these favors knew the will of God more particularly than the Gentiles, would not, by reason of this knowledge and advantage, be justified under the law, but could only be acquitted by a perfect keeping of that law; and that since the Jews did not keep the law perfectly they could not claim the reward promised by the law, namely, eternal life. Hence, so far as eternal life was concerned, they had no more claim upon it than had the Gentiles, who had less knowledge as well as less outward piety. He asks: "Are we [Jews] better than they [Gentiles, living according to the light that they possessed]? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none *righteous*, no, not one."

The Apostle's argument is that none being righteous, none could be acquitted or approved before God, whether they had the law or did not have it. Thus he proved that the Jews as well as the Gentiles, up to the time of Christ, were all under sin, all under condemnation, and that none of them had any claim upon eternal life, according to divine arrangements thus far made. For "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight."—Chap. 2:13, 17; 3:9, 10, 19, 20.

Next the Apostle proceeds to show that whoever would be justified before God, whether he had previously been a Jew, favored with the knowledge and advantages of the Law, or a Gentile, in blindness and ignorance doing to the best of his knowledge, God has now provided for both, *one* way to be saved and to come into harmony with him—namely, through Christ. He shows that the law, so far from justifying the Jews, showed them to be in a condition of sin, by their inability to keep it perfectly. But this law which had condemned the Jews, because of their failure and inability to keep its conditions perfectly, served the more abundantly to attest God's justice; it became a witness to God's righteousness—that he had been right in his declaration that Israel had not kept the law, and that all mankind, being in a fallen condition, were unfit to receive his favors; and it witnessed more than this: it witnessed to the justice of God in providing the ransom for sinners, in the person of his Son our Lord —"even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto *all* and upon *all* them that believe [whether Jews or Gentiles]: for there is [now] no difference, for all have sinned [and consequently all are unworthy of divine favor upon any basis of works of their own, and must therefore needs be redeemed with the precious blood, and their penalty met for them, ere they could be received back into harmony with God]; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [satisfaction] through faith in his blood."—Chap. 3:19-26.

Appealing to those who had formerly been Jews, and who had been inclined to boast of themselves as God's favored people, and inclined to think that in some sense of the word they were still more favored of God than those formerly Gentiles, the Apostle says, in view of the preceding facts, "Where is [the room for] boasting then?" and he answers, "It is excluded." There is no room for boasting; the Jew and the Gentile having come into Christ are on a common level—both have been justified by faith in Christ; neither was benefited or injured by his previous experience, whether under the law or without the law, if now by God's grace they had received adoption into his family through Christ. Boasting on the part of those who previously had been Jews would certainly be excluded, for they had not been able to perform the works which their Law Covenant had demanded, and now being exempted of God, under the law of faith, it would hinder them

from any boasting as respects the law of works. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without [necessity for] the deeds of [works demanded by] the law."

The Apostle proceeds to show that the Lord's operation of favor on account of faith does not make void the law, with which for centuries he had dealt with Israel,—the law of Righteousness. On the contrary, the fact that it was necessary to justify the Jews by faith, and the fact that they could not be justified under the law of works, proves, not that the law of works was bad, but that it was good, and that the Jew was imperfect through the fall, so that he was unable to obey the perfect law given. Thus God's dealings through the new law of faith really upholds and magnifies his old law of works, for the latter had to be fulfilled by Jesus on behalf of his people, in order that he might be the Redeemer of the world in general, and set free from the law of works those who had been under it, that they also, with the remainder of the world, might be accepted of God under the law of faith.—Chap. 3:27-31.

Buttressing his argument, the Apostle shows that Abraham was not justified by the law of works, the Law Covenant, but by faith, and hence the claim advanced by some that the Mosaic law was necessary, with faith for justification, was an erroneous one; because Abraham was called the friend of God, and had his faith counted to him for righteousness, not only long before the law was given at Mount Sinai, but even before the outward sign of circumcision was given to himself—the latter being given not as a requirement to his justification, but as a seal or mark of justification and harmony with God, to which he had already attained.—Chap. 4:1-15.

As Abraham was justified by faith, and received into favor with God because of his exercise of faith, so, says the Apostle, it is with us. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." And how and why through our Lord? Because, says the Apostle, "He was delivered for our offences [bearing the condemnation which those offences implied and involved—the very offences or weaknesses of the flesh which hindered Jews from keeping the perfect law at Sinai, and being justified under it by works of obedience to it]"—Chap. 4:25; 5:1.

This justification, which we receive through faith in Christ, becomes to us the basis of our new hopes in him,—of becoming his disciples, and, if faithful, ultimately joint-heirs with him in the kingdom. This the Apostle expresses in the words "By whom also [additional to justification and its peace] we have access by faith into *this grace* [the privilege of adoption into God's family] wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God [in the hope of sharing in God's glory and kingdom with our Lord and Head]." The Apostle proceeds to prove, not only that the death of Christ was necessary as the off-set to Adam's transgression, and the payment of his penalty, but he demonstrates that this penalty was fully paid, and that God has accepted it on behalf of the world in general, and not of the Jews only, and has transferred all to Christ; for as "the judgment was by one to condemnation, the free gift is of many offences unto justification. As one offence resulted in a pronouncement which affected all to condemnation, even so by one righteous act a pronouncement was made [by the same justice] which affects all men [permitting their attainment] unto justification of life."

And, adds the Apostle, the Law Covenant was introduced, not for the doing away of sin, but that sin might be more distinctly seen to be sin, and in its true colors; not, however, with a view to the injury of the Jews, with whom that Law Covenant was made, for if sin abounded amongst them the more by reason of their greater knowledge through the law, then God's grace abounded proportionately the more; for as sin hath reigned unto death, even so there is to be a reign of grace unto eternal life under righteous provisions through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Rom. 5:12, 17-21.

The next point is, If God's grace will be caused to abound in proportion to the sentence, so that he who has many and deep sins can be as fully and completely forgiven and released as he who has fewer and smaller sins, shall we then argue that we may as well delve deeply into sin, assured that God's grace will be that much the more abundantly provided for us? No, says the Apostle; those who have come into the position to *see* and comprehend this much of divine mercy and favor must first have made a consecration of themselves to God, otherwise their eyes of understanding would not be opened widely enough to grasp the subject with clearness and definiteness, and if one had made a consecration of himself, and immersed his will into the will of God in Christ, and thus reckoned himself dead to the world and to sin, how could such persons live lives of sin or take pleasure therein? So surely as they have received the holy Spirit, the new mind, that surely that new mind would be out of harmony with sin, craving, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, truth, etc.

We are therefore to reckon ourselves dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ; and we are not to let sin reign in us, because we, as new creatures, are begotten of a different spirit, that is at warfare with sin, as sin is at warfare against righteousness. Instead, therefore, of continuing to be servants of sin, and yielding our bodies to that service, we are to recognize ourselves as "*new* creatures in Christ," servants of God, his ambassadors and representatives; and are to seek to use our members, our bodies and their talents, in the new service of righteousness,—remembering our past experience in sin, that its wages are degradation and ultimate death, and that this privilege which we have now entered upon as new creatures, redeemed by the precious blood, is God's covenant through Jesus Christ our Lord, and means to us eternal life, if we maintain it.—Chap. 6.

Having reached this climax of the argument, and having demonstrated the process of our justification and our subsequent adoption into the divine family; and having shown the necessity for maintaining our standing as new creatures, and gaining victory over the weaknesses of the flesh; and that all these privileges, nevertheless, are not of the Law but of grace and of faith—the Apostle next turns his attention to another phase of the subject in Chapter 7. He has in mind, and is specially addressing the Christian brethren at Rome who were formerly Jews, as he says, "I write unto you who know the law." He wishes to demonstrate to them logically that although the Jews previously, through the Law Covenant, had "much advantage every way," yet now since the introduction of the New Covenant they were to some extent at a disadvantage—hindered or bound by the old dead covenant, unless they recognized it as dead, and cut loose from it. They were tightly bound by the Law given at Sinai; because as a nation they entered into a positive covenant with God, through Moses, the mediator of their covenant. St. Paul represents this as a marriage contract between that people and the Law Covenant, picturing the Jews as the wife, and the Law Covenant as the husband. He shows an incompatibility between them, but that nevertheless the Jews would be bound by their covenant, as a woman would be *bound* by her marriage contract, so long as the husband would live.

Hence the Jews, as a people, were less at liberty to enter into a New Covenant with Christ than were the Gentiles, because they were already *bound* to the Law Covenant through Moses. The Apostle proceeds to prove three things:

(1) That the Law Covenant, or husband of Israel, had not been abrogated, had not been executed, as a bad law, but had died a natural death, through the fulfilment of the purpose of its creation; and that hence,

(2) Every Jew might properly consider himself as released from all obligation to the (dead) Law Covenant and might properly be united or married to another, Christ, accepting the terms of the New Covenant, with its grace, mercy and peace through believing, now offered to them.*

(3) It was proper that they all should see how much better was the New Covenant, into which they would enter by becoming united with Christ, than was the old covenant, which, he declared, had died a natural death.

However, he would not have them think evil of the first husband, the Law Covenant. On the contrary, he assures them that it was a good husband to them—"The law is holy and just and good," all must speak well of the Jews' first husband. Nevertheless, argues the Apostle, we all realize that we did not receive from the Law Covenant the blessings we so earnestly coveted; we did not receive an actual cancellation of our sins, but merely a temporary covering of them, which required to be renewed and made mention of year by year continually (Heb. 10:1), nor did we obtain the longed-for everlasting life. As Jews, we cannot blame the Law Covenant; we must only blame ourselves;—nor can we blame ourselves (for I may consider myself a representative, in thought and conduct, of all true Jews, and may speak for them, says the Apostle); and I can truly say that while living under this Law Covenant I approved it with my mind, with my heart, and I endeavored to serve it accordingly, but when I came to perform its requirements I found another law, a law of sin working in my members, which hindered me from rendering the obedience I desired to render to that Law Covenant.

Not that it hindered me entirely, for I certainly succeeded in some degree in conforming life and conduct to its requirements; but since I could not render perfect obedience to its every requirement I necessarily failed, because in that Law Covenant no provision was made for my weaknesses and imperfections which I had inherited, and which were my share

* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

of the fall of our race. I found, on the contrary, that even though I had been able to perform the requirements of the Law in nine points out of ten, and had failed in the tenth point, and even though that failure were properly attributable to inherited weaknesses, and was entirely contrary to my desires of heart, nevertheless it was *failure*, and my efforts as a whole were branded *failure*, and the great prize of eternal life was denied me under that covenant.

Thus I found myself in a terrible predicament; my heart crying out for God and for righteousness, and earnestly desiring to fulfil the requirements of my covenant and to gain life everlasting, but I found myself wholly unable to fully obey its requirements; I found them entirely beyond my reach. Not that they were beyond the reach of my mind, for with my mind I grasped them and enjoyed them and appreciated them; nor that they would have been beyond the reach of obedience of my body, had my body been perfect; but, O wretched man! I find that my body is a dead body, that sin has gained such a power over it and so chained it down to things that are evil, in fact and in intention, that I cannot do the things that I would,—that when I would do good and keep the perfect law, sin is present with me, and hinders,—being an integral part of my body; so that the good that I would do, the perfect life that I would live, I am unable to perform, and the evil things that I would not do, which my mind, my will, rejects, and which I strive against, those things to some extent I find myself unable to resist; and here was my helpless condition as bound to the Law Covenant. I realized that I never could gain, through its assistance and offers, the glorious perfections that I desired, and the eternal life which could accompany only these perfections.

What shall I do? How can I escape this condition of things? I thank God that a way of escape has been provided; I thank God that in his due time he has sent Jesus, as a great Redeemer, and that through his death the world of mankind has been redeemed from the original sentence, and additionally that all we who were Jews and under the Law Covenant are *set at liberty from that covenant*—that the death of Jesus on our behalf means the death of our Covenant, which, though in some respects an advantage, was very unfavorable to us because of our inherited weaknesses. I thank God that now I am at liberty to become united to Christ, at liberty to consider my union with Moses and the Law Covenant as at an end, at liberty to take on me the vows and covenants required of all called to be the bride of Christ. Thanks be unto God for this deliverance from the bondage of the law of works into the liberty of the law of faith in Christ Jesus!

The advantage of this new position in Christ over the old position in Moses is that now God accepts my new mind, my heart desires, accompanied by my best endeavors; and under this New Covenant, through the merits of the *ransom*, he justly ignores and hides from his sight the imperfections of the flesh, which are contrary to my wish, and against which I am striving. It may be said of me, then, and of all such, that it is with our minds, with our hearts, that we are serving God—even if to some extent, contrary to our wish and endeavor, our flesh should, either through weakness or ignorance, serve the law of sin at times.—Romans 7.

THE NEW CREATURE ALIVE, THE OLD DEAD—Rom. 8:1-11

Under the covenant through which we are united to Christ, our mortal bodies are reckoned as dead, as sacrificed, as no longer us, and our minds are reckoned as the new creature adopted into the family of God, and seeking to serve God and to grow into his likeness, by being conformed to the image of his dear Son. It is therefore according to the standpoint from which we view the matter that we could say of these new creatures that they are holy, and that the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in them, and that the wicked one toucheth them not.—1 John 5:18.

In such expressions we are referring exclusively to the reckoned "*new*" creatures, and are ignoring entirely, as dead, their mortal bodies. But if we should speak from another standpoint, and attempt to say that we are actually perfect in the flesh, it would be untrue, and not only so but would be an ignoring of the merit of Christ's sacrifice, and our continued need (while in the fallen flesh) of a share in the justification which it provides. Those who would thus speak of their flesh as perfect, should hear the Apostle speaking to the reverse, saying, "In my flesh dwelleth no good thing,"—no perfection; and all imperfection is un-right, and all unrighteousness is sin. Hence, says the Apostle John, "If we say [speaking of our flesh, and ignoring the justification provided in Christ to cover its blemishes] that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—1 John 1:8.

St. Paul proceeds to clearly mark the distinction between the *new* mind, which consecrated in Christ is accepted as the "new creature," holy and acceptable to God, and our mortal bodies, which he calls "this dead body"—originally dead, under divine sentence, because of sin, but redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and justified, and then included in our sacrifice, when we gave our little all in consecration to the Lord, as living sacrifices—to be dead with Christ, to suffer with him even unto death. He declares that it is to those who are walking *after* the spirit, seeking to serve the Lord in spirit and in truth, from the heart, that are freed from the condemnation; and that this includes the thought that they do not now walk *after* the flesh, desiring to fulfil its desires. And here we are to closely distinguish between the walking *up to* the spirit, and walking *after* the spirit. We should of course follow as closely to the spirit of truth and righteousness as possible, and yet we cannot hope, so long as we are in the imperfect flesh, that we could ever walk *up to* the spirit of the divine requirements, though we are to strive in this direction continually. One thing is positive, however,—we must not walk *after* the flesh. To do so would imply that we had lost the new mind, the new disposition, the new will,—that we had become dead to those hopes and covenants which had led to our consecration.

Any who get into this condition of walking after the flesh,—seeking to serve the flesh, therein have the evidence that their minds had become "carnal," that they had lost much, if not all, of the *new* mind, the *new* disposition. All such should know most unequivocally that the carnal mind is at enmity against God, and hence that God could not fellowship it or favor it in any sense or degree The Apostle urges, then, that all remember that they who are in the flesh, who live in harmony with their fallen propensities, serving their fallen fleshly natures, are not pleasing God and that such an inclination or course leads toward, and, if persisted in, would end in death.

He proceeds to reason that if the Spirit [mind, disposition] of God [the spirit of holiness] dwell in us we cannot be in sympathetic accord with the fallen fleshly nature and its appetites and ambitions. We may know, on the contrary that if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is not of the body of Christ at all, and not to be considered as identified with the elect church,—and Christ's spirit is not a spirit of harmony with sin, but of opposition to sin, for did he not lay down his life to vanquish sin, and to deliver us from its power and dominion? Whoever, therefore, claims to have the spirit of Christ, but loves and *wilfully* practices sin, and with *his mind* serves sin, such an one deceives himself ,for he has neither part nor lot in Christ.

The Apostle proceeds further along the same line, arguing that our adoption into God's family, our begetting to newness of heart and mind, and our acceptance thus as members of the body of Christ, while it means, first of all, that the body is ignored and reckoned as *dead*, because of sin, and only our spirits or minds are reckoned righteous and alive, the beginning of our eternal existence, nevertheless this good condition is not to be considered the limit of our ambition and attainment in Christ-likeness. On the contrary, we are to remember that the spirit of God is powerful: that in the case of our Lord Jesus it was powerful enough to raise him from the dead; and as we become more and more imbued with and controlled by the holy spirit of God in our hearts, in our minds, divine power will come gradually to us through this channel of the holy Spirit, which will permit a figurative raising of our mortal bodies from their death-state into activities of spiritual life, in the service of the Lord. "If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you [in sufficient measure, aboundingly], he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [energize] your *mortal bodies* [not your immortal resurrection bodies] by his spirit that dwelleth in you."

It is our hope that in due time the Lord by his spirit will give us new bodies in the resurrection; and that those new bodies will be immortal, perfect in every respect; and that then not only our minds, but our bodies also will be fully in harmony with God and his every law and work of righteousness. That will be glorious—it is already a glorious prospect; but the Apostle holds before us the thought that even our present mortal bodies, sentenced, then justified, then reckoned dead because of sin, consecrated, may be so quickened or energized now, that instead of being any longer servants of sin, or even merely *dead to it*, they may, under the careful watchfulness of the new mind, be used as servants of righteousness, of truth. This means, of course, a high Christian development, a large attainment of "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." It is the measure or attainment, nevertheless, which every one of the Lord's people must continually strive after, and their success will be proportioned to

their attainment of the mind [disposition] of Christ, holy conformity to the Father's will in all things. And how comforting, in this connection, is the promise of our Lord, that our heavenly Father is more willing to give the holy Spirit [spirit of holiness] to them that ask him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts unto their children!—Luke 11:13.

"UNTHANKFUL, UNHOLY"

LUKE 17:11-19.—Nov. 18.

"Be ye thankful."—Col. 3:15.

Leprosy is a very prevalent disease in eastern lands, and amongst the Jews lepers were specially proscribed—separated from others—not allowed to have intercourse with their own families nor to come near anybody, but obliged to keep at a distance, and on the approach of a stranger to cry out, "Unclean! unclean!" From the standpoint of the Law it is evident that leprosy was meant to represent sin and its loathsome, contagious and consuming character.

A traveler in the Orient writes: "As our traveling party passed out the western gate of Nablus, the site of ancient Sechem, a group of repulsive lepers greeted us with calls for help. They showed various forms of that terrible disease: the nose or the lips or a hand or a foot eaten away; the limbs distorted, and one case at least was a leper 'white as snow.' When we were fairly in our tents beyond the city westward, those lepers came, fifteen in all, and seated themselves afar off, in a semi-circle, facing our tents, with one of their number a little in advance of the others, holding out a dish for alms, and, as with one voice, they cried aloud to us to have pity on them and give them aid." Another writer describes leprous conditions thus: "The hair falls from the head and eyebrows; the nails loosen, decay and drop off; joint after joint of the fingers and toes shrink up and slowly fall away; the gums are absorbed and the teeth disappear; the nose, the eyes, the tongue and the palate are slowly consumed."

The horrors and loathsomeness of leprosy and its contaminating qualities, both by heredity and infection, well illustrate the disease of sin, which has taken hold of the entire human family, and which separates and alienates from God and all that are pure and in harmony with him. The isolation of lepers was distinctly enjoined in the Law, but no cure or remedy was prescribed. The disease was treated from a religious standpoint, and in every case made amenable to the judgment of the priests: they decided whether or not a case of leprosy had developed, they banished the leper, and in the event of anything occurring to cure him, the priests must pass upon his cleansing before he would be reädmitted to society. So, in the great malady of sin, God commits to the hands of the antitypical priesthood—Christ and the faithful under-priests now being selected from the world—the work of pronouncing and making manifest what is sin, as distinct and separate from what is righteousness, and thus to separate between the clean and the unclean, between those who are in harmony with God, and those who are out of harmony with him. And in the coming age, when the royal priesthood shall be glorified and in official power to bless the world with the knowledge of God and the knowledge of how to become free from sin and, through the merit of the precious blood, to attain to full restitution,—to purity and perfection of mind and heart and body,—it will be this royal priesthood that will have the deciding of when the purification has been complete—when sin has ceased to exist in the condemned, and they have been brought back into full harmony with God and righteousness.

Travelers tell us that in the locality mentioned in our lesson—the borders of Samaria and Galilee—leprosy still abounds rather more than elsewhere; and that groups somewhat like the one described in our lesson, are frequently to be seen. This group stood afar off, as they were compelled by law to do; yet recognizing Jesus as the great Teacher, of whose miracles they had heard something, they conceived the hope that he might have compassion upon them and heal them of their loathsome disease. Therefore, they lifted up their voices together, crying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." There is no doubt as to the meaning of their cry; although they usually begged for money, they evidently now were seeking for healing from the great Physician.

Hearing their voices, Jesus turned compassionately toward them, and we can better imagine than describe the sympathy which he felt for them in their pitiable condition, and no doubt also his mind at the same time took in the thought of the great malady of sin, from which the whole world was suffering, and whose sufferings he had come to relieve, whose bonds he had come to break, by giving his own life a ransom price for theirs. Our Lord merely said to them, "Go show yourselves to the priests." This implied that the leprosy had ceased its ravages, and that they might expect to be pronounced free from contagion and permitted to return to their homes and families, even though the maiming and marring occasioned by the ravages of the disease would still be with them. Thankful for such a release from their sufferings, the entire ten obediently hastened to comply with the injunction, but in the way they discovered that the blessing they had received from the Lord was not merely a staying of the disease, but a restoration to normal conditions. Their faith had brought them far more than they had expected.

One of them turned back and prostrating himself before the Lord rendered homage and thanks to his deliverer. The other nine passed on to comply with our Lord's words, and to show themselves to the priests, not having a sufficiency of love, appreciation and thankfulness to return in their cleansed condition to, first of all, acknowledge the giver of the blessing they had received. Our Lord remarked this, and called attention also to the fact that the one who did return was a Samaritan, and not one of the Jewish household of faith; saying, "Were there none found that returned to give glory to God save this stranger?" And he said unto him, "Arise, and go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole."

Nothing is said in the record respecting any spiritual blessing or favor which came to the Samaritan whose thankfulness of heart led him to Jesus' feet in acknowledgement. We are not told that Jesus invited him to become one of his followers, nor that he received any spiritual blessing; indeed, we know that it was not possible that he could receive any spiritual blessing, because, being a "stranger," like all Gentiles, he was debarred from any share in divine favor until the full measure of favor was granted to the Israelites—Cornelius, three and a half years after our Lord's crucifixion, being the first Gentile to be received into favor, and that time being the earliest at which the favor might go to the Gentiles—the end of the "seventy weeks" of favor promised to Israel.—See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., pp. 69-71.

Neither are we told that the nine who received the favor of God without being moved at heart to return and render thanks were, because of their unthankfulness, in any degree deprived of the blessing already received. We can readily imagine, however, that their condition of heart would not be favorable to them in connection with a hearty acceptance of the Lord and the kingdom privileges he was offering. We may reasonably suppose that if they were unmoved by so great a manifestation of divine love toward them, experienced in their own persons, they would be equally unmoved by any preaching of the Gospel which they might hear at any future time, either from the lips of Jesus or the apostles. We may even surmise that those nine never came into the church of Christ. On the contrary, we would have good reason to hope for the Samaritan, whose gratitude manifested itself;—that his condition of heart was nearer to the kingdom requirement, and that when subsequently the gospel of Christ was preached to Gentiles and Samaritans, this one would be a ready hearer and have a ready heart to receive the good message and to be healed from the moral leprosy of sin, and to come into harmony with God by presenting himself before the great High Priest of our profession, who died for our sins and who accepts as clean all who come unto the Father through him. Though we have no record of it, we believe that the Samaritan was of the kind the Lord is now drawing and calling to sacrifice with Christ, and that receiving that message of the kingdom he would be ready to lay down his life and become dead with Christ—presenting his body a living sacrifice unto God.—1 John 3:16; Rom. 5:1, 2.

