

The New Covenant Advocate

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"Unto us a Child is Born"

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel."—Isa. 7: 14.

THE RETURN of the Christmas season brings afresh to the Christian's mind thoughts of the great events that transpired in Judea more than eighteen centuries ago. Then the love of God for an undone race began to manifest itself in measures that would ultimately work out for the blessing of all; but in what peculiar ways!

First, there was the prediction of the birth of a son to the aged Zacharias and Elizabeth. This child was to be great in the sight of the Lord; he was to turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God; in the spirit and power of Elias he would "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1: 5-17.) This remarkable child was born, and he fulfilled his mission as John the Baptist, "the Elias which was for to come," "if ye will receive it."—Matt. 11: 14.

About three months before the birth of John, the angel Gabriel was sent by the Lord with a message to a chosen maid of Galilee, being of the house of David, and espoused to a man named Joseph, also of the house of David. The message informed her that she was highly honoured of God, in being chosen to be the one through whom the prophecy should be fulfilled. By the power of God, she should become the mother of the Son, whose name was to be called JESUS, because He should save His people from their sins, and IMMANUEL, because His birth would be a token that God is with us.

Although the fulfilment of this would involve Mary in the risk of being seriously misunderstood, she trusted in the power of God to make all things work together to fulfil His counsel, and submitted herself as a willing instrument to let His will be done. (Luke 1: 26-38.) Mary's trust in God was amply honoured. Joseph was caused by the angel of the Lord to understand the situation after he had married Mary, his espoused, and he, being a devout man and a just, recognising the extraordinary nature of the exceptional circumstances,

also submitted to the will of God. (Matt. 1: 18-25.) Inasmuch as the least thing done for God does not go unrewarded, it is certain that Joseph's attitude in these circumstances will not be forgotten.

The Christ to be Born at Bethlehem

Mary and Joseph resided at Nazareth in Galilee, but the prophecy had foretold that the Messiah should be born at Bethlehem in Judea. (Matt. 2: 4-6; John 7: 42; Micah 5: 2.) To Bethlehem, therefore, they must go, in order that this condition be fulfilled, and there be no flaw in the claim of Mary's Son to the Messiahship. Very opportunely there came a decree from the imperial city that all the world, meaning the Roman Empire, should be enrolled. (Luke 2: 1, R.V.) This decree became the apparent reason for Joseph taking Mary an uncomfortable journey of about 75 miles, from Nazareth to Bethlehem; and so the device of man was made to serve the purpose of God.

While at Bethlehem for the purpose of the enrollment, Mary's firstborn Son was brought forth, was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And then—

"Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to our new born King."

In this manner was the prediction of Isaiah 7: 14 fulfilled.

The Presentation of Christ

On the eighth day the infant was circumcised, and His name was called JESUS, according to the word brought by the angel to Mary. Thirty-three days later, complying with Lev. 12: 1-8, they brought the child to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord. It is in this connection that a glimpse is given us of the station in life of Mary and Joseph, the descendants of the royal David. The Law concerning the purifying of a woman who had borne a child required her to bring a lamb for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtle dove for a sin offering. But—

"If she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles or two young pigeons: the one for a burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering."—Lev. 12: 8.

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Mary brought "a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons." (Luke 2: 24.) She was poor. Behold the great humiliation of our Lord, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not anything made that was made! (John 1: 3.) He took upon Himself a bondman's form. (Phil. 2: 5-11.) "He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor."—2 Cor. 8: 9.

When the child Jesus was brought to the temple, to be presented to the Lord, Simeon by inspiration testified concerning the child, and gave thanks that he had been permitted to see the salvation of God, a light for the Gentiles and the glory of Israel. The aged Anna, coming in at the same instant, also gave thanks to God, and spoke of this child to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. Never had an infant been the subject of so many divine testimonies, by angelic and human instrumentalities, as those which were associated with the birth of Jesus. It is interesting to set these down in order.

1. The message by Gabriel to Mary.—Luke 1: 26-38.
2. The inspiration of Elizabeth.—Luke 1: 41-45.
3. The inspiration of Mary.—Luke 1: 46-55.
4. The explanation to Joseph.—Matt. 1: 18-25.
5. The testimony and sign to the shepherds.—Luke 2: 8-20.
6. The testimony of the Magi.—Matt. 2: 1-12.
7. The inspiration of Simeon.—Luke 2: 25-35.
8. The inspiration of Anna.—Luke 2: 36-38.

With the above may be associated the indirect testimony supplied by the inspiration of Zacharias. (Luke 1: 67-80.) Altogether, these are some of the most magnificent passages in the Scriptures, and the Christmas season will doubtless be made spiritually more profitable to all Christians who take them up as daily readings, praying at the same time to be filled with the Spirit that inspired those humble people.