Viewed from this standpoint, thankfulness of heart is a very sure sign of the character God is seeking,—especially in matters pertaining to our great salvation. And we find parallels to this illustration all about us. We find those who have suffered from the leprosy of sin, and who have appealed to Jesus for mercy and help, and who have been justified by faith—cleansed from their iniquities, covered with the righteousness of Christ; and yet amongst all these who have experienced such blessings and favors at our Lord's hands how few, comparatively, there are who return to him and prostrate themselves before him, to offer thanks for release from the bondage of sin and condemnation, and lay themselves at his

feet, living sacrifices—making a full consecration of themselves to the Lord, their reasonable service. (Rom. 12:1) Only the truly thankful are constrained thus to do,—only the truly appreciative. As the Apostle declares of himself and all such, it is true that "The love of Christ constraineth [draweth, impelleth] us; for we thus judge that if one died for all then were all dead [yea, worse than dead in trespasses and sins and condemnation], and that we who live [justified to life through faith in his blood] should not henceforth live unto ourselves but unto him who died for us."—2 Cor. 5:14.

Unthankfulness is unholiness, lack of that proper appreciation which would lead to a full consecration of life and every interest and affair to the Lord—regardless of what reward he may bestow. The "exceeding great and precious promises" of God's Word are not given to inspire thankfulness and consecration, for they are given only to the thankful and consecrated who already have presented themselves living sacrifices to God. "To *you* it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom," "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," which is granted only to the consecrated. These promises are to strengthen and nerve us and to enable us to "overcome," in fulfilment of our covenant of consecration.—2 Pet. 1:4; Matt. 13:11; 1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

Let us each and all seek and cultivate more and more the spirit of thankfulness, the *"reasonable"* spirit or disposition. Thankfulness will make every trial and sacrifice on our part seem small, and proportionately easy to be offered, and it will make all of God's mercies and favors toward us proportionately grand and great and inspiring.

PROPER CHRISTIAN DAILY LIVING

TITUS 2:1-15.—Nov. 25.

"We should live soberly, righteously, godly, in this present world."

The Apostle Paul penned the words of our lesson, instructing Titus, an overseer (bishop) of the church—ministering to the believers in the island of Crete. The instructions are not intended for, nor applicable to others than consecrated believers, and refer specifically to six classes in the church at Crete. (1) The elderly men—not merely the aged, but rather the advanced, the matured, who doubtless oftenest would be also advanced in years. (2) The aged women—advanced, matured. (3) The younger women. (4) The younger men. (5) Those who, though freemen in Christ, were bondmen according to the flesh,—servants. (6) To Titus himself. (7) The lesson ends with an exhortation applicable to all classes in the church.

Titus, as a preacher, should have before his mind a certain standard or ideal in respect to each class in the church, and should as a wise workman labor to the attainment of that ideal, which the Apostle here brings clearly to his attention,—intimating that instructions along the lines here laid down are in fullest accord with "sound doctrine." It has been claimed by some that the people of Crete were specially degraded and lacking of good character, and that this thought is necessary to the Apostle in giving such an exhortation to those who had left the world and joined themselves to the Lord as his church. We shall see, however, that every word of the exhortation is quite applicable to the Lord's people today, even though they live under the most enlightened conditions.

The Elderly Men, the advanced, were to be sober, grave, temperate (moderate)—not light, frivolous and excitable. Not only their years of natural life, but also their years of experience in Christian life, should bring them to conditions of maturity and sobriety. These three qualities would belong to a large extent to their mortal bodies, exercised and influenced by their new minds; but in addition to these there should be three other graces, characteristic of their new natures; *viz.*, soundness in the faith, and in love, and in patience. It is of intention that the Apostle here emphasized (in the Greek) *the* faith, *the* love and *the* patience, for there are various faiths, various loves and various kinds of patience, and he meant to be understood as inculcating the faith, the love and the patience which are of God, and respecting which he is instructing his people through his Word, as it is written, "They shall be all taught of God."

It was not by accident that the Apostle placed "sound in the faith" before "sound in love," for since love is one of the fruits or graces of the spirit of truth, and since one cannot receive much more of the spirit of the truth than he receives of the truth itself, therefore the importance of the truth, in the having of *the* sound faith.

Often we are told it matters not what a man *believes*, but matters all how he *does;* but to this we answer that a sound faith is all-important, not only in shaping conduct, but also in inspiring it. It is only in proportion as we have the truth that we have the sanctifying power: in proportion as we hold errors which vitiate or nullify the truths which we hold, in that same proportion we will be lacking and deficient in the sanctifying power; and hence deficient also in the sanctification itself. We should ever remember and coöperate with our dear Redeemer's prayer to the Father on our behalf, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

Neither was it by accident that the Apostle placed love before patience; because, although patience may be cultivated from a natural standpoint, as, for instance, in the interest of worldly aims and desires, nevertheless, such patience does not affect the heart, but is merely a forcing or curbing of the outside life, and when the force is removed there is a rebound as of a spring, to the original condition of impatience. The patience which will last and become an integral part of character must result from a change of heart: the mainspring of love must first replace the mainspring of selfishness.

How grand the characters thus portrayed! We could not wish for more amongst the Lord's people of any place today than that the matured brethren should be sober-minded, dignified and moderate, with their new minds well stored with the sound faith of God's Word, and their hearts full of love, manifesting forth all of the various good qualities represented by this word,—kindness, meekness, gentleness, all of which might briefly be summed up in the word *patience*. We exhort all of the advanced brethren in the truth everywhere to note well this likeness of a matured man of God, well grown up into Christ, the living Head, and well conformed to his image; and we exhort that we all keep this image well before our minds, and make it our ideal in our Christian course.

The Aged Women, matured, developed, have also a model set before them by the Apostle. They should be "reverent in demeanor" (Revised Version). They are supposed to have professed holiness, full consecration to the Lord. full desire to know and to do his will, and such consecration is to show out in their lives. The Apostle proceeds to mention a few of the ways in which it would be manifest. They will not be "slanderers" (Revised Version)—neither false accusers nor accusers in any slanderous sense of the word. On the contrary, as the Apostle shows further on, they will be examples in the matter of minding their own business. They will not be enslaved to much wine, but be teachers of that which is good, by precept as well as by example, to all with whom they have an influence. Naturally their influence will be greatest over the younger women, and it should be exercised as becometh women professing godliness, professing to be guided by the Word of the Lord, the spirit of the truth.

The Younger Women should find ensamples in their elder saintly sisters, the influence of whom will not be in the direction of insubordination and a battle between the husband and wife in the home; and their advice will very rarely be, "Stand up for your rights;" "Give him a piece of your mind," etc. On the contrary, they will be peacemakers, and assist the younger women with such advice as will help to make home happy by obedience to the directions of the divine Word. Instead of helping to cultivate in the younger women the spirit of selfishness, which inheres naturally in every human being, through the fall, they will assist them, by both word and example, to cultivate the opposite spirit, the spirit of love—"to love their husbands and to love their children."

If love were thus inculcated as the first law of every home, the chief of the Christian graces to be developed and practiced, it would indeed make a wide distinction between Christian homes and others; and thus, perhaps, better than in almost any other manner, the Christian mother can preach the glorious gospel of salvation, and illustrate in her own life and home its power to deliver from the bondage of sin and selfishness, even in this mortal state.

They will learn from them also to be discreet, or soberminded—not too emotional;—to do some sober thinking along sober lines, and thus to cultivate both heart and head, and to increase their own joys in the Lord as well as to prepare themselves the better for their family duties and privileges. Chastity, modesty, purity, should also be learned—an instruction deep and powerful in its influence for good; not only to the younger women themselves, but also in their families. They should learn to be "keepers at home," or "workers at home," as the Revised Version renders it, appreciating the

fact that the duties of a wife and mother are chiefly home duties; that the home is her workshop and her pulpit, where her influence should be greatest and most valuable.

They should also learn to be "obedient to their own husbands," or, as the *Diaglott* renders this, "*submissive*"—not attempting to usurp the place of the husband in the home, not keeping up a continual strife and battle about life's affairs, so that the husband will have one battle of life to win their daily bread and another battle while they eat it. By "obedience" and "submission" we do not understand the Apostle to mean *blind* obedience or *dumb* submission, nor in any sense of the word that the wife shall not enjoy fully all proper liberties and privileges; but that while enjoying these she shall use them with propriety, so as to make life a blessing and not a burden to her husband, with whom lie chiefly the responsibilities of the home, according to both divine and human law.

As a Christian wife she should have a judgment respecting the Lord's will, as presented in the Lord's Word, respecting the affairs of the home, and all the interests of the family, and these views she should express, in love and moderation, and kindly, however emphatically; but having expressed her judgment respecting the Lord's will in the matter and the reasons therefor, she should be "submissive" to the decision of the husband (in all matters not involving her conscience); because, according to divine arrangement, the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the church—the final arbiter respecting family affairs.

Should the Christian wife at times find that the pursuance of this Scriptural course had brought her disadvantages or were about to work ill to the general interests of the family, let her protest kindly, and point out to her husband, without "harping," what she foresees to be the results, and urge a change; pointing out (especially if the husband be not a Christian) that the responsibilities of the transaction lie wholly in his hands; and let her then console herself with the thought that she, at least, is following the divine direction, and that the ultimate result is sure to be a *spiritual* blessing, in harmony with the Lord's promise that all things shall work together for good to them that love him—and who demonstrate their love by obedience. Let her take the matter to the Lord in prayer and "bear a song away." As the Apostle points out, this course is the one least likely to bring reproaches upon the cause we love and to which we have consecrated even life itself.

To the Young Men of the church the Apostle sends an exhortation that they be sober-minded—not rash, thoughtless, conceited—that they exercise self control. And then, in view of the fact that Titus himself was a young man, he exhorts that he shall be a pattern to all the young men of the church, and thus incidentally he exhorts all of the young men of the church to note carefully and to be exercised by the qualities and considerations then urged upon Titus.

Upon Titus the Apostle urges that he shall be a model man, a pattern of good works and soundness of doctrine; not permitting his teachings (doctrine) to be corrupted either with vain imaginations of his own or those of other people. He urges upon him, and thus incidentally upon all young men also gravity, the opposite of frivolity, levity: as Christians we have something to occupy our minds that the world has not; and the greatness and grandeur of their hopes and ambitions based upon the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word, should give to their lives and general conduct a weight which, like a good cargo in a vessel, would keep them from being top-heavy and prepare them to outride the storms and difficulties of life through which they must pass to reach the desired haven.

Sound speech, with which no fault could be found, is another of the qualities that Titus and all of the Lord's people, especially the young men, are to strive for. Not merely sound speech in the sense of accurate and grammatical expression, but sound speech especially, in the sense of having their conversation and the influence which one exerts through conversation, of a truly helpful, strengthening kind—to mind and heart and character. Alas, how much of the conversation of even Christian young men is anything but sound anything but helpful to themselves and their companions. Young men in Christ are to be copies of God's dear Son, so that by their common conversation as well as by their general demeanor they shall continually preach Christ and properly represent before the world his noble characteristics,—truth, righteousness, purity, gentleness, goodness, love. Sound speech cannot be condemned by anybody, friend or foe, heathen or Christian, saint or sinner; and, as the Apostle suggests, such a course will be a constant reproof to those enemies who must always be expected; in the face of such noble living they of the contrary part must surely be put to shame eventually.—Jas. 3:13

To Servants the Apostle sends a message also; and it was a very different message from what some of God's dear children, less wise than the Apostle in their understanding of the divine plan, would have given. Many of God's people of today, instead of being peacemakers are peace-disturbers, because of a failure to see properly the principles which underlie the Gospel, and their proper application in the present time. They exhort servants to "strike," to "stand up for their rights," to see that they are not "tramped upon," to "demand justice," and see that they get it. The Apostle, on the contrary, understanding God's plan, knew not to expect full justice, not to expect human rights or any others to have great consideration in the present time, because we are still in what he designates "this present evil world [dispensation];" because "the prince of this world [dispensation]" is Satan and because his kingdom of the present time is based upon neither love nor righteousness, but upon selfishness.—Gal. 1:4, John 14:30.

The Apostle knew not to expect the wrongs to be righted and justice to be dispensed under Satan's administration, and hence in all of his teachings he points the believers to the coming time when the Lord, the righteous King, shall take possession of earth's governments, and fulfil that petition of our prayer, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Then justice may be expected, because justice is done in heaven; then all rights will be respected, as all rights are respected in heaven; but before that glorious condition shall obtain Immanuel's kingdom must be established and Satan, the prince of this world, must be bound, that he should deceive the nations no more, and that his rule of unrighteousness and selfishness shall be set aside, supplanted by the laws of him who shall lay justice to the line and righteousness to the plummet.—Rev. 20:1-3; Dan. 2:44, Isa. 28:17.

The Apostle's exhortation to servants is in harmony with this, that they be obedient to their masters, and seek to please them *well*. They were not to be shiftless, careless, indifferent as to the prosperity of their masters' interests and the care of their masters' goods. They were to take as much interest in those things as though they were their own;—as the Apostle elsewhere expresses it, they were to do their work as though they were doing it to the Lord himself, faithfully, well (1 Cor. 10:31) Such service rendered to an earthly master "as unto the Lord," and because of a desire to please the Lord, and because of the indwelling of his truth, and its spirit, will undoubtedly be accepted of the Lord as though it were some service done directly in the interest of his cause, should the conditions of the servant hinder him from doing any work more particularly in the Lord's service and the service of the truth.

Not only were servants to endeavor to please their masters and to please them well, but this *in all things*—in the little things as well as in the great affairs; and thus Christian servants would be recognized, wherever they might be, as different, distinct from others, too many of whom are "eye servants," faithful merely under the eye of their employer. Such Christian servants will come to be recognized as jewels even by those who have no sympathy with their religious convictions, and possibly would constitute the most weighty sermons these could deliver. They might obey their masters and yet continually protest and complain; hence the Apostle adds a word on this point, saying, "Not answering again"—not gainsaying nor quarreling with the master over his methods and ways and work; not complaining of sharing the common lot of other servants, whatever that might be; preferably, indeed, letting others complain, and holding their peace, rather than stirring up strife,—and rather than have the cause they love and seek to serve ill thought of.

Not purloining—secretly appropriating to themselves the master's goods, etc., contrary to his known wishes. And it might be not inappropriate here for us to remember that if the master should desire the servant to engage in some work that would be dishonest, morally wrong, this would be a proper ground upon which the servant should object and protest. His conscience must be preserved in every matter that properly belongs to his conscience; but he may not busybody himself with the master's affairs in matters which belong to the master's conscience, and with which the servant has nothing to do. By his own strict integrity even in the smallest things he shall do his preaching and exercise his influence upon his master, "showing all fidelity," faithfulness to his master's interests.

The effect of all knowledge is to render the intelligent restive under restraints, and as Christian knowledge is the highest form of knowledge, it more than any other tends to

restlessness. It inculcates the thought that however widely different the conditions between the king and the peasant as respects men and earthly things, they really are on a par as respects morals,—on the same level from the standpoint of divine justice. This thought once received into the humblest mind destroys very much of the veneration which otherwise might be felt toward those in earthly authority. It is an uplifting thought to the poor, that before the great King of all the earth they stand on the same footing with the richest, the most learned and the most powerful of earth;—that whether rich or poor "A man is a man for all that." It causes them to realize that a man has a man's rights, and that these are more than animal rights, that they include liberty of mind and conscience and certain liberties of conduct.

It is this very enlightenment which Christianity has brought to the world which is about to cause it the great convulsion and revolution which shall overthrow all present institutions in anarchy. The Christian servant is to be more than merely an enlightened man: he is a man *consecrated to God* as well; one who has surrendered his *"rights"* to the will of God, and who, having placed himself in the Lord's hands to be taught of God, and to be fitted and prepared for the heavenly kingdom, is full of faith that the Lord is both able and willing to keep the trust, to safeguard his interests, and to permit nothing to come upon him that shall not be overruled for his spiritual development and welfare.

The true Christian servant (and all Christians must be servants if like their Master—Phil. 2:7) thus consecrated, realizes that under divine providence he is not to expect his rights in the present time, nor to strive for them; but that, on the contrary, he sacrifices them to the will of God—to the doing of the Lord's will so far as he may have opportunity, and to the having of the Lord's will done in him according to the Lord's wisdom and providence. If oppressed and dealt with unjustly he will look to the Lord for deliverance, and whatever way it shall come will accept it as of divine arrangement; and whatever God does not provide in the way of deliverance along reasonable and just lines he will accept as the rulings of his providence, and render to the Lord thanks for his watch-care and seek to learn the lessons of patience and experience and long-suffering, which these trials may inculcate; recognizing in such a case that these trials, from whomsoever they come, are permitted of the Lord if not ordered by him, and intended for his welfare and spiritual development.

Such Christian servants, and such Christians in any walk of life, are the only ones who know what contentment really is. Others are striving for the attainment of rights and for the correction of wrongs, and are only cultivating more and more the spirit of selfishness in their own hearts, and generally causing themselves the more trouble and discontent. Only the Christian can say,

"Content, whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis God's hand that leadeth me,"

and he can only take this position by the exercise of a living faith, and can only exercise such a living faith in life's affairs after he has made a consecration of himself to the Lord, and can only make such a consecration of himself after he has come to some knowledge of the divine character and plan. Such servants, the Apostle assures us, adorn the doctrine of God our Savior. They show that it is not a doctrine of strife, but of peace and of good-will toward men, not a doctrine merely of personal rights and of selfish strife for their attainment, but a doctrine of love, joy and peace in the holy Spirit.

WHY THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD LIVE SEPARATE FROM THE WORLD

After recounting to us as above the proper course for the various classes in the Church, the Apostle proceeds to give the logical reason for the above advice, saying: "For [because] the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men."—Revised Version.

When did God's grace appear thus? We answer, Not until the Gospel began to be preached after our Redeemer's death and resurrection. For four thousand years the grace of God did not appear, was not manifest in any sense of the word. The Law Covenant was to the Jew only, and it was not of grace but the reverse—of law and of justice. At very most this "grace of God" was prophesied of, that it would appear later, and that blessings would follow upon all the families of the earth. It has not yet appeared to all men, but more properly this would be rendered *"for* all men," since God's grace is intended to apply to every man—as widely as did the curse apply.

In the present time the majority of mankind do not see the grace of God,—it does not *appear* to them. More than four-fifths of the human family are totally blind to this grace, in heathen darkness, today, and of the one-fifth who have seen something of this grace divine, the vast majority have seen it so obscurely, so dimly, as not to be able to discern its beauties or appreciate its value. Blessed are our eyes if they have seen. In the Apostle's day, and still in our day, this grace of God has appeared *"to* all men," in the sense that it is no longer in any sense of the word confined *to* the Jew, but is now open *to* Jew and *to* Gentile alike, the middle wall of partition having been broken down, as the Apostle explains.

In what does this grace of God consist? We answer with Apostle, It is God's *favor* that has been announced and manifested as the basis of reconciliation—not man's righteousness. God tells us through his Word that he himself has provided the great sacrifice for sins, demanded by his own law, that Jesus has met the penalty in full on our behalf; and that as a result we may be reconciled to God now, and he can justly and without violence to his laws receive us whom he had previously condemned to death. And this receiving of us signifies a restoration of his favor; and the restoration of his favor, if rightly received by us, will, under his providence, bring us to such conditions as will effect our salvation, our full delivery from sin and death, and imperfection, into the full life and perfection and liberty of the sons of God.

This applies to the church being elected from the world during this Gospel age, and the same will apply to the world of mankind in general as they shall be blessed of God through the elect church in the Millennial age. God's grace in the present time is manifested in connection with the "high calling" to the divine nature and the life immortal connected therewith. His grace in the Millennial age will be manifested in connection with the "restitution" blessings which will be offered to all mankind, and the earthly life-everlasting which will be granted to all whose who then come into harmony with the terms of that grace.

What has the grace of God to do with us? And why should it lead to such a revolution in our conduct and character as the Apostle has just intimated? Because, says the Apostle, this grace of God, by which we are called to salvation, *teaches* us something: it teaches us that the way of reconciliation back to God's favor is a way of self-denial,—denying everything that is ungodliness, everything that is contrary to our highest conception of the divine character and will; the denying also of every worldly love or desire or ambition—ambition for worldly influence, for the riches of this world; and that instead of aiming and striving for these things, we who desire the salvation which God promises are to live to the contrary of these, "soberly, righteously, godly [God-like], in this present world"—not expecting worldly honors and advantages under the reign of "the prince of this world" who not only had no interest in our Master, but likewise no friendly interest in any who follow in his footsteps.

But if we are thus to live self denyingly in this world (age) that we may attain to the grace of God in the next world (age)—"the world to come"—what are we to have before our minds in the nature of a prospect or hope toward which we are to look with longing and interest and comfort of heart? Ah! the Apostle tells us what. He holds up before us the grand consideration toward which all of our ambitions are to turn, in which all of our hopes are to centre, and in which our hearts are to find their treasure, outweighing and outvaluing every earthly consideration. He thus describes this hope,—

LOOKING FOR THAT BLESSED HOPE AND THE APPEARING OF THE GLORY OF OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOR

This is to be the centre of our expectations. We are not to hope for blessing this side of the manifestation of God's kingdom. We are to note that this kingdom must come before God's will can be done on earth as it is done in heaven. We are to know that this kingdom must bind Satan and overthrow his institutions, based upon selfishness, before it can supplant these with new institutions of justice and truth based upon the grand principle of love. Whoever, therefore, has been blessed with the grace of God, and has had the eyes of his understanding opened by the Word of truth, and its spirit, finds its teachings to be that these blessings of salvation are to be "brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:13), and that our chief object in the present life is to fight a good fight against self and against sin, and in defence of righteousness and in the assistance of the household of faith: and not to fight for earthly rights nor to strive for earthly honors and riches,—the warfare and strife in which the whole world, except ourselves, is almost exclusively engaged. If the Lord's saints possess talents or influence or wealth, these are not their treasures, but merely their servants, and they are not the

possessors of these, but merely the stewards, whose privilege it is to use them as best they may know how, in the Master's service, and to the forwarding of the interests of righteousness in the preparation of themselves and others for his appearing and kingdom.

The Apostle speaks of our Lord Jesus as "our great God and Savior," and this is in full accord with the general teachings of the Scriptures. Our Lord Jesus is a mighty one, a great one amongst the mighty ones, and as our Lord himself declares, all should "honor the Son even as they honor the Father."—John 1:1; 5:22.

The Apostle presents in another consideration why we should be exercised by this blessed hope of the Lord's second coming and our gathering together to him as his elect church. It is not merely that we should think of life everlasting and glory in which we might share; but that we should think also that this One coming in glory, and to whom we hope to be joined everlastingly, as members of the bride, to the Bridegroom,—is no other than he who gave himself for us, who sacrificed his own life in our redemption. We are to remember, too, that he not only redeemed us from the penalty of sin, death, but that the redemption which he purposes and provides is more than a redemption from iniquity, from sin. We are to remember also that this purging away of sin and the instruction and cleansing which the Word of truth is to do for us, as the Apostle has foregoing set forth, is to the intent that by these means the Lord may "purify unto himself a peculiar people"—a people different from others, possessed of a special love for that which is just, that which is pure, that which is noble, that which is good; and who, despite the imperfections of their mortal bodies, are striving to cultivate these graces more and more in their hearts, and to keep their bodies in subjection. Moreover, says the Apostle, these peculiar people will be "zealous of good works," earnestly desirous and striving to do good unto all men as they have opportunity, physically, mentally, morally,—and especially to do good to the household of faith.

The Apostle's exhortation, in conclusion, is that Titus shall speak and exhort the church along these lines which he has laid down, reproving them, whenever necessary (in love and gentleness, and yet with full authority, not doubting as to the meaning of the divine instruction). He was to let no man despise him, in the sense that he was to declare these principles of righteousness governing the Lord's people in a plain, positive and authoritative manner. He was to speak with authority and not as with uncertainty and questioning. And so let us speak, each and all, to ourselves and to others, setting forth the principles of this salvation which has appeared to us, with no uncertain sound, that thus we may minister grace to the hearers and glorify our Father in heaven and our Redeemer and Deliverer.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

IS NATURE CRUEL?

This question has already been answered by some eminent authorities in the affirmative, and the belief that such an answer is the correct one is widespread. Sir Samuel Baker declares that nature "is a system of terrorism from the beginning to the end," and John Stuart Mill asserts that if there are marks of design in creation, "one of the things most evidently designed is that a large proportion of all animals should pass their existence in tormenting and devouring other animals." If we assume nature to be the work of a Being of infinite power, he concludes that "the most atrocious enormities of the worst men will be more than justified by the apparent intention of Providence that throughout all animated nature the strong should prey on the weak." These radical assertions are controverted by J. C. Hirst, of Liverpool, England, in a book whose title is the same as the head of this article (London, 1900). After examining the experiences of hunters of big game, he concludes in the first place that Sir Samuel Baker's dictum is untrue. We quote from a review in *Our Animated Friends* (October) the following abstract of his argument:—

"Where there is *terrorism* there must be *terror*, and terror is one of the most horrible of sufferings. Is it true, then, that the animals most exposed to the attacks of the carnivora suffer greatly from terror? We believe that it is almost entirely untrue. Terror in human beings is largely due to the imagination. . . . . Have we any reason to believe that the lower animals have a similar terror of imagination? We have good reason to believe the contrary. Mr. J. D. Inverarity tells the following incident. A poor donkey was 'tied-out'; that is, as a bait for a lion. The lion approached, but the hunter, looking through his peephole, saw the donkey standing unharmed, while the lion went on growling. It was afterward discovered that the lion had actually tried to throw the donkey over with his paw and had failed, altho it had scratched the donkey on the inner side of the leg. But 'within a few minutes of the donkey being attacked, it was calmly eating which showed its nerves were not affected.'

"Mr. Wallace maintains that 'the constant effort to escape enemies, the ever-recurring struggle against the forces of nature,' are 'the very means by which much of the beauty and harmony *and enjoyment* of nature are produced.' To what else is it that the fleetness of the horse and of the many species of deer and antelopes is due? To what else, indeed, but the perpetual stimulus to exert their utmost speed, which is caused by the fear of enemies? But is not this *fear* the very *terror* which Sir Samuel Baker affirms? By no means. Mr. Francis Galton not only agrees with Mr. Wallace, but maintains that the peril in which they live is a source of pleasure. . . . .

"Prince Kropotkin points out the enormous exaggeration of the 'tooth and claw' view of nature. The Prince refers to the families of elephants, rhinoceroses, and the numberless societies of monkeys to be found in the lower latitudes of Asia and Africa; the numberless herds of reindeer in the far North, the herds of musk-oxen and the innumerable bands of polar foxes still farther north; the flocks of seals and morses and sociable cetaceans which inhabit the ocean; the herds of wild horses, donkeys, camels and sheep which range the steppes of Central Asia. He says:

"'How trifling, in comparison with them, are the numbers of carnivora; And how false, therefore, is the view of those who speak of the animal world as if nothing were to be seen in it but lions and hyenas plunging their bleeding teeth into the flesh of the victims! On might as well imagine that the whole of human life is nothing but a succession of Tel-el Kebir and Geok Tepe massacres.'

"Unless, then, death is an inexcusable incident in animal life, it would seem that the *terror* of death to be inflicted by the carnivora is really a figment of the imagination; and one might reasonably adopt the language of Mr. Wallace, that 'the supposed torments and miseries of animals have little real existence, but are the reflection of the imagined sensations of cultivated men and women in similar circumstances, and that *the amount of actual suffering caused by the struggle for existence among animals is altogether insignificant.*'"

Mr. Hirst does not, of course, deny that there is a good deal of eating and being eaten in the animal kingdom. This however, he says, is not cruelty, and he devotes much space to showing that in their attacks wild creatures cause their victims little pain, altho he does not go so far as to say that the mangled ones enjoy it, as Wallace maintained of the fleeing antelope. The familiar case of Dr. Livingstone, on whom a lion's jaw crunching through his shoulder acted as an anesthetic, is of course cited, and supported by much evidence along the same line. The reviewer regards the case as having been made out, and concludes as follows:

"So then, as the result of this most interesting investigation, we may reasonably come to the conclusion that nature is by no means the system of terrorism that Sir Samuel Baker makes it out to be; that it does not justify the pessimistic and almost atheistic conclusions of Mr. J. S. Mill, and that it is not the horrible commingling of devourers and devoured that a superexcited imagination is predisposed to paint it. On the contrary, we may believe that the various carnivorous enemies of the gentler races of animals are much more serviceable in training them to the finest exercise of skill and fleetness than they are destructive of their numbers or oppressively noxious to their happiness of animal life, and that in a world in which death is necessary, death by the assault of carnivorous enemies is no more dreadful but is, in fact, much less painful, than many other methods by which life may be extinguished."—*Literary Digest.*

The above is in full accord with our presentation on the subject in our issue of June 1, page 165; which please note again.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN POLITICS

"At the annual meeting of the Catholic Young Men's National Union in Brooklyn, September 26, a resolution was adopted to form a great federation of all the societies of the Roman Catholic church in the United States for political purposes. Last spring Bishop McFaul of Trenton, N. J., told the Ancient Order of Hibernians that the Roman Catholics of America were fools not to organize into one solid mass and make their power felt in the politics of this country; there were 2,000,000 Roman Catholic voters, and if they were united for political action they could make this country a Roman Catholic nation.

"This federation has now been formed by the following societies: The Knights of Columbus, the Knights of St. John, the Catholic Benevolent Legion, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Irish Catholic Benevolent Union, the Irish-American Societies, the German-American Societies, the Catholic Knights of America, the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America; and, as the Brooklyn *Eagle* of Sept. 26, 1900 (from which we quote), says: 'Besides these organizations there are scores of others of less prominence.'

"The federation is formed, says the *Eagle*, 'for the avowed purpose of influencing legislation and securing what the Catholics claim are their rights.'

"The convention, which met in the Park Theater, Brooklyn, was the largest gathering in the history of the Young Men's National Union, and it was addressed by leading priests and laymen from all parts of the country. Father Lavelle, rector of St. Patrick's Cathedral in this city, Monsignor Doane of Newark, N. J., Sheriff Buttling of Brooklyn, Congressman Fitzgerald, of Boston, and Father Wall of Holy Rosary church, this city, made stirring addresses. The latter was elected president of the union.

" 'The convention,' continues the *Eagle*, which is one of the foremost metropolitan daily journals, 'unanimously approved the plan of federation and appointed committees to carry it into effect. By this means tens of thousands of men of the Catholic faith will be brought under one national head, and this stalwart body of men will have a strong influence on national legislation.' The *New York Herald* and other papers had similar reports. This is the most important step ever taken by the Roman Catholics in the United States. They now have New York City in their possession, and many of the other large cities of our republic are under their control: all, like Tammany Hall, 'worked for all their worth,' in the interests of the Roman Catholic church, and incidentally for the benefit of the workers. 'In politics I work for my own pocket all the time,' said Richard Croker, the 'Boss' of Tammany. He might have added that a large share of the municipal plunder goes to Roman Catholic institutions.

"Having possession of the cities, the Romanists now reach out to gain control in national affairs. 'We must make America Catholic,' said Archbishop Ireland at the hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in the United States, which was held in Baltimore, Nov. 10, 1889. 'We must make America Catholic. As we love our church, it suffices to mention the work and our cry shall be, God wills it, and our hearts shall leap towards it with Crusader enthusiasm.' He was wildly applauded by the eighty bishops, one thousand priests and five thousand laymen present.

" 'Why should we fear or hesitate?' he continued, with glowing fervor and proud boasting. 'We number ten millions—a powerful army if the forces be well marshaled and their latent strength be brought into action. Catholics in America are loyal to their church and devoted to her leaders. Their labors and their victories in the first century of their history show what they are capable of in the coming century, when they are conscious of their power and are under complete hierarchical organization.'

"And so, even before the century has begun, they are preparing by a complete organization to conquer this country and turn it over to the pope! What have the Protestants of America to say to this? says *The Converted Catholic* of New York."

SOCIALISM GROWING IN GERMANY

The election of a member of the Reichstag for Brandenburg has caused considerable political excitement throughout Germany, as it has resulted in a signal victory for the Socialist candidate, Herr Peus, by a majority of 648 votes. This constituency has had a varied history, having returned within the past twenty years Conservatives, Radicals and National Liberals; but throughout all its fluctuations one fact was prominent, namely, the growth of Socialism there.

The number of Socialist members now in the Reichstag is fifty-eight; in 1885 there were only twenty-three; in 1890 the number rose to thirty-five. At the general election of 1893 there were forty-four Socialists returned. At the last general election in 1898 the number was fifty-six. Subsequent by-elections have added two members.

If we turn to the number of recorded votes we find that in 1885 over half a million Socialist votes were given; in 1887 three-quarters of a million; in 1890 nearly one million and a half; in 1893 one million and three-quarters; and at the last general elections two and a quarter millions. The calculation which places the strength of the Socialist party at the next election at three million votes, and 100 seats in the Reichstag out of a total of 397 seats, would not appear excessive.—London *Daily Chronicle*, Oct. 29.

MAKE SURE OF WINNING IN GOD'S ELECTION

[Reprinted in issue of July 1, 1905, which please see.]

"SORROWFUL, FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS"

MATT. 19:16-26.—DEC. 2.

"Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God!"—Mark 10.24.

Our lesson relates to what for centuries has been called 'The Great Refusal." The rich young ruler, whose name is not given, altho possessed of an abundance of the things of this life longed for an assurance of everlasting life. As a Jew he knew the Law; he understood that God had made with this nation, and with no other, through Moses the mediator, a covenant, under which everlasting life might be attained. He perceived, however, that even the best men of his nation had failed to gain eternal life under this covenant—that all had died. He had heard of Jesus, and that "never man spake like this man," and he knew that in many respects his teachings were of a very positive character, and that his manner and instruction were not like those of the scribes and Pharisees, uncertain and equivocal;—that he taught as one having authority, and knowing what he taught to be true. He hesitated to go to this Teacher, but finally seeing him leaving a house in his own neighborhood, he ran out hastily and point-blank put the question: "Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal [everlasting] life?"

Instead of answering his question directly our Lord inquired why he thus addressed him as "good." Jesus' words do not imply, as some have surmised, a denial of being good. Rather, he would impress upon the young ruler the import of his own language, that when he got his answer he might appreciate it the more. Our Lord's words might be paraphrased thus: Are you addressing me as Good Master from the heart, or only as a complimentary salutation? If you really believe me to be good, you must believe in me as a teacher sent of God—the All-Good. More than this, you must believe my testimony, that I proceeded forth and came from God, that I am the Son of God. If my testimony is untrue in any particular I am not good at all, but a falsifier, a hypocrite, a blasphemer. If, then, you call me Good Master from the heart, and believe that I am the "sent of God," the Messiah, you will be the better prepared to receive my reply as the divine answer to that question.

Without waiting to require that the young man should commit himself definitely on the point involved; but content with merely raising the issue in his mind, our Lord proceeded to answer the question.

We are not to understand our Lord's answer to this young Jew, at a time when the Law Covenant was still in force, to be the same that he would give, or that we should give in his name, today, in reply to a similar inquiry. The young man was living under a covenant of works, of which the Apostle declares, quoting from the Law itself, "He that *doeth* these things shall *live* by them." (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5) The New Covenant had not yet been sealed with our Lord's

precious blood, and hence it was not operative toward this young ruler or anybody else at this time. Our Lord could not properly direct the young man's attention to any other procedure than the keeping of the conditions of the Law Covenant which was still in force. Anyway, this was what the young man inquired: "What good thing must I *do* that I may have everlasting life?" It was for this reason that our Lord did not say, as we should say today in answer to such a question: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ—believe that he died for your sins, and arose for your justification, and accepting him as your Saviour, as the Mediator of the New Covenant, present your life in full consecration of all its talents, powers and opportunities to the Lord's service.

Our Lord did point out to the young man the only way to life everlasting then open—the keeping of the Law. He well knew that the young man could not keep this Law perfectly, and hence could not obtain everlasting life through it; but he would bring the matter before his attention in the most favorable form to be comprehended—without preaching the New Covenant or any other feature of the divine plan not yet due to be announced. Hence the form of his reply.

The law was divided into two parts or tables, the first relating to Jehovah and the second to the neighbor. Our Lord ignored the first of these, realizing that the young man, so far from desiring to make or worship idols or another god, was seeking to know and to do the will of the true God. Our Lord would bring the answer down to the simplest possible proposition, and hence referred merely to the commandments respecting duty toward his fellow-creatures, and got the response that so far as the young man had discerned the matter he had kept the law; but altho he kept its outward form he realized that something was still lacking. He had no evidence that he had received any special blessing of eternal life, and wished to know of the Master what hindered, what he lacked of being a perfect man, keeping the law and meriting the reward of that law, life everlasting. No wonder Jesus, looking upon him, loved him: everybody who loves righteousness loves those who are righteous, or who are striving to the best of their ability to come up to the mark of righteousness,—perfection.

THE GRACE OF ALL GRACES

Then Jesus told him plainly, "One thing thou lackest." You have been endeavoring to keep God's law, and have done well, so far as the outward is concerned; but the spirit of the law you have not apprehended at all—the spirit of the law is *love*. "The whole law is comprehended briefly in one word." "Love is the fulfilling of the law." (Rom. 13:9, 10) You have been getting the outside, or shell of the divine command, but have entirely overlooked the precious thing in it, the kernel, the essence,—love to God supremely, and love toward your fellowman as toward yourself. Let me prove this to you, by suggesting that you demonstrate your love for your neighbors by disposing of your property for the assistance of poorer ones. Then consecrate your life in loving devotion to God's service, and come with me as my disciple, taking up the cross of self-denial thus involved.

The test was a crucial one, and manifested clearly the distinction between the letter and the spirit of the law. The cross was too heavy for the rich young ruler. He had gotten the answer to his question, but oh! it was so different from what he had anticipated. He had felt comparatively well satisfied with himself, altho realizing that something must still be lacking. He had rather expected Messiah's commendation, and perhaps some further advice, but nothing so radical. It was too much for him; he went away exceedingly sorrowful, says Luke; his countenance fell, says Mark; it was a sore disappointment. For the time being he could not think of accepting the Master's prescription, the dose was too bitter, and he must at least think the matter over well.

Whatever course this young ruler may have subsequently taken we are not informed; but of one thing we may be sure; he had learned a great lesson respecting the scope and significance of the law. He had ascertained the impossibility of his attaining eternal life under the Law Covenant.

It will be seen that we totally disagree with those who claim that the condition of this young man and our Lord's words to him apply to all young men or to those possessing wealth—tho the spirit of the matter is applicable to all, under the different conditions of the New Covenant. The New Covenant says to us, rich and poor, "Christ died for us, according to the Scriptures." He not only met the requirements of the law, and fulfilled that Covenant and annulled it, but additionally he sealed and ratified the *New Covenant under which he, its Mediator, can apply to all who come under its provisions through faith whatever share of his merit is necessary to make good the weaknesses and imperfections of our flesh to which our hearts, our minds, do not assent. Accordingly, even if when some come to Jesus to inquire the way of eternal life, they should be unable to say, as did this young ruler, "All these things have I done from my youth up."—if it should be even necessary for such to confess with shame, "All these commandments have I violated," nevertheless, the provisions of the New Covenant are such that even the vilest sinner who has turned from sin and who at heart desires henceforth to walk in the way of righteousness, and who, repenting of the sins of the past, gladly makes such restitution as is within his power—all such are accepted in the Beloved One, and reckoned as justified freely from all things, from which the Law could not justify them.

*See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants

Then such are invited, as was the young ruler to come, take up their cross, and follow Jesus—come, prove, demonstrate, their love for righteousness, their devotion to God and every feature of his will; come, crucify self and selfishness, and receive into their hearts instead the Spirit of God, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of love. Not merely to love their neighbors in word, but in deed and in truth, so that so far from wishing to steal from them, or to kill them, or bear false witness against them, or to do any other evil toward them, their hearts' desire would be the reverse of these, to do them good, to bless them. God is love; the spirit of his law is love, and the spirit of his faithful Son, Jesus, is love. Love is the holy Spirit, of which the Apostle declares, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ [love, *in some measure*] he is none of his." Under the New Covenant, if the heart be full of love, it is acceptable with God even tho the heart may not be able at all times to control the flesh in respect to every thought and word and act, and to show forth through it this holy spirit of love which rules paramount in the heart.

The New Covenant is God's agreement, under which he accepts, through Christ, the intentions of our hearts as tho the same were actually and fully demonstrated in our lives; and certainly our hearts' desires will find expression through the flesh in large measure, tho not always perfectly. Thus our hearts may to some extent be read by our fellowmen, tho not perfectly, while to our heavenly Father they are an open book. Moreover, the love which enters and fills our hearts expands them and crowds out more and more of the natural and selfish propensities, crossing this natural, or earthly will with the heavenly one, the new mind. Thus gradually making progress in the new way, the Lord's saints are growing in knowledge and in grace, and more and more are having the love of God *shed abroad* in their hearts.

"TRUST NOT IN UNCERTAIN RICHES"

Our Lord took advantage of this episode to impart a lesson to his disciples, showing them the danger of riches—any kind of riches, honor of men, political influence, many and large talents or abilities, social standing, fine education and material wealth—for one may be rich in any of these senses. "It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Revised Version.) Our Lord does not here undertake to explain why there would be greater difficulties for those possessing riches to enter into his kingdom, but from other scriptures we learn the reasons, and why it is that the heirs of the kingdom will be chiefly found amongst the poorer classes. "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the mighty." (1 Cor. 1:26, 27; Jas. 2:5) The rich are "called," *in one sense of the word, but not in another*; they are equally invited but they are much less likely (than others who are poorer) to accept the Lord's invitation and to present themselves according to the *terms* of the kingdom call. In this sense of the word "called" only those who accept the call are meant; and they then divide themselves into two classes —those who make their calling and election sure, and obtain the kingdom, obtain a part in the first resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, obtain a place with Messiah in his throne, to share with him in his Millennial kingdom; and others who do not make their calling and election *sure*, either by becoming reprobates, and subjects of the second death, or by a failure to manifest a sufficiency of zeal in the race for the prize, and on this account being remanded to the class known as the "great company," who must come through great tribulation, washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

It is well that we note carefully what are the hindrances of these "rich," preventing them from having so favorable an opportunity as their (in earthly respects) less favored breth-

ren. (1) The possession of earthly good things, "riches," is less favorable to the development of faith, without which it is impossible to be pleasing to God. (2) These earthly advantages are more likely to develop pride, a serious barrier to every grace and an impossible barrier as respects the kingdom, which can be attained only through humility. (3) Riches of any kind bring with them friends and associates of the earth, whose hearts being generally out of sympathy with the Lord and the kingdom will constitute them adversaries to the new mind, from whose influence it will be the more difficult to break completely away. (4) And summing up all of the foregoing, those possessed of such earthly riches have proportionately more to sacrifice than those who are poorer in these respects; and the greater the things sacrificed the greater the difficulty in performing the sacrifice.

However, on the other hand, it may be said that whenever one who is rich in this world's goods (talents, etc.) does present himself a living sacrifice to the Lord and his service it witnesses to a deeper heart-loyalty than if he were poorer. It implies a greater sacrifice, and it implies also the exercise of greater opportunities in the Lord's service. The servant who has five talents and who uses them faithfully, and doubles them, accomplishes a greater work than the servant who, having one talent, uses it faithfully and doubles it, and our Lord's understanding of this matter is shown in the fact that according to the parable the one will have granted to him authority over ten cities, and the other authority over two, altho both will be commended—"Well done, good, faithful servant."—Matt. 25:14-30.

If we would look for illustration showing wherein the rich (in talents, etc.) have been faithful, we would find at the head of the list our Lord himself, "who was rich, but for our sakes became poor." As he was richer than all others in every sense of the word, so proportionately his sacrifice was greater than that of all others in every sense of the word, and his honor, glory and power are greater. "He is Lord of all." "Him hath God highly exalted and given a name that is above every name." Similarly the Apostle Paul was rich—if not in money and property, he was at least rich in education, in social advantages and privileges, and in life's opportunities: and we may say that since the Apostle so faithfully sacrificed all these earthly riches for the sake of the privilege of preaching the Gospel of Christ, his must have been a much larger sacrifice than that of the majority of men: and proportionately we anticipate that his reward in the kingdom will be great because he counted these earthly "riches" but "loss and dross that he might win Christ and be found in him [a member of the Anointed One]."Phil. 3:8, 9.

So then while we call attention to the fact that few will be in the kingdom who have had great opportunities, privileges, property or other "riches" of this world, we nevertheless encourage those who possess this world's goods of any kind, to consider that they thus hold within their grasp grand opportunities which rightly used will yield riches of grace, not only in the life that now is but also in the life that is to come; working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, proportionate to their sacrifices and faithfulness in their stewardship.

We cannot wonder that the disciples were astonished to learn that few of the rich would enter the kingdom, for did they not see on every hand that the rich had the more important places in the synagogues and in the offices of the Jewish system? Did they not see that comparatively few of the poor in this world's goods were rated amongst the saints? No wonder they inquired, where would the kingdom class be found, if the rich were excluded? How, then, could the salvation which God had promised should come through his kingdom ever be attained?

The time for explaining these features of the divine plan having not yet come, our Lord contented himself with merely assuring the disciples that they must leave such a question to the Father; that the truth of his statement did not imply that no kingdom could be formed, but that with God the matter was possible, and that his original promise to Abraham would be fulfilled, a kingdom class be selected, and the blessing of salvation be communicated through it. To have told them of the rejection of the Jewish nation, all except the "remnant" of believers, mainly the poor, and to have explained to them that the elect church, the elect seed of Abraham, would be completed from amongst the Gentiles, of a similarly poor class as respects this world's advantages, would have been going beyond what was then due to be explained,—beyond what the disciples would have been able to comprehend at that time; and hence our Lord, using the true wisdom from above, refrained from saying more than would be to their advantage to know—leaving such information, as he explained to them subsequently, for unfoldment to them by the Comforter—the holy spirit which would come upon them at Pentecost.—John 14:26.

ENTREATY ANSWERED,—BLIND EYES OPENED

MARK 10:46-52.—DEC. 9.

"Lord, that I might receive my sight."

While passing along a road in the vicinity of Jericho, possibly going from the old city to the newer one of the same name, a great multitude following him, our Lord passed by two blind men, sitting begging by the wayside. (Mark mentions only one, the chief subject of the lesson, but Matthew mentions a companion.) Bartimeus, one of the two, as he heard the multitude passing and learned from some of them that they accompanied Jesus, the reputed Messiah, of whom he had no doubt heard before, was struck with the fact that his opportunity for a blessing was near at hand and rapidly passing from him. He began to cry out, his voice rising above the din of the multitude, saying, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Our Lord paid no heed at first, but passed on. The multitude rebuked the blind man, so to speak, saying, "You, poor beggar, should not thus cry out and annoy and seek to take the attention of so great a one as this, whom we verily believe to be the Messiah, and whose mission is the establishment of God's kingdom; keep quiet!" But so much the more did he cry out for mercy. He longed for sight, and had faith to believe that the great Messiah might be prevailed upon to rescue him from darkness. Jesus stopped and gave the word to the multitude to bring the blind man to him. He might have gone to the blind man, or he might have lifted up his voice and spoken to the blind man, bidding him to come; but instead he chose to use instrumentalities—to give those about him an opportunity of sharing in the work of blessing. So the word was passed from one to another and the blind man was helped forward and thus greater attention was brought to the whole miracle and to the divine power which it manifested. Those who had but a moment before upbraided the blind man for his temerity in expecting a blessing from the Messiah, now gladly bore the message of hope to him, saying, "Be of good cheer! arise; he calleth thee." And he sprang up, casting away his outer robe that he might go the more quickly to Jesus for the blessing.

Everything connected with the case shows us that Bartimeus possessed a large amount of faith, and that he was very earnestly desirous of the blessing which he received. When he came to Jesus, altho the latter knew well his desire, he inquired respecting it. He would have the blind man express himself respecting his hopes and desires. He answered, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight!" The word "lord" here is "rabboni," the most reverential term of four titles used amongst the Jews at that time (rab, rabbi, rabban, rabboni). Then Jesus touched his eyes (Matt. 20:34), saying, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." Sight came immediately, and Bartimeus became one of the followers of Jesus.

The lesson itself is a very beautiful one in demonstration of the Lord's tender compassion and divine power; and from its incidents we might draw other lessons, parallels, as it were. For instance, sin brought alienation from God, and moral blindness, which prevails today in every land and on every hand. The Apostle thus pictures some of the heathen, desirous of having the light of truth, as blind men groping after things desired. He speaks of such as crying out to the Lord in prayer, and "feeling after God, if haply they might find him;" just as Bartimeus had cried out to the Lord and then went to him. And as Bartimeus cast away his outer robe that he might go to the Lord the more speedily, so the sinner should cast away everything found to be a hindrance—he should make acknowledgment and repentance of sins, and he should make restitution also as far as possible, and thus approach the Lord.

And such, when their eyes are opened to see the blessings

of God bestowed upon them, should look, as Bartimeus looked, first into the face of the Saviour with gratitude and appreciation, and look unto the Father through him. Indeed, their eyes being opened by the word of truth, they will gradually come to see everything in a new light, and be able to say, "Old things [of darkness and sin] are passed away; all things are become new"—lighted by the knowledge of God; for we have been "translated out of darkness into marvelous light." It is unnecessary to add that such transformed sinners should thenceforth follow Jesus as his disciples, seeking to walk in his steps.