The Genealogy of Joseph

In Matt. 1: 2-16 the lineage of Joseph, the husband of Mary, is given. The form of statement used demonstrates this. If we say, John begat Thomas, we mean to state that John was the parent of Thomas, and that Thomas was the child of John. Therefore, when we see this form of statement used throughout the genealogy in Matt. 1: 2-16, finishing with, "Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary," we conclude that this is the lineage of Joseph. It should be observed that, having brought his statement so far, Matthew says nothing to intimate that Jesus was the child of Joseph, but everything to the contrary.—Matt. 1: 18-25.

The purpose of introducing the lineage of Joseph was (as we understand it) to show that Joseph, although a son of David, could not have been the father of Jesus. Of course, it is understood that no man could have been the father of Jesus; but Joseph's lineage shows that he, of all men, could not have begotten the Messiah.

The descent of Joseph from David was through the line of Solomon and Jeconias, or Coniah. (Matt. 1: 6, 11.) Solomon had not remained faithful to the Lord, and by his unfaithfulness he had forfeited the Lord's promise to establish His kingdom forever, because this promise was conditional upon his remaining constant. (1 Chron. 28: 5-7.) As for Jeconiah (or

Coniah), a descendant of Solomon, and an ancestor of Joseph, the husband of Mary, he was to be written childless, as far as the throne was concerned. He was not to prosper in his days, and no man of his seed should prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.—Jer. 22: 24-30.

In view of these things, it is clear that no son of Joseph of Nazareth, the husband of Mary, could by any means be the Messiah. The Messiah was to inherit the throne of David, but no son of Joseph could inherit that throne; his lineage would be an effectual barrier. Therefore, if Jesus were the son of Joseph, He could not possibly be the Messiah; being the Messiah, the heir of David's throne (Luke 1: 30-33), He could not have been a descendant of Joseph, of the cast-off line of Solomon and Jeconiah. We are thus justified in believing that the genealogy of Joseph is shown in the New Testament for the purpose of proving that Joseph could not have been Jesus' father, and thus of leading up to the narration of the circumstances which accomplished the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy which stands at the head of this article.—Isa. 7: 14; Matt. 1: 23.

The Genealogy of Mary

In Luke 3: 23-38 another genealogy than that of Matt. 1 is presented. The difference between the two is easily discerned by comparing the lists of names. The name of Joseph is associated in Luke 3: 23 with this genealogy, but it is to be observed that the words "*the son,*" in this genealogy are in italics, this indicating that they are not in the text, but have been supplied by the translators. We have already seen (Matt. 1: 16) that Joseph, the husband of Mary, was the son of Jacob, because "Jacob begat Joseph." This being so, it is obvious that he could not have been in the same manner the son also of Heli. Joseph must have been called Heli's son because he had married Mary; that is to say, Joseph was Heli's son-in-law. It is gathered from Luke 3: 23 that Jesus, being about thirty years of age, was popularly supposed to be the son of Joseph, who was the son-in-law of Heli.

This genealogy of the sons of David proceeds through the line of Nathan. (Luke 3: 31.) There was no barrier to prevent a son of this line becoming heir to the throne of David. So it came to pass that Nathan's line, which had never occupied the throne, and was "of low degree," was exalted in being permitted to number among its members Him Who was both David's Son and Lord; while the "mighty" line of Solomon was put down from its seat.—Luke 1: 52.

"Thou shalt call His name Jesus"

The distinctive feature of the reign of "great David's greater Son" is in that His people shall be saved from their sins. (Matt. 1: 21.) Sin did not cease under David's reign, nor was anyone under that reign saved from sin or from death, its penalty. Under the reigns of David's successors, the situation generally grew worse, so that at last the diadem was removed, the crown was taken off, and the throne overturned, until He should come whose right it is. (Ezek. 21: 25-27.) Under His reign, all enemies, including sin and death, shall be abolished. Even now, by virtue of His death and resurrection (Rom. 14: 9), He is Lord of all, and

is in the Father's throne. (Acts 10: 36; Rev. 3: 21.) At the Father's right hand He rules over His Church (Col. 1: 13; Eph. 1: 22), and awaits the day when all His enemies shall be made His footstool. (Heb. 10: 12, 13.) This having been accomplished, and the already begun (Acts 3: 26) blessing of all the families

of the earth, and the destruction of the wilfully wicked having been concluded under His millennial reign, in which will be associated His Church (Rev. 20: 4), He will deliver up the Kingdom to the Father, and will Himself be subject unto the Father, "that God may be all in all."—1 Cor. 15: 28.

Jesus Christ

"That in All Things He might have the Pre-eminence"

Christ's Resurrection and His Gospel Age Work

(Hampton Conference Addresses, Concluded from December issue.)