Another lesson might profitably be drawn from this narrative. Bartimeus was not a sinner, in the sense of being an alien, stranger, foreigner and outcast from the divine favor. He was a member of the household of faith, an Israelite, to whom belonged the promises and the covenants, etc. (Rom. 9:4); yet he was blind. And so there are today in spiritual Israel many who are not sinners, strangers, aliens from God, but members of the household of faith and heirs of the promises, who are mentally, spiritually, blind. They are blind to the goodness of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord: they do not appreciate the love of God, having been blinded thereto by false theories and traditions of men. Because of their blindness they are unable to "*comprehend* with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths and to know the love of Christ," as they should do. Perhaps some of them are accountable to some extent for their own blindness, and quite possibly others are in no measure responsible.

We notice that in the case of Bartimeus Jesus did not inquire respecting his responsibility for his condition. It was sufficient that he realized that he was blind, and that he earnestly desired from the heart to receive his sight, and that he demonstrated this by his prayers and his efforts to obtain sight. So today, to those spiritual Israelites who are blind to the beauties and harmonies of the divine character and plan, if they are willing to admit their blindness, and so anxious for the light that they will cry aloud and not be dissuaded from their good desires, they will undoubtedly get the blessing they crave, the opening of their eyes of understanding, that they may be able to understand "the deep things of God."

We see many blind people of this latter sort today. Nearly all of the nominal churches are full of them. But alas! the vast majority are unlike Bartimeus—they do not realize their condition nor hunger and thirst for the light, nor come to the Master in the humble attitude necessary to receive it. Their pitiable condition is described by the Lord himself (Rev. 3:17) under the name Laodicea. He tells why they do not receive their sight—why they cannot comprehend the lengths and breadths and depths of divine love: "Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked."

As it was not within the power of the multitude to give Bartimeus his sight, neither is it within our power to give sight to the spiritually blind. All we can do is to let the blind ones know that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by—that the great Physician is able and willing to grant them the opening of the eyes of their understanding. Those who long for sight, who love the truth, who hate darkness and error, and none others, will be attracted by the information, and lift up their voices in supplication for assistance. But, alas! when they do cry aloud for help there are sure to be some, even amongst the Lord's friends, to rebuke them for their earnestness, instead of encouraging it. However, such oppositions only serve to demonstrate the amount of faith and the measure of love for the light, and the Lord evidently intends that only those who seek for truth "as men search for silver" shall find the knowledge of God.—Prov. 2:4.

When the faith and earnestness of the seeker for light have been sufficiently demonstrated the Master will grant him the opportunities he desires. Nevertheless he will require that even in their blindness all shall manifest and exercise faith, and come to him through evil report as well as through good report, to receive the enlightenment sought. And when they obey thus they surely receive a good reward in their appreciation of the Lord's character and plan. From this new standpoint they can sing with the spirit and with the understanding also,—

> How happy and blessed the hours,
> Since Jesus I always can see;
> Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
> Have all gained new sweetness for me."

They will surely acknowledge that whatever their joys in the Lord previously they are multiplied by the opening of the eyes of their understandings. And is it surprising that such will follow the Lord? Nay, verily! How could we do otherwise than "show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light?"—1 Pet. 2:9.

ILL-GOTTEN WEALTH RESTORED

LUKE 19:1-10.—DEC. 16.

"The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Zacchaeus was a Jew and a chief publican, which signifies that he was in the employ of the Roman government as a tax-gatherer, a very lucrative office, but one greatly despised amongst the Jews, because (1) their views of patriotism led them to resent the service of their conquerors; (2) their tax-gatherers collected for a percentage of the tax, and were at the same time assessors of the amount of the tax, and charged (probably generally with good reason), with gross violations of justice—taking advantage of their position and of the necessities of their neighbors to reap large usury by advancing them money for the tax and requiring superabundant security for both tax and usury. Publicans, then, it will be seen, were a disreputable class amongst their own people, esteemed as financially immoral, and unworthy the confidence and honor of faithful Jews. Zacchaeus as a "chief" probably employed under-collectors to assist him in his contract, and for this reason was designated chief publican.

He had heard of Jesus evidently, and curiosity and possibly other nobler sentiments operated in his heart and led him to desire to see the great Teacher. Possibly indeed he had qualms of conscience respecting his business and business methods, and a longing for peace with God, which his riches could not take the place of. These nobler and better thoughts and aspirations were quickened as he found himself in the presence of the celebrated Nazarene, of whose holiness and exalted teachings he had heard. Quite probably, too, he had heard that, unlike the Pharisees, this great Teacher did not spurn publicans and sinners, but on the contrary, treated them kindly. Zacchæus sought a glimpse of the Master's face, but there being a throng in the way, and he being of small stature, could not discern him. There was a throng anyway at this season, going up to the Passover, and so notable a person as Jesus would always be an attraction.

Zacchaeus soon resolved what to do, for he was a resourceful man; he would run ahead and climb into a tree, and thus get a good view of the Master. We cannot help admiring the courage of this little rich man, ordinarily probably dignified enough in his bearing, but now his heart swelling with feelings of interest in righteousness and a desire for reconciliation with God, and ran along like a boy and climbed the tree. When Jesus and the multitude came to the place the Lord addressed Zacchæus by name, possibly by that power of knowledge which is beyond our comprehension; or possibly by reason of hearing the crowd jeer and laugh at the little rich publican in his lugubrious position.

How astonished he must have been when the Master said, "Zacchaeus, come down, for I must lodge at thy house!" So great an honor as this Zacchaeus had not dreamed of, and the multitude of Jews were likewise surprised. The latter murmured against Jesus because he, as a holy man, should have nothing whatever to do with this publican. Perhaps it was in part to give the Pharisees a lesson, as well as to provide for his own entertainment or to put himself in the way of Zacchaeus, that our Lord proposed this visit to the publican's house. In any event, nothing could have pleased the serious thinking little man more. He came down from the tree immediately, and joyfully took Jesus (and the desciples also we may presume) to his home for entertainment. Thus does the Lord look for and care for and assist those who are of a contrite heart—those who are feeling after God, and longing, as prodigals, to return to the Father's house. Had Zacchæus been of other condition of heart we may reasonably presume that our Lord would have paid no attention to him whatever.

What a surging of sentiment took place in the heart of little Zacchæus! His name in the Hebrew comes from a root signifying *pure*, and the inference is not unreasonable that

his ancestors had been noble and holy people, and that back of his love for money and dishonest practices lay good principles, which now, under favorable conditions, were asserting themselves and clamoring for a change of life,—worrying his conscience and embittering all his pleasures and causing him to long for righteousness in his own heart and life. In no other way can we account for his sudden determination to reform. Nor was he content merely to determine upon reform in his heart; he would seal the matter by a public confession. As we read, he stood forth in the presence of his own family, in the presence of Jesus and his disciples, and probably numerous friends and neighbors who had gone along, and publicly acknowledged that he had gained part of his wealth by unjust exactions, and pledged himself to restore all such wrongfully obtained money, to the extent of his ability, fourfold. More than this, realizing that there were probably many cases of small injustices which it would be impossible for him to ever correct in detail, he publicly pledged one-half of all his possessions to the poor in off-set of these.

Noble Zacchaeus! Well did his conduct show that the Master knew what he was doing when he went to lodge with this little man, so much despised by some of the Pharisees. Jesus knew that notwithstanding his wrong course of life he was much nearer to the right attitude of heart than some of the self-righteous who denounced him—altho outwardly they were living a cleaner life and a more moral one—making clean the outside of the cup while inwardly it was full of vile affections and selfishness, abominations in God's sight.

Our Lord's reply is striking: "This day is salvation come to this house; forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." While it is true that "salvation is to be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"—at his second advent—it is nevertheless true also that this salvation begins in the present life to all who are of the spiritual house of Israel, who, repenting of their sins, come into harmony with the Lord, and seek to walk according to his ways. It is a salvation of the heart, reclaiming it from sin and selfishness and meanness—filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit—2 Cor. 7:1.

This salvation means reformation and transformation; and while the Lord can read the heart and see there more than men can see respecting the change, yet, as Brother D. L. Moody suggests, the change, the conversion, the transformation of life, must have been appreciable even by the most unsympathetic of Zacchæus' neighbors when, the next morning after this event, Zacchæus' servant presented himself to the neighbor with a purse of money, and when asked what it was for replied, "My master says that he extorted from you a sum of money years ago, and now returns it fourfold." The conversion that includes recompense—and that not merely in a skimped manner but abundantly—four-fold—undoubtedly signifies a true conversion, one that is not likely soon to be forgotten or ignored.

We might find parallels to this incident, which belonged to the end of the Jewish age and to fleshly Israel, in the end of this age and to spiritual Israel. We find today some backsliders from the Lord's Covenant of Grace, as Zacchæus was a backslider from the Lord's Covenant of the Law. We may perhaps find them living in a measure of sin, in business which they admit is unjust and in violation of their consciences. We are not, therefore, to pass by them with the Gospel message, the good tidings of great joy; but if any such manifest an interest in the present truth we are to seek to assist them as our Lord and Head assisted Zacchæus. And there is an encouragement to this class in Zacchaeus' case, for tho they may feel themselves sadly short of the stature of a man in Christ, if they have in their hearts a longing desire for righteousness and to behold the Lord's face, they will find opportunity to do so, if they will but humble themselves to take the necessary steps. And sincere reformation today must be like that of Zacchæus; it must make some outward manifestation expressive of contrition and of a desire to make reparation to the extent of ability. Some one has said, and quite truly, we think:—

"No religious profession amounts to anything if it does not include a readiness to put one's property at the service of the Lord. It has been well said that 'a personal consecration' should be spelled 'a purse-and-all consecration.' And the full restitution of all that had been taken wrongfully must be made by a Christian disciple—even to the stripping of himself of all his earthly goods."

"PILGRIM" ARRANGEMENTS STILL MISUNDERSTOOD

We find that quite a number of our readers did not respond to our queries respecting "Pilgrim" visits because they thought themselves too far from Allegheny to ask or expect a visit. Others who did respond have wondered that a "Pilgrim" was not started to them at once. For these reasons we explain again, as follows:—

The Society sends forth a number of these Pilgrims—according as the Society's funds will *permit* and the interests of the flock seem to *demand*. These are sent out on long tours —three to twelve months, according to circumstances;—and sometimes reach very out-of-the-way places where we know that the interest and arrangements will justify the expense and time. We rarely give more than two days to any place unless more is specially *requested* and good reasons *given*.

We will be making up new routes for 1901 and therefore requested replies to our questions from all who desire to be remembered and visited. See TOWER Aug. 1, 1900.

CHRISTIAN HOME EMBELLISHMENTS

We have a choice assortment of Scripture and Motto Text Cards of our own importation from London. Some are of dark red and dark green color, assorted shapes and sizes, embossed with silver lettering and with hanging cords; others on light tinted cards with flowers or other illumination, etc. The mottoes are too numerous to specify but all good. The prices range from five cents to twenty cents each and these prices are considerably less than the usual.

Another drawback has been the difficulty in preparing small quantities for mail, so as to prevent their getting damaged. We believe we can best surmount all these difficulties by putting them up in $1.00 packages as follows:—

2 mottoes dark, 5c each	.10
2 " light, 5c "	.10
2 " dark, 10c "	.20
3 " " 20c "	.60
2 "To Us the Scriptures Teach"	.10
2 Text Easels, 2c each	.04
4 Text Cards	.08
Total	1.22

Postage and packing free.

We will put these up in four different ——*A, B, C, D,*—— assortments, so that persons ordering more than one package need not get duplicates except the fifth item. If you order more than one package and want variety, say so.

Importing these ourselves and saving jobbers' profits and saving time, etc., by packing them in this way, we can afford to supply these bundles for the price named, one dollar. We would not offer them were we not sure that our readers will appreciate them and thank us for bringing them to their attention. The card marked above, "To Us the Scriptures Clearly Teach," is our own get up, of rose pink color printed in maroon ink, size 11x14 inches, with silk cord hanger. On one side is the statement which appears at top of page 2 of each WATCH TOWER in good sized type. It is a statement of Bible faith which none need feel ashamed of; and which should be seen in the homes of all WATCH TOWER readers. We have gotten out a large quantity and can therefore supply them very cheaply,—at five cents each (plus five cents for tube and postage). In lots of 20 for $1.00 postage free.

I will tell the wondrous story,
How, my lost estate to save,
In his boundless love and mercy,
He the ransom freely gave.

I will praise my dear Redeemer,
His triumphant power to save,
How the victory he giveth
Over sin and death and grave.

I will sing of my Redeemer,
And my call to glory too;
He from death to life hath brought me,
Heavenly glory brought to view.

WHAT HOPE FOR THE INNUMERABLE NON-ELECT?

[Continued from our last issue, "Make Sure of Winning in God's Election."]

In our last issue we found abundant Scripture evidence that God is selecting a little flock from amongst mankind to be joint heirs with our Lord Jesus in the Millennial kingdom. That fact being proven, it cannot be questioned that all the remainder of mankind are *non-elect*. The question now is, What provision has the great Creator made for this class —numbering at least fifty thousands of millions of all the families of the earth? Is this condition hopeless or not?

According to orthodoxy it is hopeless—the theory being that all the non-elect of mankind were predestinated by God to be sufferers of eternal torment; but we find no Scripture whatever in support of such a theory. So surely as God did elect or predestinate an elect class he must equally have predestinated and foreordained that there would be a non-elect class. And to suppose that he foreordained that this non-elect class should suffer eternal torment would be to suppose God a monster, devoid of every sentiment of justice, not to mention love. And if God did not foreordain the non-elect to eternal torment, neither could he have authorized any to use eternal torment as a threat against the non-elect—neither to intimidate them nor for any other purpose. Indeed, what object could there be on God's part in endeavoring to scare the world of mankind into striving to be of the elect little flock, when he had already predestinated that only a small number comparatively could be of this elect flock? The whole matter, viewed from any such standpoint, is unreasonable.

Let us notice, on the contrary, that this eternal torment theory may properly be charged with nearly every deflection from the doctrine of the necessity for holiness of life on the part of God's people. Everyone who has read with care the Scriptures already cited which refer to the elect class must realize that the standard which God has set "for the very elect" is a very high standard; and that comparatively few—saints only—ever attain to that high standard. All will acknowledge that very few of their friends and neighbors, parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, who have died, could have any hope of being in the "elect class," according to the high standard for that class set in the Scriptures; and yet the awfulness of the theory they hold respecting the non-elect has driven them to so modify the standard of Christian living that would be acceptable to God as to include these dear friends. Thus day by day, and century by century, as deaths occur in every family connection, the tendency, under the influence of the popular error of eternal torment is to lower in the minds of all Christian people the standard of true holiness, "What manner of persons ought we to be" The funeral discourses in nearly every case help forward this work of undermining the Christian standard, and dropping it to a worldly level of *morality*—and scarcely even that, because even persons who are notoriously immoral, unjust, extortionists, etc., and who have very little indeed to commend them, are felt to be not sufficiently bad to be eternally tormented; and under the theory that they must go either to a heaven of eternal bliss or to a hell of eternal torment they are, in their neighbors' minds, admitted generously to the former rather than consigned to the latter.

What incalculable harm has been introduced into the faith and hopes of Christendom through this God dishonoring doctrine of eternal torment, which implicates the great Jehovah as the chiefest coadjutor of Satan,—the planner, the designer of all his accredited devilishness, the one without whose cooperation Satan could not have done all that he, as ordinarily pictured, has done and is doing,—dominating a host of fire-proof and pain-proof devils pitchforks in hand, tormenting millions of humanity, delivered into their power by the Almighty, and by some inscrutable power rendered fire-proof but not pain-proof

THE GENEROSITY COMMENDABLE BUT THE THEORY WRONG

We cannot but sympathize with the greater generosity of our day which is gradually coming to disown such a theory, and we must also sympathize with that sentiment which has sought to rescue from such an awful future the loved ones of the present life, however evil and injurious they may have been. But while this increase of benevolence is commendable it is bringing the remedy from the wrong quarter. It is bringing a remedy which, while it is to some extent consoling to the heart momentarily, nevertheless leaves a terrible *fear*, lest peradventure the high standards of the Scripture may be required, and that all not coming up to them will suffer excrutiatingly In others it leads to *doubts*, not only respecting the eternal torment, but also respecting the eternal bliss: and additionally it casts serious doubt upon the Book of divine revelation which is the only foundation for heavenly hopes, because they believe it to be also the authority for their "hellish fears."

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES RESPECTING THE NON-ELECT?

In the Scriptures the non-elect are of two classes: First Those who in the present life were (1) enlightened, (2) justified through faith, (3) called, and accepting the call were sanctified and begotten of the holy spirit, and started on the course with a view to making their calling and election sure —but who have not made it sure, but on the contrary have failed, by not coming fully up to the requirements.

This class in turn is Scripturally divided into two parties:—

(*a*) Those who sin *wilfully* after that they have received a knowledge of the truth, and been made partakers of the holy spirit, etc. For those there remaineth no more a share in the sacrifice of Christ—no further mercy, opportunity or hope To them the result is the second death—nonentity. Heb 6:4-6; 10:26, 27.

(*b*) The other class consists of those who, while at heart preferring righteousness and truth, and loving the Lord, have not become copies of God's dear Son, in that they fail to attain to his Spirit of full devotion of heart to the doing of the Father's will—rather they permit themselves to become overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches, and thus fail to complete that sacrifice according to their covenant, and hence fail to make their calling and their election sure. For these the Lord has a gracious provision as suggested in Rev. 7:13-15. They will not be utterly confounded, because they have trusted in him (Psa 22 5), and he will surely carry them through. Yet the Lord's intervention on their behalf must be strictly along the lines of his covenant and general plan—he cannot interfere with their free moral agency; he will not coerce their wills, but he can and will bring them to such a place of experience as will test them and compel them either to renounce their loyalty to him or to seal that loyalty with their lives Those who renounce the Lord will, of course, in so doing bring upon themselves the penalty of the second death, but those who, under such *compulsory* circumstances, are faithful, cannot be counted as of the same likeness with God's dear Son, who, without compulsion, voluntarily gave up his life in the Father's service. The little flock of the elect church will contain all of this class, and to them will be granted the kingdom, and to sit with Christ in his throne, and to be the temple of God and to have the crowns. (Rev. 3:21; 1 Pet. 5:4) But the others, who will "come up out of great tribulation," having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, altho they will have suffered equally as much as the elect (more indeed, if the mental conditions are taken into consideration) will not get a crown of victory, but a palm of victory; will not get a seat in the throne with their Lord, as his bride, but nevertheless an honorable place before the throne as servants. They will not become pillars and stones in the living temple of God, but they will have the honorable privilege of serving God in his temple, the church.

This class is not prominently referred to in the Scriptures, nor in the types and symbols even; because none were called to this position, but, as the Apostle declares, "Ye were all called in *one* hope of your calling"—to the highest place of joint heirship. (Eph. 4:4) The position attained by these is an unpromised one, of the Lord's abundant mercy.

Second: The second class of non-elect from the Scriptural viewpoint is the world of mankind, including three classes:—

(*a*) It includes those who have never had any knowledge of God's provision of grace in Christ, and who consequently could not have gone on further to be of the called elect class of this age.

(*b*) It includes those who have heard of the grace of God, but in that indistinct, indefinite manner which does not bring conviction—those who have seen in Jesus something wonderful and great and admirable, but who have never *seen* him from the Lord's standpoint of Redeemer and Saviour—their eyes being blinded to the manifold evil influences of "the god of this world," business or pleasure or love of money or distracting religious dogmas. These, not having seen and not having accepted Christ as the Redeemer, could go no further

and by no possibility could they have been amongst those called to the election of this Gospel age.

(c) It includes those who have heard of Christ as the Redeemer, and have appreciated him as such, and have accepted him as their Saviour; but who like the nine of the ten lepers cleansed by our Lord at his first advent, thought not to return to give glory to God—thought not to present their bodies living sacrifices in his service. These having reached the point of justification were, undoubtedly, amongst the ones called; but they failed to make their calling and election sure, not caring to respond to the call. Of this class, apparently, are the thousands, the masses of church members of the various sects. They are glad for what they see, but not anxious to see any more, as, intuitively, they realize that further knowledge would bring greater responsibilities, which they desire to avoid and not even to think much about.

These last mentioned "receive the grace of God [the privilege of justification] in vain." (2 Cor. 6:1) The intention of this reckoned or faith justification of the present time is to enable the justified ones to present their "bodies living sacrifices, holy, and acceptable to God," their reasonable service; because they could not be acceptable to God as sacrifices, nor in any sense of the word come to his altar, while still they were sinners. Since to permit this sanctification and sacrifice is the only object of the giving of this grace in the present time, they have received it in vain, in that they have not used it as God designed it to be used by those who are appreciative.

Amongst this second class of non-elect, we may say that the vilest are too good to be turned over to devils for an eternity of torment, either mental or physical, and God their Creator was too wise to have ever made them in such a condition as to necessitate such an abominable result, so inharmonious with his character and with every sense of right and justice, and necessitating the everlasting perpetuation of evil, upheld, and therefore sanctioned, by divine power. And God's Word, rightly understood, teaches no such thing. It is only where the false theory has corrupted and perverted the judgment that it is able and willing to construe such a theory from the parables, symbols and "dark sayings" of our Saviour, instead of understanding and construing them much more reasonably and in full accord with the divine character of justice, wisdom and love.*

NO CONDEMNATION POSSIBLE UNTIL AFTER TRIAL

If the worst class of non-elect do not deserve eternal torment, the less degraded certainly would not deserve it; and indeed we are to remember that none of them can deserve any punishment until first of all they have had their *trial.* True, the whole race had a trial in father Adam, in Eden, and when he lost in that trial the whole race lost life and came under the sentence of death. But in harmony with the divine plan, our Lord Jesus redeemed Adam and all his race by giving himself as the ransom-price for Adam and thus incidentally for all. We are to remember that Jesus was not only the Redeemer of the church, but also the Redeemer of the world, as it is written: "He is a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours [the church's] only, but also for the *sins of the whole world.*"—1 John 2:2.

* See *What Say the Scriptures About Hell?*—Sample sent free on postal card request

If then all these non-elect have been *redeemed* from the first trial and its sentence with the same precious blood which redeemed the elect church; and if the church, by the grace of God, has had her trial in advance of the world in general, and if the church's trial was the result of the redemption, and without that redemption she could have no further trial for eternal life, is it not manifest that the same redemption has provided a trial for the whole world of mankind, as well as for the church of this Gospel age? And what matters it that the trial of the world did not take place at the *same time* as the trial of the church? Has not the great God, our Saviour, the full right to arrange this matter of salvation according to his own wisdom? Who amongst fallen men is competent to direct him?

And yet this is what Christian people have been doing; they have been attempting to arange the divine plan, instead of hearkening to God's own revelation respecting the same. They have said, but he has not said, that the present life is the only opportunity for trial, and that this trial-time will end with the end of the Gospel age. He, on the contrary, has foreseen their misrepresentations of his plan, and has caused it to be written aforetime through the prophet: "My thoughts [plans] are not your thoughts [plans], neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts [plans] than your thoughts [plans]."—Isa. 55:8, 9.

The Scriptures tell us specifically respecting the Lord's plan for these non-elect. We will give it first in our own phraseology, and then we will give the Scriptural language. They tell us that the church is being selected from the world in advance, in order that this little flock, thoroughly trained in the school of experience, thoroughly polished and in full conformity to the Head, Christ Jesus, is, with their Head and Lord, to constitute the Royal Priesthood, whose work will only begin after its election has been completed and it has been received into glory; and that its work will be the *judging* of the world of mankind, not in the sense of pronouncing condemnation upon them, but in the sense of granting to each member of the non-elect a *trial* (judgment) for eternal life. That trial of the non-elect is guaranteed, based upon the great ransom-sacrifice wherewith all mankind were purchased from the death-sentence that came upon all through Adam. And that this trial-time, or day of the world's judgment, will be the Millennial day (a thousand years long), in the which full opportunity shall come to all, full knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep, and a full blessing of eternal life may be attained by whoever *wills* and obeys, of those then on trial; and that the remainder (the unwilling and disobedient) will be destroyed in the second death.

Among the many Scriptures supporting this presentation we cite two which are very pointed and should be fully satisfactory if there were no others. "God hath appointed a day in the which he will *judge the world* [future] in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained"—the Christ, Head and body.—Acts 17:31.

"Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" —1 Cor. 6:2.

THE ULTIMATE END OF THE COMMANDMENT IS LOVE FROM A PURE HEART AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE

"Now the end [ultimate object] of the commandment is love from a pure heart and a good conscience, and an undissembled faith —which some, having failed [to discern] have turned aside to foolish talking."—1 *Tim.* 1:5.

Not only in the Apostle's day did many fail to get the true idea of religion—the Lord's commandments to his people, etc. —but many, probably an increasing number, have since similarly failed. We may suppose that the method of the great adversary is to confuse the minds of those who are feeling after God and righteousness. It is thus, as the Scriptures declare, that he deceives the whole world—putting forms, ceremonies, theories and confessions instead of heart religion.

Those who teach the monstrous false doctrine that the present life decides the fate of every human being, either for eternal misery or for eternal joy, consider this doctrine the very bulwark of pure Christianity and of holiness, consequently many who really do not believe it tacitly give it their consent and approval, believing that in so doing they are forwarding the cause of holiness. But this is a great mistake: this is one of the great adversary's delusions, by which he would make the piety of God's people serve his cause, (1) because this doctrine dims the divine glory as respects love and justice, and (2) because the doctrine, instead of cultivating or promoting holiness cultivates and promotes the reverse of this, as we shall show.

The theory that the present life is merely to decide who are worthy of eternal joy, and who are worthy of eternal torments, resolves itself finally in the general thought as signifying that all fiendish characters may perhaps be worthy of some kind of ill-treatment to all eternity, provided they shall not breathe a prayer of penitence at some time before they expire; but that all half-way decent people are too respectable or too good to justly merit an eternity of torture, and hence must be of the kind who will receive an eternity of bliss. Thus this hell-fire doctrine, instead of promoting holiness, purity of heart, promotes the reverse,—carelessness as respects anything except out and out murder and general devilishness.

On the contrary, the Scriptural doctrine makes no threat of eternal torment, and promises a full opportunity for every human creature to come to a knowledge of the truth, either in

the present life or in the next life, and thus, under the terms of the New Covenant, to avail themselves of the opportunity for eternal life through the great atonement sacrifice finished at Calvary. This Scriptural doctrine is replete with the highest incentives to holiness, purity of heart and of life; because, instead of holding forth a general penalty of torture, it holds forth "a *just* recompense of reward," a reward of blessing or of stripes which will be proportionate to the individual efforts of each to come into harmony with God and his holiness.

First we have the call of the Gospel church to become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, in the Millennial kingdom, upon *the condition of holiness of heart*, and subsequently will come the offer of restitution and everlasting life in human perfection, to those of the world who similarly return to heart-harmony with the Lord. The Scriptures hold out no suggestion anywhere that eternal life will ever be given to any creature on any plane of existence, except upon this condition of full, complete heart-harmony with the Lord. Anything contrary to, or even short of, this perfect harmony with the Lord, will, from the Scriptural standpoint mean the second death. Here then in the divine offer we have the highest inducement to strive for our closest possible attainment to perfection; and we are assured that such striving will ultimately, according to divine favor, be rewarded with perfect conditions (in which absolute perfection will be possible)—in the resurrection.

Many there are who have very erroneous views of what is signified by the expression 'pure in heart;" one class considers this impossible of attainment in the present life; another class, no less mistakenly, considers this to mean absolute perfection in every thought, word and deed; and in believing that they fulfil these conditions, and in teaching others similarly, they are making a grave mistake.

Answering the last error first, we remark that it is possible for one to deceive himself respecting his own heart and his own condition, as for instance, apparently, the Pharisees of our Lord's day: claiming that they were perfect, and that they kept the whole law, they were merely deceiving themselves, but not the Lord; by their self-deception, a form of hypocrisy, which blinding them to their own need of the robe of Christ's righteousness, left them in the filthy rags of their own righteousness, unfit for the kingdom. And so with some today, who claim perfection of thought, word and deed. They have blinded themselves to their own weaknesses, imperfections and errors, and are in a far worse condition than he who, tho outwardly less moral, is at heart better in the Lord's sight, because honest in confessing his unworthiness, because for such the Lord has provided forgiveness of sins,—covering with the robe of Christ's righteousness.

Nevertheless, those who think that purity of heart is an impossibility in the present life are likewise mistaken. Their mistake arises from not seeing a wide distinction between a purity of heart and a perfection or righteousness of all the words and deeds of life. The heart, as used in this text, refers to the mind, the will, the actuating intentions or motives of the man. With this thought before the mind, it is easy to see that one might be pure of heart, that is of pure intentions, and yet confess himself unable to do and to be all that his good intentions desire and endeavor. He whose heart is pure toward the Lord in Christ is the same one whose eye is single, the same one who is not double-minded but single-minded, whose mind, will, heart, seeks first, last and always the will of God. Hence the exhortation of the Apostle, "Purify your hearts, ye double-minded."—Jas. 4:8.

But how can this condition of purity of heart be attained? Is this to be our message to sinners—"purify your hearts"? No the Gospel does not call sinners to purify their hearts: on the contrary it declares it to be an impossible thing for the sinner to purify his heart; a fuller's soap, which the sinner does not possess, is needed to cleanse the heart and bring it into that attitude of relationship with God and his will which will be pure and acceptable in his sight. On the contrary, sinners are called to repentance—called upon to confess that not only their outward lives are imperfect, short of the glory of God, but that their hearts also are rebellious, impure and in sympathy with impurity. After the sinner is repentant for sin, desiring to come into harmony with the Lord and his righteousness, he is pointed to the great atonement for sin, and is drawn to the great Redeemer, through a desire to be made free from sin and to come into harmony with God. When this step has been taken—when the sinner having repented of his sins, and having made restitution so far as possible, accepts Christ and the pardon he offers, and seeks to walk in the way of righteousness, then he is *justified*,—justified freely from all things, from which the law could not justify him—"justified by faith through the blood of Christ"—brought nigh to God, into relationship with him, and caused to know the joy and peace of his forgiving love.

When this is accomplished, when justification by faith has been established, when the sinner is reckoned and treated as no longer a sinner, but as reconciled to the Father, then his heart may be said to be pure, cleansed from "the sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." But now arises a new question with the reformed one: while past sins are graciously covered, weaknesses of the flesh are present, and temptations of the adversary are on every hand. He starts to walk forward, but finds himself beset by the world, the flesh and the devil; what shall he do? A heart searching probably begins there: finding himself incapable of guiding himself, or of keeping himself, his proper course is to accept another offer of divine grace, namely, the second step in our great salvation. He hears the voice of the Lord, through the Apostle, saying, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God [manifested in the covering of your sins], that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

The reformed one, if rightly instructed, realizes his inability to stand in his own strength, realizes that his *only hope of maintaining justification* granted to him lies in getting the Lord to take charge of him. At first he may think to go into partnership with the Lord, and to say, "Some of self and some of thee," some of my own will and some of the Lord's will; but rightly instructed he finds that this will not be satisfactory to the Lord; that the Lord will accept him, and become responsible for him, and guarantee him glorious victory and eternal reward, only upon this one condition, namely, a full self-surrender, a full consecration of heart.

It is after the sinner has come through all this process and has made a full consecration of his heart to the Lord, that he is of the class described in our text, one of the pure in heart, under the law of love, the law of the New Covenant. But notwithstanding the purity of his heart, his motives, his intentions, his will, to fulfil the Lord's great commandment, which is briefly comprehended in one word, love,—he will find that he has a battle to wage, that the law of his members, depraved through heredity in sin, is a strong law of selfishness, in opposition to the new law, to which he has pledged himself, the law of his pure heart or new heart or will,—the law of love.

Hence, as the Apostle suggests in our text, we must learn that the ultimate end or object of the divine commandment or law, means LOVE,—even tho we do not find ourselves thoroughly able to live up to every minute particular and requirement of that law. Yet our inability to live up to the requirements of that law must be through no lack of the will, or intentions of the loyal and pure heart toward the law, and toward the Lord whose law it is: whatever failure we make, however short we may come of the grand ultimate object before us, it must be solely because of weaknesses of the flesh, and besetments of the adversary which our pure hearts, or wills failed to resist.

And here the Lord's promises are helpful, assuring us that he knows our weaknesses and frailties, and the wiles of our great adversary, the devil, and the influence of the spirit of the world, which is contrary to the spirit of love: he tells us that we may go freely to the throne of the heavenly grace, and obtain mercy in respect to our failures to live up to the grand standards which our hearts acknowledge, and seek to conform to; and that we may also find grace to help us in every time of need. And, availing ourselves of these mercies and privileges provided through our great High Priest, we are enabled to fight a good fight against sin, to repulse its attacks upon our hearts and to drive it off if it shall succeed in invading our flesh. Thus, and thus only, may the Christian *keep himself pure* in heart, preserving his stand as one of the fighters of the good fight, one of the overcomers of the world and its spirit.

There will be a tendency on the part of the flesh, and the mind of the flesh, to deceive us in respect to this commandment of love. The mind of the flesh will seek to go into partnership with the new mind, and will be very ready to recognize love as the rule and law of life, *under certain conditions.* The mind of the flesh would recognize love in words, in profession, in manners—a form of godliness, without its power. Gentle manners, such as love would demand, may be exercised by a selfish heart deceiving itself, and seeking to deceive others; on the lip may be the smile, the word of praise, of kindness, of gentleness, while in the heart may be feelings of selfish-

ness, of grudge, of bitterness, of animosity, which, under favorable conditions, may manifest themselves in more or less carefully worded slander, or backbiting, or reproaches. Or these, continuing in the heart and rankling, may, under favorable conditions, bring forth anger, hatred, malice, strife and other wicked works of the flesh and of the devil, wholly contrary to the proper course of a pure heart, and an utter variance with the commandment of the law of the New Covenant —love.

We are, therefore, to have clearly before our minds the fact that the *ultimate object* of all the divine dealings for us and with us, and the ultimate significance of all the divine promises made to us, is the development of love, which is godlikeness, for God is love. And to have this love developed in us, in the sense and to the degree intended by the Lord, it is necessary that it shall come from a *pure* heart, in full accord with the Lord, and his law of love, and wholly antagonistic to the adversary and his law of selfishness. To have this kind of love in its proper development requires also a good conscience: for be it remembered that there are bad consciences, —our consciences require regulating, as do all the other features of our fallen nature. If our consciences are to be regulated we must have some standard by which to set and regulate them. The conscience is like a watch whose dial is properly marked with the hours, but whose correctness as a timekeeper depends upon the proper regulating of its mainspring, so that it may point out the hours truthfully: so our consciences are ready to indicate right and wrong to us, but they can only be relied upon to tell us truly what is right and what is wrong after being regulated in connection with the new mainspring, the new heart, the pure will, brought into full harmony with the law of love, as presented to us in the Word of God.

Our text also points out the necessity for an undissembled faith. And here, we believe, is one of the important difficulties besetting many who are in the nominal churches: they are not honest; they are not conscientious in respect to their faith. If they believe differently from the denomination they have been connected with, they are willing to dissemble their faith, to misrepresent it, because they fear a disturbance in the church; they fear to be thought peculiar; they fear to lose the esteem of fellow-Christians ("wheat") who might understand them, and of fellow-associates ("tares") who would be sure to misunderstand them, and speak evil of them. They love the praise of men more than they love the praise of God, else they would not risk the disfavor of God through a violation of conscience, and a dissembling of their faith, in order to maintain the friendship of the world and of the nominal church.

We urge that all our readers consider carefully, studiously, the words of our text, remembering it is those who miss this true thought who are not only missing the opportunity of the present time to be overcomers of the world, and the opportunity of the future, to be "joint-heirs with Christ" in his kingdom, but who, additionally, are lending influence now in the wrong direction, and are likely to be turned aside to foolish talking, preaching and teaching and discussing matters which are illogical, irrational, nonsensical; because their hearts have become darkened through neglect of the *principles* which the Lord has set forth for the government of those who are new creatures in Christ Jesus. And sometimes the matter goes beyond foolish talking, and the heart becomes embittered and corrupted: love is cast out of the heart, and selfishness takes its place, and from it flows words of bitterness, anger and evil, instead of words of love, kindness, gentleness, mercy and goodness.

"Keep thy *heart* with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life"—life or death. "Blessed are the *pure* in heart, for they shall see God."

CLAIMING, RECEIVING AND ADMINISTERING A KINGDOM

LUKE 19:11-27.—DEC. 23.

"Every one of us shall give account of himself to God."—Rom. 14:12.

Naturally enough the fact that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, the city of the great King, and that he had definitely acknowledged himself as the Messiah, and that he was exercising a great influence amongst the people, and that under this influence the rich Zacchæus had been soundly converted, led the disciples to believe that when they reached Jesusalem, then only fifteen or twenty miles distant, they would immediately see tangible evidences of the establishment of God's kindgom—that they would see Jesus assume regal robes, power and authority, and that they themselves would be associated with him in the throne of power, and that speedily Israel would arise from the dust to be the dominant nation of the world, and through its laws, at the mouth of Messiah, supported by his divine powers, would bring blessing to every nation, people, kindred and tongue.

It was in view of this erroneous expectation that our Lord gave the parable of this lesson—to point out to the disciples, and vaguely to others, that kingdom glories were yet a considerable distance in the future, and that before they could be expected he must leave them and go to the central seat of government and deceive his commission from Jehovah, the Father, and return; and that meantime he would give to some of his servants a work to do in his name which would prove their loyalty, their love, by their faithfulness.

The figure used as the basis of the parable was one with which the people of Jericho were quite familiar. They had in their city the palace of Herod, and knew that when his father, Herod the Great, died, Herod Archelaus, then king, set out on a mission to Rome, to the court of the Cæsars, the rulers of the world;—the object of the mission being to obtain Cæsar's authority an investiture of government as the king of Judea instead of his deceased father. They knew that Herod returned, fully equipped with authority, and was in consequence the ruler. They knew also that when he went to Rome a deputation of citizens of Judea was sent after him to make complaint against him, and to urge that he be not appointed;—and to inform Cæsar that the government of the Herods was no longer desired by the people of Judea. Josephus says that this deputation of opponents who went to Rome numbered 500. The people probably also remembered that when Herod Archelaus returned with kingly power he first of all rewarded his faithful retainers with various offices throughout the kingdom, and subsequently dealt harshly with those who had manifested their opposition. Thus we see that those who heard this parable were much more likely to be appreciative of its significance than the majority of the people of today would be, because customs of the present time are so different

It was understood by those who heard the parable that the Lord referred to himself as the nobleman, that heaven was the far country, that Jehovah himself was the great King, whose commission was essential to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom, and that Jesus' disciples were the servants to be entrusted with the "Pounds," and that those who would not have him rule over them were more or less in love and in league with the darkness of sin. Everyone who opposes righteousness, or who loves and serves unrighteousness, is thereby declaring *his opposition* to the reign of righteousness, which the Lord proposes to establish in the earth in due time,—when his kingdom shall come and his will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

There is in this lesson a severe rebuke (which alas! is not often recognized) to those who claim that the kingdom of God was set up at Pentecost. They must see, unless they with more or less wilfulness close the eyes of their understanding, that this parable is against their theory, and teaches that the kingdom is not to be expected to be set up until the return of Messiah at his second advent. It is also a rebuke to those who claim that in some manner, incomprehensible to themselves or anybody else, the second advent took place 1800 years ago, at the time of Israel's overthrow, about A. D. 70. They must see, unless with a certain amount of wilfulness they close their eyes of understanding against it, that nothing at all corresponding to a second advent of Christ took place at that time—nothing corresponding to the setting up of his kingdom occurred there; nothing corresponding to the calling of those of his servants and reckoning with them and rewarding them with places in the kingdom took place there; nothing corresponding to the calling of his enemies who would not have him rule over them, and the punishment of them, took place there—in A. D. 70.

Indeed, the parable is opposed to every theory respecting the kingdom except for right theory, and it is in full accord with it; because the right theory is not a human wish or whim or conjecture to help substantiate some human program of events, but is the sum and substance of all the teachings of the divine Word brought into harmonious unison and interpreted thus, Scripture throwing light upon Scripture, by the holy spirit.

Those who heard the parable might have conjectured that it required months, or possibly years for its fulfilment; but probably none of them expected that it would require more than eighteen centuries—because, as natural men, they would be disposed to look at matters from the natural standpoint, from the standpoint of seventy to a hundred years as being the limit of human life. Nor did the disciples even know how to view matters from the divine standpoint until after they had received the holy spirit. Under its enlightenment, however, the Apostle tells us plainly that "A day with the Lord is as a thousand years."—2 Pet. 3:8

As the Revised Version points out, the ten servants to whom the pounds were given were only a part of all the nobleman's servants; they would seem to represent the *consecrated* class who have professed full devotion to the Lord, and to each of whom is given a special gift or blessing, not given to others of the servants of the household of faith. This special gift or blessing seems to be referred to by the Apostle, when he says, "A measure of the spirit is given to every man [in the true, consecrated church] to profit withal." (1 Cor. 12:7) It is the same gift to all, the same spirit amongst all, working in all of this class, and the duty of each one is to use this gift of the Lord for its increase; and the more his devotion and the more his faithfulness the larger may be the results.

We are to notice a difference between this parable of the "Pounds" and a somewhat similar one of the "Talents." The latter represented the natural abilities of the individual—"to every man according to his several ability," some one, some two, some five talents or opportunities. But this parable of the pounds ignores the individual abilities of the servants, and shows them each as receiving the same thing and for the same purpose. Possibly the differences of opportunities are to be understood as implied, because the Lord expressed as hearty approval of the one who gained four pounds as he did the one who gained nine. Both did well, both were good, both were faithful. The one with greater talents in order to be equally faithful with the one of fewer talents, *should be able to*, and should show larger results: and the rewards given would seem to imply the same thing—that greater sacrifices in the present time "work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And this emphasizes the instructions of a previous lesson, showing that those who are *rich* in talents, opportunities and privileges, if faithful achieve a larger victory and a still grander reward than those who are poorer and who therefore sacrifice less, tho the sacrificing be done in both cases with the same spirit, which in both is thoroughly acceptable to God, pronounced well done, and the servant faithful and good.

The servant who hid his talent and returned it, and whose loss of all opportunity to share in the kingdom is shown, would seem to represent a class not merely justified but sanctified—consecrated fully to the Lord, and made the recipients of the holy Spirit, even as the other members of the body. He is called a "*wicked*" servant; not because he had committed murder or robbery of any kind, but because, having assumed an obligation by which he was entrusted with certain of the Master's goods not given to others, he failed of his covenant and obligation. Such a servant could not be trusted, and properly was considered unfit for any share in the kingdom; and the blessings which had been entrusted to him were given to the one who had already most, but whose faithfulness had been so abundantly attested by zeal. So to everyone who uses present blessings and opportunities well, zealously further blessings, privileges and opportunities shall be granted, and from those who do not so use them they will be taken away.

To our understanding we are now living in the very time represented by this feature of the parable—the time when our Lord, invested with the authority of the Father, is about to take to himself his great power and reign; and when, preparatory to that reign, he is reckoning with his servants now living, with a view to their appointment to places in the kingdom he is about to inaugurate. It is from this standpoint that we interpret the testings and siftings now in progress amongst the consecrated ones in and out of all the sects of Christendom. "The Lord your God proveth you, whether ye do love the Lord your God or no." Present truth and present conditions are testing and *showing* to what extent those who have received the Lord's favor are faithful. This does not imply that others of this class who have died in the past of this age are ignored; on the contrary the Scriptures assure us that they would be dealt with first, and that those accounted worthy have a share in the first resurrection preceding those who are alive and remain at the present time.

But the living ones pass through an experience of testing (the ending of their trial) before they die; they must give an account; judgment must pass respecting them; they must either be gathered, as "wheat" into the barn or be left in the field where the "tares" are shortly to be burned. Fortunately for us, the reckoning is not one of an instant, but time is granted to us to make up our account: and blessed is he who, finding that he has not been as faithful as he might have been in the past, is now putting forth redoubled energies—"redeeming the time" (grasping opportunities—Eph. 5:16), in order to make as favorable an account as possible while our King is waiting to receive them and willing to show us all the favor that could be desired.

Ten servants were chosen as a *general number* to represent all of the consecrated, but only three of these are mentioned as illustrations of faithfulness and unfaithfulness. Thus the Lord avoids even intimating how many of the whole number of consecrated will prove faithful to their consecration and enter into the joys of the Lord—into the kingdom and to share with him in the throne; and how many of them will fail to be accounted worthy of these honors and blessings; and how many of the latter may be counted worthy of the second death; and how many of them will come, through faithfulness in tribulation, to be honored servants in the kingdom.—Rev. 7:9-15.

The enemies of the King are all to be slain, after he takes to himself his great power and begins his reign; "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Some would suggest that this slaying will be with the sword of the spirit, and imply a universal salvation; but to our understanding such an interpretation would be utterly at variance with the spirit of the parable, and hence sophistical, and unworthy of any one claiming either honesty or ability as a teacher in Israel. There ought to be a reasonable relationship between the figure of the parable and the reality, as it will be fulfilled. To our understanding the slaying of the enemies represents clearly and distinctly the punishment which the Lord prescribes for the enemies of righteousness, *viz.*, the second death. However, this by no means signifies that all the people (aside from the specially trusted servants) are enemies. It was not so in the parable, which rather implies four classes: (1) The king's servants; (2) those specially granted the pounds for use in his service; (3) the citizens (4) the class of the latter opposed to the king, his laws, etc.

After the kingdom has been established under the King and his then exalted servants, we may be sure that all in harmony with him will have cause to rejoice in his favor and the blessings of the kingdom; and if some of the citizens had misunderstood the King's character, having heard him traduced and slandered, they will soon perceive, under the blessed conditions of the Millennial day, how grossly the "Prince of this World" had misrepresented the character of the Prince of Peace, telling them that he (the latter) had a place of eternal torment prepared for them, into which he would surely cast nine-tenths of their number, etc., etc. When these begin to have the eyes of their understanding opened so that "the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God," shining in the face of the new King, will bring them enlightenment and joyful privileges hitherto undreamed of, many of them, unquestionably, instead of longer being enemies and hating the King and hating his rule, will become staunch friends and supporters, and will rejoice greatly that they are freed from the yoke of the former prince, Satan, and will rejoice in his binding, which makes possible their liberation from the bondage of ignorance, superstition, fear and calumny.

It will require all of the thousand years to demonstrate who are the friends of truth and righteousness and who their *enemies*. The "*enemies*" of righteousness, are enemies of God and of Christ, and of all who are in harmony with righteousness; and this separation from the King's friends is Scripturally represented as the separating of the "goats" from the "sheep," which will progress throughout that Millennial period, and eventuate in the gathering of all the "sheep" to the right-hand of the King's favor, and the gathering of all the "goats," of contrary dispositions, to the left-hand of his disfavor,—where, because of their wilful and intelligent rejection of the principles of righteousness (the laws of his kingdom), they will be counted not his servants or messengers, but the servants or messengers of Satan, and as such they will meet their destruction in the symbolical lake of fire, "which is the second death."—Rev. 20:14; Matt. 25:31-46.*

* See our issue of March 15 and April 1, 1900, page 101.

"THOU CROWNEST THE YEAR WITH THY GOODNESS"

PSALM 65:11.—DEC. 30.

What more appropriate lesson could have been chosen for the close of the year! It is fitting that the Lord's people should continually keep trace of the mercies and blessings they enjoy—otherwise the pressure of the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches would so crowd in upon our minds and hearts as to cover from our observations and ultimately choke up completely the springs of divine grace, which, kept open, minister continually to our joy and refreshment in the holy Spirit.

To this end it is appropriate that we have a daily review of the blessings we enjoy—that every evening we call to mind the privileges enjoyed, the providences which have guided our way, and the blessings, both temporal and spiritual, which have come to us; some of them in common with the world in general and others of a special kind, known to and appreciated by those only who know the Shepherd and are known of him;—who hear his voice and to whom the rod and staff, his chastenings and guidance, are continually a comfort and a joy.

It is appropriate, too, that we take weekly reviews, looking at the same mercies and blessings from a still broader standpoint of observation, reminding us of the rest into which we have entered through faith in the precious blood, and also of the rest that remains for the people of God, whereof God has given us assurance in that on the first day of the week he raised up Jesus from the dead.—Heb. 4:3, 9.

But it is with special appropriateness that at the close of the still larger cycle of a year we should take a still broader and more comprehensive view of our experiences, looking circumspectly at the way we have traveled and considering well which have been the steps which hindered progress, and which have been proper steps in the footprints of Jesus, bringing us nearer to the goal—the "mark" which we must surely attain if we would be accounted worthy of a share in the promised kingdom.

A year may seem a longer or a shorter period, according to the circumstances. To the mind of childhood it is a very long period while to more developed minds, filled with the activities of life, it seems much shorter—speeding all too rapidly to permit the accomplishment of all the things desired to be achieved. Then again, the year will seem proportionately long as it has contained draughts of bitter experience or sufferings, mental or physical;—proportionately short, as it has contained joys and pleasures which seem to slip away all too quickly. To a certain extent such experiences are common to all mankind; yet the Christian, especially if he have been for some time in the school of Christ and is somewhat developed both in knowledge and in grace, has a larger capacity than others for grasping and appreciating life; because no matter how unsound his natural mind may have been he has now "the mind of Christ," "the spirit of a sound mind," which is far better able than the natural mind to estimate matters at their true worth.