CHRIST IS RISEN! THE LORD IS RISEN INDEED! This is *good news*! An essential part of the good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people!

We have just heard about our Lord's death; the importance of it in the plan of God, and the necessity of believing that He died for us, if we would be saved. We have also heard of His pre-eminence in His pre-human state, and of His superiority over other men in His human life. We find also that He was pre-eminent in the Resurrection. He was the *first* to rise from the dead (Acts 26: 23; Rev. 1: 5)—

"The first born from the dead; that in all things He might have pre-eminence."—Col. 1: 18.

The Resurrection of Christ stands out in the Scriptures as of equal importance with His death; and it is quite as necessary for us to believe in His Resurrection as to believe in His death. The Apostle Paul states this in 1 Cor. 15: 3, 4. He says he delivered "first of all" that which he had himself received; namely, "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures;" and also, "that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

The Value of His Death and Resurrection

Without His resurrection, the value of Christ's death would have been lost both to *Himself* and to *us*. To have died on the cross and not to have been resurrected would have deprived Him of the very thing He came to purchase; namely, the human race. It would have deprived Him of the glory He had with the Father before the world was, and would have given Him nothing in return. It would have taken from Him a perfect human life, which he never forfeited by sin; it would have left His name forever under a stigma of failure. Hence the reasonableness of those Scriptures which show that there was an understanding between the Father and the Son, that He should receive a reward for His obedience unto death. So we read (Heb. 12: 2)—"for the joy set before Him." He "endured the cross, despising the shame," and that He is "set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Had Christ not risen, the value of His death would have been lost to us! for we read (1 Cor. 15: 14)—

"If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."

Why is our faith vain if Christ be not risen? Because (vs. 17)—

"If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins."

Why are we yet in our sins if Christ be not risen? For two reasons. First, had He died, and remained dead, it would have indicated that He had sinned, and was suffering death as a penalty for His own sin. In that case, He would not have been a perfect sacrifice for sin, and we should not have been redeemed. It was because no man could redeem His brother, or give to God a ransom for him, that Jesus needed to come and give Himself on our behalf. His resurrection from the dead demonstrated that He had given the satisfactory price, and therefore gives us assurance that we are redeemed.

Second, if Christ had not risen, His death would have been valueless to us, and we would still be in our sins, because we needed not only someone to die for us, but

Someone to live for us

to be our kind Friend, and to help us out of sin into holiness and righteousness; to deliver us out of death and to give us life. So we read (Rom. 4: 25), that He was

"delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."

And as showing our great need of Him (1 Cor. 1: 30)—

"Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

Moreover, whatever blessings we might receive in this life would soon be lost to us, if Christ had not risen, and if He were not the Lord of life and glory; for without Him we could have no hope of a future life. The Resurrection of Christ was necessary in order that we might be raised by Him, and that we might retain forever the blessings begun here. Otherwise all our efforts in this life would be in vain, as we are told in 1 Cor. 15: 16-19—

"If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised."
"Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

We see, then, how much depends upon the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. Truly, as the Apostle says (1 Cor. 15: 19), if Christ be not raised, and if in this life only we have hope in Christ,

then we are of all men most pitiable. But, thanks be unto God, He is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Truly He spoke the word, "*I am the Resurrection and the Life*!" "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life." Christ Jesus abolished death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel!

But here several questions occur—*How did Jesus rise up? And with what body did He arise?*

Did Jesus Raise Himself from the Dead?

This inquiry is answered by so many positive Scriptures, that there can be no hesitation in saying that God raised Him from the dead.

Acts 2: 24—"Whom God hath raised up."

Acts 2: 32—"This Jesus God raised up."

Acts 3: 15—"Whom God raised from the dead."

Acts 13: 30—"But God raised Him from the dead."

Rom 4: 24—"Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

1 Cor. 6: 14—"God hath . . . raised up the Lord."

2 Cor. 4: 14—"He which raised up the Lord Jesus."

Eph. 1: 20—"According to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead."

Col. 2: 12—"God, who hath raised Him from the dead."

1 Thes. 1: 10—"His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead."

Heb. 13: 20—"The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus."

1 Pet. 1: 21—"God raised him from the dead, and gave him glory."

Not a word in Scripture to the effect that He raised Himself. The only passage that seems to teach it is John 10: 17, 18—

"Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This Commandment have I received of My Father."

But the thought here is *not* that Jesus would raise Himself from the dead. The thought rather is, that His life was beyond the touch of His enemies; because it was by God's authority (and not theirs) that He laid it down for the sheep, of whom He had just been speaking—"The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." And it was also by God's authority that He would receive it again.