Such an advanced Christian looks back through the year and recalls life's storms as well as its sunshine, its sorrows as well as its joys, is tears as well as its smiles, and sorrows not as others who have no hope (but who, instead, have more or less of vague fear and dread of the future, both of present life and that which is to come). His troubles have been divested of their hobgoblin features, and minimized by the spirit of a sound mind, and the instructions of God's Word, which assures all such that the trials, difficulties and adversities of life rightly accepted as lessons, are blessings in disguise,—which will work out "a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory" in the life to come.—2 Cor. 4:16, 17.

He will perceive too, that his joys have been of a purer and a more solid kind than any he ever knew before he was begotten of the holy Spirit. They have not had commingled with them the bitterness of envy, malice and hatred but have been unalloyed; because they have not been rejoicings in iniquity, but rejoicings in the truth. Moreover, they have been much more numerous than ever before; because he not only is able to joy in the Lord, joy in his Word, joy in the holy spirit, joy in fellowship with brethren of like precious faith, but by the grace of God he has been enabled additionally to joy in tribulation also;—not because he loved tribulation, but because he loved the patience, the experience, the character, which God assures us are a fruitage which all tribulations must yield us under his providence, if we are rightly exercised thereby.—James 1:3, 4; Rom. 5:3.

Of whom are all these things true? Not of every man, surely for alas! we know many who have no such experience—the world that lieth in darkness knows not God. Nor are these experiences true of all people of intelligence—nominally Christians. Surely but comparatively few of those who profess the name of Christ enjoy these precious experiences, or will be able to look back upon the year with satisfaction of this kind, realizing that God has crowned the year with his goodness! Many who cannot rejoice in the goodness which we have enumerated foregoing, will nevertheless return thanks for temporal good things and mercies, and strive to peer into the darkness with which an insufficient knowledge and an insufficient faith enshrouds the trials and difficulties of life, which to them are incomprehensible and sources of no joy, and generally of little advantage; because they have not taken the necessary step of full consecration to the Lord, to bring them under his protecting care and under the enlightening influence of his Word through his spirit: or, having taken the step of consecration, they have not been performing their vows, but seeking to serve both God and Mammon, without pleasing either, and without receiving satisfactory blessing from either.

The class which can and does look back through the year from the standpoint that we have described—the class which looking back can see that God's goodness has crowned every feature of life throughout the year, is the "little flock," the true Church, whose names are written in heaven,—the body of Christ the bride class. They are described by the Prophet in preceding verses of this Psalm. They are the true Zion, which shall shortly be set up, filled with divine glory, the joy of the whole earth, and the divine channel of blessing to all the families of mankind; "For out of Zion shall go the Law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."—Hear the Prophet:—

> "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion:
> And unto thee shall the vow be performed.
> O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come!
> Iniquities prevail against me: as for my transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.
> Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee.
> That he may dwell in thy courts.
> We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house,
> The holy place of thy temple."

Here we have a description of the elect church, of which Christ is the Head, and all the faithful royal priests who, now fulfilling their vows of sacrifice, are companions in the sufferings of Christ, as by and by they shall be his companions also in the glory that shall be revealed. (Rom. 8:17, 18) They are God's choice, or his "elect," for, as the Apostle informs us, God has predestinated that this class whom he will choose shall all be copies of his Son. (Rom. 8:29) They shall dwell in his house—they will be members of the great temple which the Lord God is building of spiritual stones, in and through which he will bless the world with a knowledge of himself and his grace.—1 Pet 2:4-8.

Is it any wonder that these can rejoice in spirit, saying, "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits"? "He hath put a new song into my mouth, even the loving-kindness of our God." Is it any wonder that these looking back can see in the year that is past that which has blessed and rejoiced them in every sense of the word has been of divine goodness, and that thus God has crowned the whole year with his favor toward them? These can say with faithful Joshua "Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake"—Joshua 23:14.

These are assured by their Lord that in the Father's house are many mansions, many conditions, suitable to the many kinds of his intelligent creatures; nevertheless there was no mansion for them because they were to be a new nature, "partakers of the divine nature," and hence it would be necessary for him to go away and *"prepare a place for them"*—a heavenly condition These, knowing that they must be prepared for the place, as well as the place be prepared for them, are enabled to rejoice under every blow of the hammer of discipline, because they realize that it is a part of the Master's work in their preparation to fill the place to which they have been called in the Father's house—which will be the place of God's temple, in which they are to be living stones.—Eph. 2:10.

And if the experiences and sentiments of this "little flock" are beyond the ken of the natural man, his neighbors and friends, is it any wonder? Despised and rejected of men they are nevertheless God's royal priesthood; "as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown and yet well known; as dying, and behold they live"—a life more abundant. In all these things they have cause to rejoice, realizing that the path

in which they tread has in it the footprints of him who redeemed them and became the leader and forerunner of this priesthood. The world knows us not, even as it knew him not.

As we thus review the leadings of divine providence during the year that is past, let God's goodness and mercy stimulate our faith and confidence in him as respects the New Year coming in. A proper retrospect on the part of a proper child of God will enable him not only to render thanks for the past, but to look up an lift up his head, realizing that our deliverance is nearer than when we first believed; and that he that began a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it, if we will but continue to submit our wills, our lives, our all, to his wisdom and loving care.—Rom. 13:11; Phil. 1:6; 1 Pet. 5:5, 6.

"NO WEAPON FORMED AGAINST THEE SHALL PROSPER"

ISAIAH 54:17.

Our publications have many able enemies, yet one and all they are powerless in their opposition. As in the *harvest* of the Jewish age the Scribes, Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, when they could not resist the truths then due, "gnashed upon him with their teeth," but "could not answer him," so it is now in the *harvest* of the Gospel age. Their rage is impotent except as it resorts to misrepresentation and sophistical trickery which the Lord assures us cannot "deceive the very elect."

About ten years ago a certain Professor Morehead (himself tabooed by many as a "heretic" because of his advocacy of pre-millennarian views) wrote an article for the *United Presbyterian* in which he did his *worst* to defame MILLENNIAL DAWN. The article was reprinted as a tract in various quarters by persons laboring under similar misconceptions of divine and human justice. These are published by some three or four parties—none of whom, probably, ever read the books he seeks to defame.

We did not consider Prof. Morehead's *tirade* worthy an answer, believing as we still do, that honest people (of whom alone we need expect to find the "saints" whom we seek) would be quite able to discern the professor's sophistry. The below correspondence will be interesting to our readers as showing the correctness of our supposition that honest children of God are not misled by the Adversary and his agents.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN TWO MINISTERS RE MILLENNIAL DAWN AND THE MOREHEAD "SMOKE"

(Brother Seddon, as we understand it, was at the time Recording Secretary of the Southern Chautauqua Assembly of Atlanta, Ga., and Bro. Worrell a visiting speaker at its Evangelical Alliance prayer service. The matter has been held over for some time now in order to permit Bro. Worrell to find time for a reply justifying his position, but all in vain.)

ATLANTA, GA., Aug. 11, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—You will probably be interested in the enclosed, which will explain itself. Kindly return to me the letter to Bro. Worrell re the Morehead tract. Keep the latter, however, if you can use it in any way. [The letters follow in their order.] Yours fraternally,

A. E. SEDDON.

ATLANTA, GA., Aug. 2, 1899.

REV. A. S. WORRELL,

DEAR BROTHER:—I was in the Alliance prayer-meeting this afternoon when, in the close of your address, you denounced as unscriptural the teachings of C. T. Russell of Allegheny City, Pa. I regret that the necessity of your having immediately to catch a train deprived me of an opportunity I greatly desired to ask you in what particulars in your opinion the teachings of the MILLENNIAL DAWN series of books are unscriptural. I have read four volumes of that series, and other writings of Bro. Russell's, and am not only interested but also impressed by his presentation of God's Word. If there are some points in which he is at variance with God's Word, I should esteem it a great kindness and an act of extreme brotherly service to have them pointd out. Hoping you will kindly reply, I am,

Yours fraternally, A. E. SEDDON.

LOUISVILLE, KY., Aug. 12, 1899.

MR. A. E. SEDDON,

DEAR SIR:—Yours of the 2nd inst. has been received and noted, in reply to which I enclose a tract touching on some of the evils of the MILLENNIAL DAWN. Much more could be said, but my time is taken up in other work that falls to my lot in my regular business.

It amazes me that anyone who really knows the Christ of the Bible should have ever been ensnared by the writings of Mr. Russell. The Christ of Mr. Russell is altogether a different character from the Christ of the Bible. See Isa. 9:6; John 1:1, 2, etc., etc.

I trust that his writings do not truly represent him. May you, my dear sir, not be ruined by the errors of Mr. Russell. Respectfully,

A. S. WORRELL.

ATLANTA, GA., Aug. 14, 1899.

REV. A. S. WORRELL,

DEAR SIR:—On receiving today yours of the 12th inst., in reply to my request of an earlier date, that you should specify charges that you make against the writings of Bro. Chas. T. Russell (in justification of your denunciation of those writings at the Evangelical Alliance prayer meeting), I regret I cannot accept it as a satisfactory reply.

I cannot resist the impression either that you ranked my intelligence very low in supposing I could accept such a reply as having any weight at all, or that, giving me credit for average intelligence, you trifled with my sincere and even anxious inquiries by sending an answer which would not have satisfied you, had our positions been reversed.

The only charge you made against the MILLENNIAL DAWN doctrines in your address was that you had known cases where Christian character had 'wilted' under their influence. But you surely cannot use that as a *proof* that the doctrines are unscriptural, since such 'wilting' is possible and frequently happened under Apostolic teaching. See Heb. 6:4-6; 10:28-31; 1 John 5:16. I wrote you in all sincerity asking for a specification of charges. I understood from your own statement that you were wholly given up to the Lord's work. It was as a sincerely inquiring disciple who supposed it possible that you could clearly see some aspect of truth that had escaped my notice that I felt such an inquiry was rightly made of the Lord's servant, and that in the Lord's name I had a right to expect a candid statement of specific charges.

What do you send me? A statement that your time is taken up in other work that falls to your lot in the course of your regular business; but you find time to express amazement that any one who really knows the Christ of the Bible should ever have been ensnared by the writings of Mr. Russell. You make the assertion, "The Christ of Mr. Russell is altogether a different character from the Christ of the Bible;" but you do not specify one single item of the alleged difference. You express a hope that his writings do not truly represent him and that I may not be ruined by his errors, but you do not pen one sentence calculated to avert that ruin, nor do you suggest any explanation of your extraordinary hope that Mr. Russell may think one way and write another. Is that something to be hoped for? If a man teach errors, it surely were better for him that he believe that he is teaching the truth, than that, knowing the truth, he nevertheless teaches error with seeming sincerity in writings that do not truly represent him. It seems to me that could your "hope" for Bro. Russell be realized, it would place him in a very low plane of moral obliquity.

In addition to this you enclose two tracts, one an excellent homily on Luke 2:10, 11, in which, after carefully reading it twice, I cannot discern the remotest connection with my inquiries. Personally I would say "Amen" to every sentence of that tract—and I believe that Brother Russell would do the same. You also enclose a tract which is a direct attack upon the MILLENNIAL DAWN books. To this I will now refer.

You express a hope that Bro. Russell's writings do not truly represent him. I think it will be the kindest thing I can say to you that I trust this attack on the MILLENNIAL DAWN books by Prof W. G. Morehead does not truly represent what you as a Christian brother, would say about those books if your "regular business" allowed you sufficient leisure to read them—and you certainly ought to read them before you attack them again. Your first attack may be excused on the ground of misinformation, but that excuse should never avail you again.

Can you as a fair minded man approve an attack which cites the *price* of a book as an argument against it, that cites the missionary zeal displayed in advocating its teachings as

argument against it; that calls names—"nocturnal hallucinations," "hydrophobic," "packed full of fundamental error," "product of insanity," compared with "the infidel Renan"? This is not honest Christian controversy! I think too well of you to suppose that you really endorse this kind of attack; yet by charitable estimate of you is sorely tried when I reflect that you evidently thought this kind of argument good enough for me.

As regards the teachings of the MILLENNIAL DAWN books on the human and divine in the nature of Christ, can you state a presentation of Scripture teaching on that important subject that more satisfactorily answers to *all* the Scriptural statements than Bro. Russell's? If you can, then for Christ's sake I earnestly and reverently ask you to do it; and I am convinced that Bro. Russell will receive it no less gratefully than I.

I was recommended to write to you as a scholar. I would now ask you candidly as a Greek scholar and a Scriptural exegete: Can you find fault with Bro. Russell's exegesis of *kelusma* ["shout"]? If you can, what is the error? If you cannot, why do you make use of the Morehead attack? If Prof. Morehead himself could assail the MILLENNIAL DAWN teachings on the two points above referred to, why did he not do it? If he cannot assail them, is he not guilty of shameful insincerity in making believe that he can?

With regard to Bro. Russell's opinions respecting the dates 1874 and 1914, time, of course, will alone prove how far he is right. But surely you do not endorse Prof. Morehead in suggesting these opinions are in the nature of deadly heresy. I have read a vast quantity of Millennial literature, "pre" and "post," have listened to a great deal of platform and pulpit talk on the same subject, and am utterly unable to conjecture what, out of all the bewildering mass, has a right to the name of "orthodox premillenarianism" by the side of which all other opinions are to be denounced as "nocturnal hallucination." Your own recent exposition of 2 Tim. 3 led me to infer that you regard these as the closing days of this present dispensation. Has your study of prophecy led you to detect deadly heresy in Brother Russell's conclusions? If so, what is it?

I understand the Morehead attack to assert that Bro. Russell teaches that the resurrection will be simultaneous for all the dead. My simple answer is that in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV., pp. 640, 641, Prof. Morehead can find conclusive proof that he is incorrect. If the bracketed words ("simultaneous for all the dead") are not intended to indicate the writer's understanding of Brother Russell's teachings, but his own conception of Scripture teaching, he had better consult his New Testament before he attacks a Christian brother again. The emphasis placed on a "first resurrection" of necessity implies subsequent resurrection. "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth"; but not all of these will have part in the first resurrection.

Prof. Morehead, in section 7 of his attack, ignores, possibly does not know enough Greek to distinguish between, the *parousia* and the *epiphania*. I was referred to you as a Greek scholar. As such I cannot imagine that you can endorse the Morehead attack or *apparent attack*. Are you, as a student of the Greek New Testament, prepared to deny and disprove from Scripture that the Lord's second coming will at first be discerned by only a comparatively few faithful watchers? Do you regard the word "coming" in our English version as adequate to embrace the ideas embodied by both *parousia* and *epiphania*?

I have detained you so long in criticism of the Morehead attack because I am inclined to believe that you made use of it hastily. I want you to read it carefully, to discern its dishonesty, its innuendo, its crafty appeal to the *odium theologicum*, its essential weakness, its unchristian vituperation. Lay it aside, Bro. Worrell. Don't fight for the Lord with the devil's weapons. If Bro. Russell errs there is Scripture to show it. If Scripture is on his side then I am convinced that after you have shaken off the theological prejudice with which you are apparently possessed, you will have grace enough to admit that Bro. Russell has a right to speak and to be judged by the Word; and that denunciation about "ensnaring souls," "ruin," expressions of amazement, etc., have really more of bluff about them than of the spirit of Christ.

Your statement about "wilting" of character under the influence of Bro. Russell's teaching proves that your opportunities of observation have not been wide enough to qualify you to form an accurate estimate; certainly not wide enough to justify you in assuming the office of public censor as you did on the 2nd inst. The humble and persistent zeal of the "Pilgrims," engaged in teaching the views advocated by Bro. Russell, comes nearer to apostolic zeal and self-abnegation than most Christian work now-a-days. I have known many who, like you, seem to be afraid of Bro. Russell's teachings, yet who pay well deserved tribute of admiration to the devotion and consecration of those who accept it.

As for Bro. Russell himself, I do not know him personally, have never met him, never seen his portrait even; yet I cannot help admiring the absence of the "ego" in his ministry. I have several times written to him concerning difficulties I have encountered in reading his works. He always replies personally; he presents reasons lucidly and never indulges in denunciation or exclamations of amazement. He never uses the trickery practiced by Prof. Morehead, nor resorts to innuendo. I am, dear Brother Worrell,

Yours in the love and pursuit of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, ALFRED E. SEDDON.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

THE BEGINNING AND ENDING OF THE MILLENNIUM

Question.—I understand from Rev. 20:4-6, that Christ will reign one thousand years, and from verses 2 and 7 that Satan will be bound during that period. If Christ began to reign in 1878, and Satan will not be bound until 1915, the two periods do not seem to synchronize; and furthermore, both extend beyond the seventh-thousand year period which, according to our Bible chronology, began in the Autumn of 1872. How is this? Can you assist me?

Answer.—The Lord has evidently arranged for the gradual closing of the Gospel age and opening of the Millennial age, in such a manner that the one laps upon the other, with some particular purpose in view; but just what his purposes are he has not been pleased to inform us; and since this extends into the future we may reasonably suppose that it is not now "meat in due season for the household of faith." When the end has been reached and accomplished, we have no doubt whatever that it will be manifested to all of the Lord's people that his Word has been accurately fulfilled. Until then a certain amount of faith is required and expected from those who have so many evidences of the Lord's wisdom and exactness in the features of his plan already accomplished "We can trust him where we cannot trace him." Apparently this matter of when the thousand-year period should be reckoned as fully beginning and fully ending will be an open question until the close of the Millennial age. It is our expectation, from Rev. 20:8, 9, that the obscurity of this question will have something to do with the final test of loyalty and obedience to God, which will come upon the whole world of mankind who will have enjoyed the blessings of restitution throughout the Millennial age, and have attained perfection at its close. The indefiniteness of the end of the period would appear to be an important feature of their testing. Apparently they will think the period of Christ's mediatorial reign ended before the Lord's time; and some of them, impatient of delay, will make a demonstration, and demand of the earthly representatives of the kingdom that full dominion be at once restored to perfect man, according to their understanding of the divine plan and its times and seasons.

In so doing these will be demonstrating their own unworthiness to enter the age of perfection which will follow the Millennium and will be destroyed in the second death. For, while such an attitude of mind may be forgivable in imperfect men of today, those perfect beings who shall have had a full restitution and large experience will be required to exercise a full faith, an unwavering confidence in the wisdom, love and promises of the Creator. And their failure to manifest implicit faith and obedience to the divine program after all their experience will be proof sufficient that they are unworthy of the eternal state. If permitted to go beyond into the full liberties of sons of God they would always be liable to sin and its consequences; and God's promise is that there shall be no more sighing, no more dying, no more crying, no more pain *there*, the equivalent of a promise that there shall be no more sin. Hence all who shall not have developed characters in full accord with, and fully submitted to the divine will, will be esteemed as having enjoyed all the blessings and privileges divine mercy has to offer. The fire, the judgment from heaven, will destroy such from among the people, in the second death, as unworthy of life-eternal.

The Scripture declaration respecting the saints, the "overcomers" is, "They lived and reigned a thousand years." The

reign of the saints cannot be properly said to begin before all the "jewels" have been gathered, nor before "the times of the Gentiles" end, in 1914. Nor is it said that their reign will be no longer than a thousand years. After the thousand years' reign Satan shall be loosed and the above trial shall ensue; but the reign of Christ and the church will evidently continue long enough after the thousand years to destroy all found unworthy in that final test and to thus complete the work for which this reign is instituted;—for, as expressed by the Apostle, "He must reign *till* he hath put *all enemies* under his feet. . . And when all things shall be subdued unto him [some by conversion and some by destruction], *then* shall the Son also himself be subject unto him [the Father]"

WHO CONSTITUTE "THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH"?

Question.—Our Lord commands us to do good, "especially to the household of faith." Who constitute this household—only the consecrated saints? Or does it include also the justified class, some of whom have not yet reached the position of sanctification or entire consecration?

Answer.—We understand that the *church of Christ*, as viewed from the divine standpoint, and as addressed in the Scriptures, includes only "the sanctified in Christ Jesus;"—those who have taken the step of justification through faith and, additionally, the second step of consecration to the Lord.

But "the household of faith" takes in a much larger number,—all who have faith in the Lord as their Redeemer from sin and its penalty,—all who are trusting in the precious blood of Christ, and seeking in any degree to be in harmony with the Lord and his rules of righteousness. The loving interest and care of all the "saints" (the consecrated) is to be exercised, not only toward each other, but also especially toward these members of the household of faith who are supposed to be under "instruction in righteousness," helping them forward to take the position of full consecration and become reckonedly dead to the world, and new creatures in Christ Jesus, risen with him, to walk in newness of life and to become his joint-heirs in the promised kingdom.

VOL. XXI ALLEGHENY, PA., DECEMBER 15, 1900 No. 24

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY'S YEARLY REPORT

DECEMBER 1, 1899, TO DECEMBER 1, 1900

Many of the Lord's dear people deeply interested in present truth, are quite isolated, and have comparatively little opportunity for learning of the general progress of the cause, except as they may infer it from occasional remarks in these columns. These and we trust all of the WATCH TOWER readers, will be looking with expectancy for this report, that they may thus have tabulate information respecting the work which interests us more than all else in the world besides—the work in which each according to his love, zeal and ability, has contributed either financially or through the circulation of literature, or otherwise.

We are glad to think of you as looking for and interested in this report, and give thanks to our Lord that by his grace so favorable a showing can be made, indeed, the grand totals for the year astonish us; for altho we have been aware that greater efforts than ever were put forth, we were not aware, until the calculations were footed up, to what extent the year just had transcended every previous year of this harvest-time in our mutual service of the truth and in the evidences of good results attained. We are sure that our friends will be astonished, as they read the reports we have to offer: astonished, first of all, that a company of the Lord's people so poor in this world's goods, as those who embrace present truth generally are, should contribute to the extent our Report shows, and that without being "dunned," urged, or even requested to give;—merely upon the information that an opportunity for thus engaging in the Lord's service is open to such as are able and willing to serve in this manner. The astonishment will be doubled when it is seen how great a work, under the Lord's blessing, has been accomplished with this comparatively small sum of money, which, amongst the nominal churches, would be considered only sufficient to pay the salaries of a few officers, and practically accomplish nothing in the way of propaganda.

And our astonishment still increases as we reflect that the circulation of this amount of literature, accompanied by this amount of "Pilgrim" preaching, etc., supporting the most glorious message that could possibly be heralded to mankind, shows so meagre results; that so few have ears to hear and eyes to see these things which enrapture our hearts. Let us, however, reflect that our Lord informs us that his "elect" will be but a "little flock"—and in it not many great, mighty or wise; but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith. The comparatively small results of our efforts to reach the ripe "wheat" in Babylon convince us, all the more, that the "wheat" is very scarce in comparison with the "tares;" that we are living in the time of which the Apostle declares that the church nominal will have itching ears, and be turned away from the truth, turned to fables, and respecting which our Lord said, "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find *the* faith on the earth?" implying that it would be difficult to find—2 Tim. 4:3; Luke 18:8.

True, the results may be more than we can at present discern; for we can estimate the widening influences of the truth chiefly by the growth of the WATCH TOWER subscription lists. These show considerable growth for the year,—but not nearly so much as we had hoped for: and our offer of credit, and of special terms to the poor, should bring to our lists the names of all who have "tasted that the Lord is gracious" and are hungering and thirsting for his righteousness. We can only hope that an under-current of influence is moving, of which we have little outward manifestation; and that in the Lord's own time and way during this "harvest" all of the true "wheat" will be reached and ripened and garnered.

THE COLPORTEUR BRANCH OF THE SERVICE

We give this department of the work the first place in the Report, considering that those who are engaged in it are doing the work of evangelists, and remembering that the Lord has specially blessed this service to the reaching of many who are now rejoicing in the light now shining upon the Word. We can think of no branch of the work in this harvest that more nearly corresponds to the style of service instituted by our Lord in the Jewish harvest, than does the colporteur work. The colporteurs usually go in couples, as the twelve apostles, and afterward the seventy, went forth,—from town to town and city to city. Like them, also, they go from house to house, and likewise their message is, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand! The time is fulfilled; repent, and believe the good tidings!" Going in this manner into all the homes of the civilized world, these colporteur brethren and sisters have opportunities for finding the truth-hungry as well, perhaps better, than if the pulpits of the land were open to them, and they all are competent to give able discourses upon the divine plan. Because in such a case they would be able either to preach but few discourses, or else to reach comparatively few hearers: whereas each colporteur can reach more than an average church audience every week; and with those whom he can interest he leaves reading matter representing many discourses, upon which the reader may feed for months. Where enough interest may not be awakened to lead to a purchase of the books, a tract is left, which sometimes bears good fruitage; and even tho some who purchase may neglect and fail to read at the time, experience shows us that the books thus scattered are often blessed of the Lord to the reaching of others, and sometimes years after, under more favorable conditions, the purchaser may also be blessed through conditions, the purchaser may also be blessed through them.

You will be pleased to learn that the sale of the DAWNS and booklets during the year (chiefly through the colporteurs) was as follows:—

In the English language . .	84,251
In the German language . . .	9,137
In the Scandinavian tongues .	6,712
In the French language (estimated)	543
Total	100,643
BOOKLETS:	
English . . .	39,047
Foreign languages	1,323
Total	40,370

It should be remembered that altho we endeavor to keep this branch of the work on a self-supporting basis, it nevertheless comes short of this, by reason of the fact that our wholesale prices are very low: in the case of the foreign translations considerably less than cost.

We feel sure that this showing will greatly encourage the dear brethren and sisters who are giving their lives in this department of the Harvest work; and we trust that it will

act as an incentive to others who have been contemplating engaging in this work—to lead such of them as are of good address and without family and financial encumbrances, to give themselves freely to this evangelistic work. It is a department which the Lord has greatly owned and blessed; it is a preaching of the Word in a most practical manner,, likely to leave a lasting impress; one which will undoubtedly, we believe, bring forth much fruitage during the great time of trouble, as well as serving to find and to perfect those of the Lord's saints who shall be accounted worthy to escape those things coming upon the world. We will be glad to hear from, and to co-operate with all who desire to enter this branch of the service. Write to us freely of your wishes, hopes, difficulties, etc., in respect to this, and we will do what we can to open the way before you. There is still plenty of room for the work in this land as well as in Great Britain. The fields are white for the harvest, and the laborers are few; and if we are praying for laborers let us see that we are doing what we can to fulfil our own petitions.

Some who cannot give their entire time to colporteuring are doing valiantly in their spare moments and hours; for instance, one dear brother, an architect, not slothful in his business, is nevertheless so fervent in spirit and in serving the Lord that during the past six months he has disposed of 650 copies of the DAWN to mechanics and tradesmen with whom his business brings him in contact. Others have less opportunities, but the same zeal, and are doing what they can;—some by giving, some by loaning, some by selling the literature. We rejoice that in any and all of these ways there is *an opportunity for all* of the Lord's dear flock to show their love for the truth, and their zeal in laying down their lives for the brethren still in Babylon and darkness.

THE "VOLUNTEER" WORK

All who labor for the truth do so of their free will and without compensation, and hence might properly be termed volunteers: under this head we might include in a general way all the efforts that have been put forth during the year in the way of free circulation of WATCH TOWER literature, bearing on the harvest themes—but the special use of the word with us has been confined to a particular feature of this free distribution; viz., that done systematically at or near churches at the time of their dismission on Sundays.

This Sunday church-distribution by those who volunteered for the service was begun in 1899, and reached good proportions and accomplished good results that year, and was continued during the past year with excellent effect. When we speak of results we have chiefly in mind that which is within our power, and not the ultimate results, of which no man can now know, and which time alone will show. The results, so far as the distribution of the Volunteer WATCH TOWER was concerned, were a success, large numbers being circulated in all parts of this country and in Great Britain. In handing literature to church attendants we had no thought whatever that they were all going into the hands of saints; but we do hope that some of them reached the hands of the Lord's consecrated people; and we still believe that it would be difficult to find a more effective way of reaching this class than by reaching the church-goers. In proportion to the circulation we cannot say that we have had large returns; on the contrary, they have been small, so far as letters, WATCH TOWER subscriptions, etc., are concerned. But in various ways we learn that they are making an impression upon the minds and hearts of many of those who have received them and who, while not ready to accept and endorse, nevertheless have been influenced by what they have read, and to some extent brought nearer to the truth and are better prepared for further instruction in the right way, when the Lord in due time may again send it to them.

We incline to think that the greatest blessing of all in connection with this part of the work has come to those who engaged in it as "volunteers," and who, all over the country, numbered hundreds. These have repeatedly testified that no part of their Christian experience had ever been more helpful to them in the development of true character, in committing them fully to the Lord and to his truth and to his service; making them strong in him,—"not ashamed to own his name, nor to defend his cause." Those who have had the opportunity to engage in this work, and who have allowed the "fear of man which bringeth a snare" to hinder from engaging in it, and thus being ministers of the true Gospel, and co-workers with the great Chief Reaper in this harvest-time, have missed a great deal—how much they may never know in the present life, unless some further opportunity for the Volunteer work should occur and they should then engage in it and ascertain how great the blessing and character-development they have already missed.

The friends in various quarters who have engaged in this work during the past two years, are writing us hoping that the Lord may open the opportunity for further volunteer service during the coming year, beginning early in the spring. The evidence is that where the entire company of the Lord's people at any point have entered into the work a great spiritual blessing has resulted. We will bear their requests in mind, and see what can be done as respects a future service for the soldiers of the Cross.

The total number of Volunteer issue of the WATCH TOWER circulated during the year was 948,459.

ORAL PREACHING—"PILGRIM" DEPARTMENT

It is not long since this department was inaugurated, and yet, as this Report shows, it has already reached considerable proportions. While we are in direct contact with the Lord's people through correspondence by mail, it became evident to us about four years ago that if competent brethren could visit amongst the little groups of those who have come into present truth through the ministry of the printed page, they could be of great service and encouragement to them; and at the same time might through public meetings be able to reach and further interest many who were already partially interested through the printed page and through private conversation, etc. These traveling oral preachers we designate "pilgrims," because they are nearly always on the go, their stops with the various little groups or churches being very brief (two or three days, as may seem to be warranted by conditions.) We make out the routes for these, and send notification ahead of them, so that no time need be lost An evening meeting is always in order for the day of their arrival, and afternoon and evening meetings for the succeeding days.

We endeavor, as far as possible, to select for this service brethren who give evidence, first, of character, and of faith in the Lord, in his Word and in his plan; second, such as seem to give evidence of ability in presenting the truth to the minds of others—as the Apostle expresses it, "apt to teach"—and, so far as possible, those who are "mighty in the Scriptures" (1 Tim. 3:2; Acts 18:24); and of ability in "rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15) These, so far as worldly judgment would be concerned, would all be classed as plain men; and we trust also would be classed as true Christian men, humble-minded and modest, both in language and deportment—men who do not have the false idea that they are great ones, or lords of God's heritage, of superior caste or order above the household of faith, but who simply and humbly acknowledge that they are "brethren," "servants" of the Lord and of the household of faith,—men who are very thankful for the privilege granted them of being engaged in such a service, and who look for their reward, not in luxuries of the present life, but in the Father's house, beyond the veil—in the kingdom. These "pilgrims" are not paid salaries; and tho ample provision is made for their comfortable maintenance, everything connected with this is expected to be done on the reasonable and economical lines which we believe the Lord and apostles followed, and respecting which we regard them as "ensamples." No collections are taken up by these "pilgrims," nor do they in any manner, directly or indirectly, request aid privately. Nor need we request their entertainment, knowing full well that any we thus send to you in the Master's name will be welcomed by you and granted a share of such things as you have,—according to the Scriptural injunction.—Heb. 13:2.

In following the plan here indicated we have been enabled to reach some of the Lord's scattered ones in various parts of this broad land, who never expected to hear preaching along these lines; for it will be readily seen that the expense connected with this traveling ministry is proportionately much less than it would be by any other method which would reach the same number of the Lord's people. Beside, this method assists, rather than discourages, the development of talent amongst the brethren of the various little groups. It is our thought that, generally speaking, the Lord is pleased to use some in each little company for the instruction and assistance of the others in the same; indeed, we encourage the thought advised by the Apostle, that each member of the Lord's consecrated church should strive to "build *one another* up in the most holy faith."

We believe that an immense amount of good has been done through this pilgrim service during this past year, and that quite a number of the Lord's dear people, as they read this part of the report, will offer prayer on behalf of this feature of the Lord's service asking for us wisdom and grace in respect to the matter for the coming year. The figures

in this line also, we believe, will astound many of our readers. They are as follows:

Number of persons who gave more or less of their time to the Pilgrims work during the year	14
Number of miles traveled in connection with the service	48,845
Visits to churches	649
Public meetings held	1,287
Private or parlor meetings held	875
Cost of this branch of the work	$3,357.59

One point alone in this report seems unsatisfactory to us, and that is the number of private or parlor meetings. These, we think should have been much more numerous in proportion to the public meetings. It is our thought that the chief good in these pilgrim visits is for the household of faith: while, therefore, we urge the holding of some public services to which all classes of Christian and earnest people may be invited by advertisement and otherwise, we urge that during the year beginning the parlor meetings be given the chief attention. At these, subjects can be discussed which would not be so fully appreciated by the public, nor by any except those who had been *studying* along the lines of the WATCH TOWER literature. We take this opportunity, then, to offer this suggestion to the dear friends,—that when notified that a Pilgrim will be with them they may make proportionately larger arrangements for their parlor meetings and proportionately less arrangements for public discourses in halls, churches, etc.

CONVENTIONS OF THE YEAR

The Conventions are a part of the "Pilgrim" work, but deserve a word of special notice. Three general conventions were held during the year—at Philadelphia, Chicago and Dallas; these were interesting and profitable, but were reported on at the time. Besides these the President of the Society (the Editor) attended several *local, one-day conventions*, at different points—Toronto, Canada; Saratoga, N. Y.; Houston, Tex., San Antonio, Tex.; Columbus, O.; Cleveland, O.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Washington, D. C.; New York City; Wilmington, N. C.; Roseboro, N. C.; Hayne, N. C.; and the Florida Chautauqua Assembly.

We have good reasons for believing that these gatherings were all profitable to the Lord's flock, seasons of refreshing and joyous fellowship in spiritual things; nevertheless we feel that in the coming year we must be more economical of our time. May the Lord direct; we will be glad to follow his leadings in the matter.

THE GENERAL TRACT DISTRIBUTION

The circulation of tracts during the year has been highly satisfactory to us. They have not been sown in a broadcast manner, but rather handed out with a measure of discretion, so far as we are able to judge; and this is the plan which we commend. Of course, in a majority of instances we merely know that tracts have been ordered and have been sent; but many give us an intimation of how they use what they receive: some visit hotels, where they hand them to the patrons; others seek opportunity for handing tracts to intelligent looking people at railway stations; others mail the tracts with their letters, perhaps with a little comment, and a request that some report be given after the reading; others keep a variety on hand, and make a selection for those with whom they come in contact. Thus there are various methods in vogue in this department, the colporteurs using a considerable number, leaving one at every house where they fail to take an order,—the tract sometimes having an influence where the words of the colporteur failed.

The total number of tracts sent out during the year was 1,468,990.

Of these a large number went direct from the WATCH TOWER office through the mails, to lists of addresses which we procured in various ways—many of them those of persons known to be religiously inclined, holy people, lovers of righteousness; and some of the best of these lists are sent to us, written upon proper-sized wrappers, by WATCH TOWER readers. You are all welcome to avail yourselves of this opportunity for service. Besides the tracts, we sent out *as tracts* large numbers of WATCH TOWERS to good addresses. We request that no addressed wrappers be sent us for either tracts or WATCH TOWERS except such as are known to you in some way to represent intelligent and religiously inclined people. It is only a waste of money and labor to cast the pearls of truth before those who are swinish; whose god is their belly or their apparel or their pocket book.

THE CORRESPONDENCE DEPARTMENT

What blessed opportunities God has provided for his people at the present time! What an opportunity it affords for all of his dear children to have fellowship and communion! In this manner, as well as through the printed page, those afar as well as those nearby may have the privilege of complying with the Apostle's words, to forget not the "assembling" of ourselves together, and so much the more as we see the day drawing on. (Heb. 10:25) Many letters assure us of the blessings which the wonderful mail service of our day has brought to them; and on our part we can testify that great blessings and encouragement have come to us through this same channel. While some of the letters received are cold and business-like, and others bitterly antagonistic, others, and the majority, are laden with rich perfume of Christian love, sympathy and deep appreciation of present truth. Through these we are kept in touch with the spirit of the Lord's dear flock in all parts of the world; and we can assure you that the touch is profitable to us, as we trust that our responses are profitable to you, and comforting and helpful.

As the work in general has grown, so this feature of it has expanded, so that the figures below are far in advance of those in any previous year in our history:

Letters and postal cards received during the year	37,357
Letters and postal cards sent out	38,609

CONDENSED STATEMENT

Copies of MILLENNIAL DAWN circulated at cost	100,643
Copies of booklets circulated at cost	40,370

Circulated at Expense to Tract Fund

Copies of ZION'S WATCH TOWER	1,247,960
Copies of *Old Theology Tracts*	1,468,990
These amounts expressed in the usual form represent in tract pages	131,891,340.

Whenever figures get into the millions they are quite beyond the average mind to comprehend. We have therefore estimated the matter in pounds,—206,710 pounds, or over one hundred and three and a half tons, weight.

THE FINANCIAL SIDE—TREASURER'S REPORT

Tract Fund Expenditure

Cost of the above 103½ tons matter, including freight, postage, gas, help, etc.	$18,350.21
Pilgrim Expenses, etc.	3,357.59
Total	$21,707.80

Tract Fund Receipts

Balance on hand Dec. 1, 1899	$ 871.54	
From "Good Hopes" Donations	13,337.72	
From Other Sources	4,472.63	$18,681.89
Shortage		$ 3,025.91

THE BLESSED PRIVILEGE OF THIS SERVICE

The Editor (who is President of the Society), in closing this last report of the century, congratulates all the dear friends of the cause upon the above showing, and trust that it will more than meet the expectations of all who contributed to the funds thus scattered as leaves of spiritual healing all over the civilized world. Especially do we trust that the God of all grace, the Father of mercies, may accept and approve our stewardship—the merit of our Redeemer making good whatever unintentional errors the all-seeing eye may discern.

Do we urge the dear co-laborers to make still greater sacrifices for the work in the year just beginning? Not at all. We have never solicited in the past, and we do not expect to do so in the future. Even of the Lord we make no requests for money. His will, not ours, be done in this and in all matters. If he through his people or otherwise sees fit to entrust to us financial means, we will endeavor to use the same to his praise, and seek for this the wisdom which cometh from above. We esteem it a *privilege* to have any share in any department of this "harvest" work, and its accompanying blowing of the Jubilee Trumpets proclaiming restitution times at hand. And this joy in the Lord's service is fully appreciated also by the twelve dear "brethren" who, as office assistants, have so ably and so patiently lent their best endeavors to make the work a success; and their efforts under God have contributed largely to the securing of the above results. The Lord will reward them as we can not. "Brethren, pray for us," as your representatives and the Lord's, in this "defense of the truth."

Below we give some interesting figures from two of the Society's foreign branches (the reports from the other two are not yet at hand.) Both of these reports are *included* in the totals given above.

REPORT OF MANAGER OF BRITISH BRANCH

From May 7 to Nov. 15, 1900

LONDON, Nov. 16, 1900.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I have the honor to submit the following report of the Tract Fund receipts and expenditures for the British Branch of the Society, May 7-November 15, 1900:—

EXPENDITURES:	£	s	d
Paper and printing	340	14	10
Carriage	55	2	3
Share of expense for labor, etc	24	10	4
Expenses in Pilgrim work	45	5	9
Total	465	13	2
Receipts from Great Britain	40	11	10
Deficit supplied from Home Office	425	1	4

Report of Literature Circulated

Copies of MILLENNIAL DAWN circulated	3,224
Copies of booklets	667
Tracts sent out free	77,835
Sample WATCH TOWERS sent out free	171,850
Total sent free	249,685
These represent in tract pages	19,189,684
Letters and cards received	1,184
Letters and cards sent out	9,294

The volunteer work has been quite zealously pursued here this year; how much so you may judge by comparison of the amounts distributed in America and here, and reckoning that there are about twenty times as many TOWER readers in America as we have in Great Britain. Volunteer work has been done in 39 cities and towns in Great Britain, and with some encouraging results. More than 50,000 copies were distributed in London.

Tract distribution has also had considerable attention from the friends here, and with such results as to warrant its continuance. To be sure, we must often put tracts in many houses before reaching one which contains persons ready for the truth; but sometimes the one tract in the right place has a very far-reaching influence, as has been indicated in this city, where one tract under a door has thus far reached four persons, on the principle of John 1:41, 45, and is still working.

The colporteur work has not fared so well, not having had so many workers as have been able to participate in the work in other ways; but the few who have had this privilege have been industrious, and have also been permitted to see some fruit of their labors which has caused their and our hearts to rejoice. We are praying and hoping for more laborers in every branch of service, but particularly in the colporteur department, which experience has demonstrated to be by far the most efficient means of reaching "hearing ears" with the truth, as it is also the most practical, being self-sustaining. The experience of those who have engaged in the service of the truth by the colporteur method in Great Britain in the last six months shows that the worker can sustain himself in this service. It is a most attractive opportunity for those who have time to spend in the harvest work, and we shall be glad to hear from many on the subject.

The financial aspect of the work here is presented in the figures foregoing, which plainly tell their own story. It would have been impossible for the British Branch to do as it has done, except for the financial coöperation of the head office to the large amount of $2,000.

We pray daily for ourselves, and for all of God's saints, that we may be plentifully supplied with heavenly wisdom, with strength and grace, for the discharge of each day's duties in such a manner as will redound to the glory of God and the upbuilding of his people. "Brethren, pray for us." Respectfully submitted, Yours faithfully in Christ,

E. C. HENNINGES

REPORT OF OUR GERMAN WORK

Sister Giesecke reports 448 letters received and 494 letters sent out; 2,899 copies of the German WATCH TOWER circulated as samples, and 10,108 tracts distributed, representing 232,460 pages.

A PERFUME OF SWEET ODOR

MATT. 26:6-16.—JAN. 6.

"She hath done what she could."

Preceding lessons showed us incidents in our Lord's journey toward Jerusalem, via Jericho—the healing of the blind men by the wayside, the conversion of Zacchæus, and the parable of the young nobleman, given because they were nigh unto Jerusalem, and because the disciples and many of the multitude expected that the kingdom of God would immediately be manifested,—set up in earthly grandeur, etc. The distance from Jericho to Jerusalem was only about twenty miles, and Bethany, the home-city of Lazarus (whom our Lord raised from the dead) and his two sisters, Martha and Mary, was quite near to Jerusalem, and with them Jesus decided to spend his last Sabbath-day in the flesh. We may presume that the day was happily spent according to the observance of the Sabbath required by the Jewish law; but the narrative, passing over the events of the day unnoticed, draws special attention to the feast or supper made for our Lord in the evening, after sundown, when the Sabbath was considered ended, and the first day of the week beginning.

This feast was at the house of Simon the leper, yet Simon is not mentioned in connection with the narrative, and it is quite probable that he was then dead. It is conjectured that Simon was either the father of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, or else that Martha was the widow of Simon, and that Lazarus and Mary were younger than she. These items, however, are merely tradition, nothing in the Scriptures throwing any light upon the matter. We remember that on the occasion of a previous visit to this home, our Lord was entertained; and Mary became so absorbed in listening to the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth that for the time she neglected the ordinary affairs of life, until her more practical, but possibly less spiritually-inclined, sister commented upon the fact, which brought forth our Lord's declaration to the effect that while service is quite acceptable and appreciated, veneration and fellowship are still more appreciated—"Mary hath chosen the better part."

The two sisters had the enviable privilege of serving the Lord and ministering to his comfort in the feast of our lesson, just before the agonies which closed his earthly life. As before, so now, the service of the two sisters took somewhat different form, but probably this time by mutual agreement and prearrangement; Martha herself served the table with others assisting, and Mary was left free to render her peculiar service, of which this lesson is a memorial. From some source she had procured a valuable alabaster vase of choice perfume. She had either purchased the vase, and manufactured the perfume herself, at great expense of time, etc., or had spent for its purchase a considerable sum of money. She had anticipated our Lord's coming, and had fully arranged matters so that at this feast she might treat him in a manner in which very few except the worldly great were ever treated;—kings, emperors, etc., were thus anointed with perfume, but very rarely indeed could others afford such a luxury, for the facilities for manufacturing perfume then were quite inferior to what they are now, and even if the perfume were of home manufacture and of fine quality the cost in time, etc., would be great, and the perfume would be so valuable that it was usual to sell it to the very wealthy.

The feast had begun, and Jesus, with the disciples and other guests, were at the table, which, according to eastern custom, was long and narrow, the guests not sitting upon chairs, but reclining full length upon couches or divans, with the head extending over the table, and the feet extending back to the rear, the weight of the shoulders poised upon the left elbow, while the right hand was used in partaking of the food.

While Martha and her associates were serving, Mary came forward and, breaking the seal upon her alabaster vase, she began to pour the precious perfume upon our Lord's head, and subsequently, as John's record of the matters informs us, going to our Lord's feet she poured some of it upon them, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Mary's affection for our Lord was so deep and so strong that it could not be satisfied with any of the ordinary methods of expression. If the kings of earth were perfumed and anointed, much more did she esteem it fitting that her friend, her Lord, the Messiah, should be anointed with the best that she could procure for him. Her love was so intense that it knew no economy—nothing could be too good for her Beloved. She would give expression to the rich sentiments of her heart by giving him the finest and most costly of sweet natural odors. Our Lord appreciated the matter fully—the sweet odor of the heart which prompted the act, still more than the sweet odors which filled the entire house.

But the disciples, more selfish and less able to appreciate Mary's true sentiments, and the propriety of their expression in this form, found fault with her, and the records show that their leader and mouthpiece, who incited the fault-finding spirit amongst the others, was Judas, the treasurer of the

little company, whose disappointment was great that the value of this ointment did not find its way into his money-bag, and thus a part of it, at least, to his own private uses; for we are told, "He was a thief, and carried the bag." His objection seems to favor the thought that Mary may have prepared the perfume herself, for he does not object to its having been *purchased* for a large sum, but that it might have been *sold* for three hundred pence. (Mark 14:5) Estimating the value at 300 Roman pence, or *denarii*, worth about 16 cents each, the value of the ointment would be about forty-eight dollars, but much more than this amount would be represented in today's values; for we are to remember that a *denarius* represented a workman's wages for a day, and hence that 300 *denarii* would practically represent a workman's wages for a year. It was indeed an extravagant action, but it represented an extravagant love, and was expended upon one whom God and the angels delighted to honor, and whom Mary seems to have appreciated much more nearly at his true value than did his other associates of the hour.

Beloved Mary! We can, perhaps, imagine to some extent the emotions which filled her heart as she prepared this costly expression of her devotion, the sentiment of which she hoped others would appreciate. But now, on the contrary, she beholds the "indignation" of her friends and guests, the Master's nearest companions; and her heart sinks within her as she fears that the Lord himself will view the matter in a similar light, and reject and disapprove her libation. What a load is lifted from her heart, when she hears our Lord pronouncing her work a noble deed, and reproving his disciples for lack of sympathy in her sentiment, telling them that this perfuming of his body was in preparation for his burial. It was probably in the midst of this discussion of the matter between Jesus and the apostles that Mary, having anointed his head with the perfume, went to his feet, and began anointing them also, wiping them with her hair, as an evidence that the most precious thing of her personal adornment was gladly at the service of her Lord.

Probably Mary had no thought of perfuming our Lord's body for burial, and his words to this effect would be as astonishing to her as to the others who heard them. It was customary with the ancients, to spend considerable care and money upon the persons of their dead in preparing them for burial; sweet spices and perfumes, etc., were lavishly bestowed, just as today it is the custom to provide handsome caskets and many and expensive flowers and fine monuments, as expressive of the love and appreciation in which the dead are held by their friends. In Mary's conduct in the pouring of the precious perfume upon the Saviour while he was yet living, we have a most excellent suggestion in respect to the proper course to be pursued toward those we love. It is far far better that we should unstop our alabaster vases of perfume, and pour them upon the heads and upon the weary feet of our friends, while still they live, than that we should wait until they have expired, and then give our attention to the cold, inanimate and unappreciative corpse. Our alabaster boxes are our hearts, which should be full of the richest and sweetest perfumes of good wishes, kindness and love toward all, but especially toward the Christ—toward the Head of Christ, our Lord Jesus, and toward all the members of his body, the church; and especially on our part toward the feet members who are now with us, and on whom we now have the privilege of pouring out the sweet odors of love and devotion in the name of the Lord, and because we are his. The poet writes:

"How oft we, careless, wait till life's sweet activities are past,
And break our 'alabaster box of ointment' at the very last!
O, let us heed the living friend, who walks with us life's common ways,
Watching our eyes for looks of love, and hungering for a word of praise!"

The heart of each truly consecrated child of God is like the alabaster vase,—a receptacle for the holy Spirit, the spirit of love, the choicest perfume and most precious to the Lord and to men. It is expensive, because it cannot be gathered rapidly, but requires patient perseverance in well-doing to be "filled with all the fulness of God" Again, it is like Mary's vase in that it gives forth its odor not before, but after the seal is broken and the contents poured forth. It differs from hers, however, in the fact that it may be continually poured out and yet its fulness all the while increase.

Our hearts and their holy love are like Mary's vase again, in that they should be poured upon the Lord himself—upon the Head first, but subsequently upon the members of his body, even the humblest, the lowliest, the feet. And this should be our service, even tho it be unappreciated by others, who instead would think that we should pour our love and devotion upon sinners, or upon the poor heathen world. They realize not what abundant opportunities there will be for blessing the heathen world in the future, in the Millennial age, which God has set apart for their blessing, and in which his disciples will have abundant opportunity for co-working with him in the general uplifting of the world of mankind. Those who upbraid us for pouring out our heart-treasures upon the members of Christ, the church, do so through ignorance, and if at times it has caused some discouragement to us, let us hearken to the words of the Master, declaring that such is a noble course that has his approval, and that it is proper as a prelude to the burial of the entire church, the body,—that it will be appropriate that this shall be done to the church rather than for the poor world, up to the time when the church shall have finished the earthly pilgrimage;—up to the time when the sufferings of Christ having been fulfilled there shall be no longer opportunity to bless and refresh and comfort the body of Christ, respecting whom our Lord declares that what is done to them is done to him.—Matt. 25:40.

So then, let the Marthas serve the Lord in one way, and the Marys pour out their most precious spikenard perfume, assured that neither service will be forgotten; for both are told and have been told for eighteen centuries, as memorials to their praise, testimonies of their love, which the Lord appreciated and accepted, however they were viewed by others.

OPPOSITION FROM SELFISH HEARTS

In this connection it is well to notice sharply that the one who made the greatest ado on behalf of the poor, and who objected most to Mary's expression of her devotion, was the thief and murderer, Judas. And the principle, to a considerable extent, seems to hold good all down throughout this Gospel age· that those who make the greatest outcry on behalf of mission work and in opposition to the expenditure of costly time in the anointing and blessing of the consecrated members of the body of Christ, are not always those who have the interests of the heathen exclusively at heart, but are frequently those who have an "axe to grind," a selfish interest in some way to serve. And not infrequently these hypocrites mislead others of the Lord's dear people, who are thoroughly conscientious, even as Judas, by his sophistry, for a time mislead the other apostles into indignation against Mary for the doing of the very thing which was pleasing to the Lord, and on account of which he decreed that wherever this Gospel should be preached her conduct should be mentioned as a memorial.

And so it is today: this Gospel is preached in more than 350 languages—to every important nation in the world. But we presume that it was not merely Mary that our Lord wished to memoralize, but especially her deed: he wished that all who should know the good tidings should know also of his appreciation of such devotion to him, to his body, and that the more it costs us the more he appreciates it. In view of this, let each one who would be pleasing in the Lord's sight seek continually to pour the perfume from his heart and life upon other members of the body of Christ, and let him realize that in so doing he will not only be pleasing to the Lord, but will be receiving also a blessing himself; for as no alabaster vase could pour forth perfume upon others without itself being thoroughly involved in the perfume, so our hearts, as they pour forth upon others of the members of the body the sweet perfume of love and devotion to the Lord and his cause, will be sure to bring a blessing to ourselves, even in the present life—our Lord's approval and benediction now and everlastingly.

Some of the methods employed in connection with present endeavor to anoint the members of the Lord's "body" for burial,—with the perfume of his truth and grace—call down the condemnation of fellow-disciples. As for instance, the expenditure of time, energy, and large sums of money this present year in the "volunteer" work has been, and will be misunderstood by many of the Lord's dear children,—and be *bitterly* reproved by those who are of the Judas stripe. Yet realizing the Lord's approval we have quite sufficient to make our cup of joy overflow. Fellow-disciples tell us that we should not be handing the meat in due season to the household of faith, but to sinners; that we should not be seeking to anoint the saints with the sweet perfume of present truth, but should, on the contrary, be going to the outcasts of society, engaging in slum-work or in foreign-mission work. The real difficulty with the Judas class, however, is that they fear that the circulation of the truth amongst the Lord's people would cut off the revenue which otherwise might flow into their coffers: they fear the loss of numbers and influence in sectarianism But their fears are largely imaginary; for the

perfume of the truth is only designed to fall upon "the members of the body of Christ," and our expectations are that the Lord will guide it to these, and that to others it will be of no effect. And since the members of the body of Christ, the consecrated ones, are so few, their anointing and their separation from Babylon, and their burial, will be comparatively unnoticed so far as numbers are concerned,—tho their taking away as the "salt" and the "light" of those systems, will indeed be a serious loss, conspiring to their downfall in the great time of trouble approaching.—Matt. 5:13, 14.

Let us not forget to note clearly and distinctly the wide difference between love and selfishness, as exemplified in the opposite courses of Mary and Judas. Mary, full of burning devotion, was willing to sacrifice much to honor, comfort and please her Lord. Judas not only was unwilling to sacrifice on his behalf, but on the contrary was willing to sell him to his enemies for thirty shekels—the price of a slave. Not only so, but the devotion of the one seemed not to impress the other favorably, but rather the reverse; the devotion of Mary, and our Lord's approval of it, seem to have aroused the opposite spirit in Judas, for he went straightway to negotiate with the chief priests for our Lord's betrayal into their hands.

It would appear from the Greek text, and the rendering of the same in the Revised Version, that Judas received the money for his work in advance: "They weighed unto him thirty pieces of silver." He completed the contract; he sold himself to work evil, and that against his benefactor, his Lord, of whose power he was fully conversant, and of which, indeed, he had received so abundantly that he himself had been enabled to heal the sick and cast out devils. How strange that any could be so perverse! No doubt he had a way of reasoning the matter to himself which made his crime appear to him less heinous than it does to us. No doubt, also, others who today are willing less directly to sell the Lord for earthly advantages or influence or money find ways of excusing their perfidy; but in proportion as our hearts are loyal and devoted, as was Mary's, in that same proportion will the Judas course appear heinous and impossible to us.

Yet these climaxes of character are not reached suddenly. Mary's love had been growing from the first; it was greatly strengthened by her course in sitting at the Master's feet and receiving from him spiritual nourishment, which our Lord declared to be a still better part or course than that pursued by her sister, tho the latter was not disapproved. Mary's faith and love had been still further increased as she witnessed the Lord's power in various ways, and especially at her brother's awakening from the tomb. She had cultivated this love and appreciation for the Lord until it filled her entire heart, and found its expression in the costly libation which she had just poured upon his head and his feet. Judas, on the other hand, had long been permitting the spirit of selfishness to more and more intrude upon his heart; he had permitted himself to think of what money would do, and had given his thought largely toward its accumulation. It had fettered his soul, so that he was unable to appreciate the Lord's character, even tho he knew him intimately from daily association, so that he was unable to measure anything except from a monetary standpoint. And these bands of selfishness gradually grew so hard and tight about his heart that they squeezed out everything of character, of love, devotion and friendship, and thus gradually he came to be the representative of, and his name the synonym for, the grossest of ingratitude and meanness, selfishness and treachery. One lesson for us here is, to *cultivate* love and the appreciation of whatsoever things are just, good, lovely and pure; and to fight down and eradicate so far as possible (especially from our own hearts and lives) everything selfish, mean, ignoble, dishonorable.

HOSANNA! BLESSED IS HE THAT COMETH!

MATT. 21:1-17.—JAN. 13.

"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

After the feast of our last lesson, the next morning, the first day of the week (our Sunday), our Lord early began his preparations for his triumphal entry into Jerusalem as a King. Altho he well knew that "his own" people would not receive him, but, as he had already testified to his disciples, that he would be put to death by the rulers, and intimated the night before that Mary's anointing was for his burial, it was nevertheless necessary as a part of the divine plan that he should formally offer himself as King to the Jews, and thus fulfill to that people God's promise that his favor should be "to the Jew first."

Our Lord had previously resisted the disposition of some of the people to take him by force and make him King, withdrawing from their midst, etc. (John 6:15); but now the time, the due time, having come, and that to the very hour, he deliberately planned his triumphal procession, instead of, as previously, hindering it. He sent some of his disciples for the ass and colt, manifesting his superhuman power by designating where and how the animals would be found. An ass was used rather than a horse, and tradition tells us that so all the kings of Israel were accustomed to ride to their coronation.

When the animal arrived the disciples and the whole multitude seemed to enter into the spirit of the arrangement; for it would appear that quite a number of those who came up from Jericho, and who had witnessed our Lord's power and teachings *en route* to the Holy City and the Passover, lodged at Bethany over the Sabbath, as he did. These, with the disciples, constituted quite a little band, who began to hail Jesus as the King, and to do him homage, as was customary with notables at that time, by spreading their outer garments in the way for his beast to tread upon; and by plucking grass and flowers, and branches of palm trees and strewing these also in the way.

Jesus, in the honored position, riding at the head, was followed by this multitude on the road toward Jerusalem. Then another multitude from the city, having heard that the great Prophet and Teacher was at Bethany, came forth to see both him and Lazarus, and these, meeting the Lord and the shouting company behind him, turned about and became a vanguard, shouting like the rest, "Hosanna to the Son of David," which meant the King, one of the royal line. They probably were deterred from using the word "king" lest they should bring upon themselves charges of treason against King Herod, and against the Roman empire, which sustained him in power.

It was a grand or a ludicrous triumphal entry into the city of the Great King, according to the standpoint from which it was viewed. From the standpoint of the disciples and the multitude, full of Messianic enthusiasm and hopes that the longed-for blessings upon Israel were about to be realized, and full of faith that this great Prophet, who had the power to raise the dead and heal the sick, could in his own time and way make himself and them invincible against all enemies, and amply fulfill all the glorious things foretold by the prophets—for these it was a grand occasion, a real triumph. For, notwithstanding the fact that Jesus had previously told them repeatedly of his death, and had even reproved Peter for speaking to the contrary, nevertheless his disciples and others seem to have been unable to receive his words in their true meaning, and to have interpreted them merely a part of his "dark sayings" which would undoubtedly later become luminous in some grand significance. This is attested by their language, even after his death and resurrection—"We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel."—Luke 24:21.

From the standpoint of Herod, Pilate, the chief priests and scribes, this triumphal procession was merely the parade of a fanatical leader and his ignorant and fanatical dupes. They saw in it evidently no more than this. King Herod and Pilate evidently had no fear that this despised Nazarene and his company would ever be able to organize and equip an army which would be of any force as against the order of things of which they were the heads. The religious leaders feared merely that the fanaticism might spread in some manner, and bring down upon them the wrath and further oppression of the secular powers, who might make them an excuse for further interference with the liberties of the Jews. Quite evidently none of these chief rulers believed in Jesus as the Messiah sent of God for the fulfilment of the gracious promises of their Scriptures. To this the apostles testify, saying, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers;" "If they had known they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."—Acts 3:17; 1 Cor. 2:8.

That procession was viewed from still another standpoint by our Lord himself and by the invisible multitude of angels, ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation. These joined in the enthusiasm of the multitude, but from a totally different standpoint—realizing this triumph as merely a part of the divine plan, and merely a prelude to a greater triumph on our Lord's part through the completion of the sacrifice of himself and the attainment thus of "all power in heaven and in earth;" and as a fore-

shadowing, too, of his coming glory and his triumphal entry upon the kingdom on his return from the far country (heaven) armed with a plenitude of power and authority, to put down sin and to bring all things into subjection to God; and to lift up out of the horrible pit of sin and disease and death all desirous of coming back into full harmony with the Father and the laws of his empire. This, the most glorious standpoint of view of that triumphal march, it is our privilege, by the grace of God, to enjoy; and we may well say in our Lord's words, "Blessed are our eyes, for they see; and our ears, for they hear."

RESPONSIBILITY OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Luke's account of this matter informs us that certain of the Pharisees who were with the multitude at the beginning, altho they could not object to anything which our Lord said or did, complained that he should permit his disciples and others of the multitude to hail him as a King, shouting Hosanna! (Salvation, Blessing, Praise!) Then it was that Jesus, knowing of the prophecy bearing upon this subject (Zech. 9:9), not only refused to rebuke the disciples and hinder their acclaims, but informed the Pharisees that since God himself, through the Prophet, had said, "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem," therefore there must be some shoutings; and that if the people had not arisen to that amount of enthusiasm to give such shoutings, the very stones would have cried out, so that the prophecy should not be unfulfilled.

Tho the distance is quite short to Jerusalem from Bethphage, where the Lord mounted the ass, nevertheless the city was hidden from view by the Mount of Olives, and it was when the Lord had reached the top of Olivet, and the city of Jerusalem came suddenly into view, that he halted the procession and wept over the city, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this, thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes . . . because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." (Luke 19:41-44) From this language it is evident that our Lord did not consider the multitudes who were with him, as in any sense of the word, representing the city and nation; for altho these who were with him were shouting the very words, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah!" our Lord's language indicates that a time is yet to come when the heads of Israel, the chief ones representing the people, shall gladly acknowledge him as King of kings and Lord of lords, at his second advent; but in the meantime their failure to recognize the time of their visitation meant to them a great loss of privilege; meant to them that their house must be left desolate, abandoned of the Lord during this Gospel age, during which he would gather from amongst the Gentiles a sufficient number to complete the elect number, in conjunction with the faithful ones of Israel, the remnant who had or would receive him—See Matt. 23:39.

The objective point of this triumphal march was the Holy City, the capital city, the City of the Great King. But our Lord did not go to Herod's palace, to demand possession of it; nor to Pilate's palace, to demand recognition of him; but as the representative of Jehovah, as the Messiah, sent of God to be the Saviour of Israel and the world, he went appropriately to the Father's house or palace—to the Temple.

JESUS EXERCISING KINGLY AUTHORITY

The scene in the Temple must have been a peculiar one. It was undoubtedly crowded with pilgrims from all parts of the civilized world, who at this season of the year came, to the number of hundreds of thousands, to worship the Lord and to observe the Passover, according to the Law. Probably many of them had heard something about Jesus of Nazareth, "mighty in word and deed." Many of them had been healed by him, or had friends who were thus blessed; and we can well imagine the commotion created by the multitudes coming with Jesus and crying, "Hosanna in the highest," etc. The Pharisees, scribes and chief priests, who were used to dominate the people in religious matters, and especially in the Temple, altho filled with anger against Jesus, recognized themselves powerless to do him injury under the circumstances, for he was doing nothing contrary in any sense of the word to the Law, and this would be manifest to all. On the contrary, as tho to show that he was only doing what was in his power, our Lord began to exercise it as would be befitting a spiritual King—by reproving those who were violating the holy Temple and its precincts, driving out of it those who sold doves for offerings, and the money changers, who were reaping a profitable harvest from the necessities of the worshipers from a distance, whose money, not being Jewish, could not be accepted at the Temple, and which they must therefore have exchanged at a loss—the profit of the money changers. We are not to understand that our Lord was interfering with the proper laws of the land nor of the Temple—he was in every sense law-abiding. On the contrary, he was thoroughly authorized, as was any Jew, under the directions of the law, to use so much force as was necessary in the maintenance of the sanctity of the Temple.

DIVINE FAVOR DEPARTED FROM ISRAEL

Blind and lame people came to our Lord in the Temple and were relieved of their infirmities, and then he taught the people—continuing the healing and the teaching for several days, returning at nights to Bethany and coming the next morning to the Temple, but without any further demonstration, as a King, for that one demonstration had served the purpose intended. It had given to the officials of the city and nation the opportunity to formally accept him as king, but their contrary spirit is shown by their coming to him while the children in the Temple courts were crying "Hosanna!" requesting that he should put a stop to the matter; but our Lord answered them, quoting from the Scriptures that this was in harmony with the divine plan: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." The worldly-wise did not appreciate this, and were blinded by self-interest; but little children, and especially those who in simplicity of heart and meekness became like little children, should be the instruments the Lord would use in shouting his praises.

Many of our Lord's parables and special teachings were uttered during those days in the Temple, between his triumphal entry and presentation on the tenth day of the month Nisan and his crucifixion on the fourteenth, as the Passover Lamb. (See Exod. 12:3, 6) These parables, etc., are recorded in Matthew, chapters 23-25; in Mark, chapters 11-13, and in John, chapters 12-16. Among other things he declared that the favor of God was, there and then, taken from fleshly Israel, saying:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee! How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!"—Matt. 23:37-39.

TYPICAL NATURE OF OUR LORD'S ACTS

In considering the best lessons we at the present time can draw from these incidents, we suggest that their typical feature be not forgotten—that all shall remember that the events in the close of our Lord's ministry, and everything pertaining to the rejection and dissolution of the fleshly house of Israel, is typical and illustrative of the things which are to be expected to transpire in the present time, in the end of the Gospel age—in the rejection and dissolution of nominal Israel of today, "Babylon." As already shown in MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. II., page 235, the time which corresponded to the Lord's formal offering of himself to fleshly Israel and his rejection was the year 1878. There nominal spiritual Israel was rejected, as previously the first or fleshly house had been rejected; yet in both cases all Israelites indeed receive him and receive corresponding blessings at his hand.

It is since this date (1878) we understand that our Lord has been in his spiritual temple, the true church, teaching in an *especial manner* all those who have an ear to hear, opening the blinded eyes and helping those who are spiritually lame to walk in his ways. It is since that time that all who belong to the temple class of true worshipers are permitted to hear and see wonderful things out of the divine Word; and it is during this time also that the Lord is casting out of his temple all those who make merchandise of the truth, and who are not true worshipers—the money-changers and dove-sellers, etc.; and it is during this time that out of the mouth of babes and sucklings the truth is being proclaimed so often to the offense of the scribes and Pharisees of today.

Shortly, the last members of the body of Christ, the feet, already being anointed for burial with the sweet odors of the truth, will complete their sacrifice; shortly, the first resurrection will be complete and all the members of the body of Christ be glorified together with him; and then, the sufferings of Christ being ended, the glory will speedily follow. But meantime, before the glory is revealed, there will come a great time of trouble, symbolically a time of fire (trouble) and smoke (confusion) upon the world, and especially upon rejected "Babylon," and all who do not escape from her before the great tribulation comes, even as similar fiery vengeance came upon Israel after the flesh, and all who had not escaped from her.—Luke 3:16, 17; Matt. 13:38-43.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

DUTY TO THE HEAVENLY AND TO THE EARTHLY HUSBAND

Question.—I am the wife of a minister in one of the denominations. I have been studying the truth for now several years, and feel convinced that the WATCH TOWER publications represent the true Gospel. I desire to be faithful to my Lord, no matter what the consequences; but I am in a measure of perplexity to know just what my duty is. As the minister's wife I am, of course, a member of the church; I am the organist for the congregation, and a teacher in the Sunday School. My question is, Should I, or should I not, come out of Babylon—withdraw from worship and coöperation in that which I believe is in many important respects a misrepresentation of the Gospel—of God's truth and character?

I do not wish to weigh earthly interests so far as I am myself concerned, being quite willing to suffer whatever the Lord's providence may permit. My hesitation is more on account of others who would necessarily suffer with me. My husband, who would undoubtedly lose his position and its small salary, is not in sympathy with the truth; my best efforts to awaken his interest in it having proved unavailing. He would suffer, and our two children would suffer, as well as myself; and my query is—To what extent is it right for me to involve others? And what would be the proper course for me to take that would be pleasing to our Lord?

Answer.—Yours is a peculiar case, dear sister. We will suggest what we would consider to be the Lord's will in the matter, and give the reasons, and then leave it for your own conscience to decide upon. It is your duty to do what *you understand* to be the Lord's will, according to the best light which *you* possess or can obtain.

First then, we advise that you explain the whole situation fully and frankly to your husband, and tender to him, as the minister and representative of the congregation, a letter requesting that your name be stricken from the list, etc.,—one of the printed letters which we supply free would answer this purpose. Your husband, as the representative of the congregation, can, if he choose, erase your name from the roll. You may request him to make the matter public, but he will not be bound to follow your request, and under your peculiar circumstances we advise (differently from usual) that you do not send the Withdrawal Letters to all the members of the congregation unless your husband is willing. Leave the responsibility with him.

As for the teaching of a class in the Sunday School, we advise that you continue it, especially if it be a class of adult scholars—teaching, however, not any sectarian theory, but the true theology of the Bible. Let your husband, as the pastor of the church, know that it is the only condition upon which it would be possible for you to retain your class. As for the playing of the organ, we recommend that you continue it also, explaining, however, to your husband your objection to certain false hymn-book theology, that you believe to be contrary to the Scriptures, and requesting that if he desire you to continue to be the organist he will give you some little liberty and consideration in the matter of the selection of the hymns. But we advise that you be not too particular, not hypercritical, in this matter. We reason that God's people are justified in praising God with any words from which it would be *possible to take* a proper thought—even tho others might from the same words take an improper thought.

Our reasons for advising in this case differently from what we would ordinarily are two-fold: (1) Your husband is nominally, and perhaps really, a Christian, and hence it would be proper for you to render some deference to his judgment in any matter not compromising your own conscience—as, for instance, along the lines above suggested.

(2) There is a little difference between the position of a husband and of a wife in such a matter: the wife may throw some responsibility upon the husband, but the husband could throw no responsibility upon the wife. We are not under the law, but nevertheless the law in a shadowy way gives to us some conception of the Lord's view of matters; as for instance, see Leviticus 30. Your husband was aware of your vow unto the Lord whereby you consecrated your all to him, and made no dissent thereto. It would appear, therefore, that he could not in any way interfere with the proper liberty of your conscience without doing violence to his own.

"WHO ONLY HATH IMMORTALITY"—WHO?

Question.—How should we understand 1 Tim. 6:14-16? Is it the Father or the Son who is referred to as the "King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto," etc.?

Answer.—We understand that the Apostle here refers to our Lord Jesus. Our reasons for so concluding are as follows:

(1) While immortality belongs exclusively to the divine nature, we are to remember that the Apostle Paul declares that the entire church is called to "glory, honor and immortality," and the Apostle Peter says that God has given us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these "we might become partakers of the divine nature." This implies, therefore, that the church of God is to possess this divine attribute of immortality or deathlessness. But only our Lord Jesus had yet been made partaker of this quality at the time of the Apostle's writing. The church, his body, would not be thus honored and glorified until their due time, in the first resurrection, when they shall be like him, sharing his divine nature, glory, honor and immortality, etc.

(2) That our Lord Jesus already possessed this *divine nature*, and therefore possessed immortality at the time of the Apostle's writing, is fully attested by the Scriptures, which assure us that "as the Father hath *life in himself*, so hath he given to the Son to have *life in himself*." This describes immortality, for no other conditon of life is inherent life; all other conditions are derived or imparted life. The statement here that our Lord will give this same inherent life to his followers, is in agreement with the Apostle's assurance that all who have part in the first resurrection are raised in incorruption, in immortality (1 Cor. 15:52, 53); and remember that our Lord's resurrection was the beginning of this first resurrection, and that it could have meant no less to him, the Head, than it is by and by to signify to the members of his body. We are to remember the same Apostle's declaration that our Lord Jesus' resurrection was as a "first-fruits;" that thus he became the "first-born among many brethren." We are to remember also that the Apostle, in harmony with the above, expressed the desire that he might have a share in "*his* resurrection," "*the* resurrection," "the *first* resurrection," in which all the overcomers are to share.—Phil. 3:10, 11; 1 Cor. 15:20, James 1:18.

(3) If, therefore, sharing in "*his* resurrection" is to bring his faithful members to immortality, our Lord's own resurrection can have been to no inferior condition. Hence, to apply the text in question to the heavenly Father would not be consistent with the testimony of Scripture, that the heavenly Son possessed immortality at the time as well as the heavenly Father.

(4) That the passage in question relates to our Lord Jesus and designates him the only Potentate, King and Lord, does not imply any disregard or disrespect of the heavenly Father and his attributes, kingship, etc., as the same writer (St. Paul) elsewhere points out. When speaking in similar strain about Christ's kingdom and the subjugation of all things under him, he says, "It is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him." In other words, comparisons which show dignity and honor pertaining to Christ, Head or body, are never understood to be comparisons with Jehovah, who is beyond all comparison.—See 1 Cor. 15:27, 28.

(5) The correctness of this application is further attested by our Lord's own application to himself of the same titles. —See Rev. 17:14 and 19:16.

(6) The Apostle's entire discourse is along the line of showing the faithfulness of our Lord Jesus, his humility and high exaltation, and how servants and all of us should be likewise humble and lowly and faithful to the truth as servants of God, and in due time be exalted—manifested to the world —in glory, honor and immortality in the kingdom.

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