The word translated "take" is rendered "receive" in the last clause of verse 18. He did not "*take*" the "commandment from the Father in the sense of snatching it from Him; he merely took it in the sense of accepting or receiving it. So with the resurrection life; He accepted or received it at the hands of His Father.

We must remember the testimony of the Scriptures that He died for our sins. If Christ really died, as we believe He did, He *could not* raise Himself. To realise what death meant to Jesus, and the great Faith in God which He possessed, we must understand what death meant to all mankind; and that is, utter extinction of life. The Death of Christ was a wonderful revelation of the love of both the Father and the Son for the human race; and the Resurrection of Christ is a grand tribute to the faithfulness of God in not abandoning His Son in death, but delivering Him from it, and giving Him honour and glory. No wonder Christians who know all this have confidence in God, and desire to serve Him and His blessed Son to all eternity! We,

too, have the promise—He that raised up Christ will raise us up also by Him.—2 Cor. 4: 14.

The Bible Asserts the Fact

of Christ's resurrection. Perhaps some of us would like *proof*. We do not wish to be deceived by false reports. Some of us are perhaps like Thomas; we want to see the wounds in His hands, and put our fingers in His side. That kind of proof, however, we cannot give. We cannot examine the tomb to see that He is risen, any more than we can go to Golgotha, and see Him hanging on the cross. But we can give evidence just as convincing as physical sight and touch. The best of all proof on any subject is that which appeals to the mind; that which convinces our reason.

If a friend tells us he met an old neighbour in Collins-street, we are just as sure that person is in town as though we saw him with our own eyes; for our reason tells us that our friend could not have seen and talked with our old neighbour in Collins-street had he not been there. The whole question revolves around the trustworthiness and reliability of our friend. But suppose a half-dozen of our friends had seen and conversed with our old neighbour. We would certainly show ourselves most unreasonable and obstinate not to believe their united testimony.

Now we believe in the resurrection of Jesus as thoroughly as though we had seen Him with our own eyes, and had ourselves heard the words of comfort and instruction He gave to the disciples during the forty days—in the upper room, on the way to Emmaus, at the Mount of Olives. We believe in His resurrection as thoroughly as though we had ourselves seen Him go into heaven.

We believe in the resurrection because we believe the testimony of those eye-witnesses who have written their experiences for our information. Moreover, their testimony was inspired by God's Holy Spirit, so that we have every reason to accept their accounts as true and accurate.

Chosen Witnesses

And who would be more reliable as eye-witnesses of His resurrection than His disciples, who were with Him during His ministry, and who were familiar with all His personal habits and tastes? And to whom would He more likely reveal Himself? Certainly not to the Scribes and Pharisees who persecuted Him, nor to the Roman soldiers, who had no interest in His mission. He had said—

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but YE see Me. Because I live, ye shall live also."—John 14: 19.

He also charged the disciples not to be alarmed or troubled because of His death, because the separation would be only for a short time (Matt 26: 31)—

"But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."

And Peter said (Acts 10: 40, 41)—

"Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly: not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead."

Our Lord kept His promise to go before the disciples into Galilee. We are told in Acts 1: 3 that he

"Showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God."

"Behold my Servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my spirit upon Him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles . . . IN HIS NAME shall the Gentiles trust."—Matt. 11: 18, 21.

"Made Alive in Spirit"

Time will not permit us to look in detail at the "infallible proofs" given to the disciples preceding Pentecost.* But let us examine a few passages which these same disciples wrote under inspiration several years later, after they had received the Pentecostal outpouring, and had been led by the Spirit to a better understanding of our Lord's nature and work than they possessed before Pentecost. Differences of opinion among Christians as to our Lord's nature would disappear if they laid more stress upon these later utterances, and viewed the Lord's manifestations before Pentecost in the light of the disciples' better knowledge.

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death *in the flesh*, but quickened [or made alive] *by the Spirit*."—1 Pet. 3: 18.

The sense of this passage is obscured by the A.V. translation. The Revised Version is better—being put to death *in the flesh*; but made alive *in the spirit*. The literal word for word rendering is—"put to death *in flesh*; made alive *in spirit*."

If we say Jesus was made alive *by the Spirit*, we must be consistent, and say put to death *by the flesh*. But the meaning is, that He was put to death a fleshly being; and made alive a spirit being. This text alone should be sufficient to convince anyone that our Lord Jesus is now a spirit being, and not a human being, nor yet a mixture of divine and human. When we read that "*God is a spirit*" (John 4: 24), we do not infer that He is part human; neither should we do so when we read that Jesus is *a spirit*. But as Peter so plainly states, we should recognise the distinction between Jesus as a man, put to death in the flesh, and Jesus as the Lord of heaven and earth, made alive in the spirit. His meaning is further explained by verse 22:—

"Who is gone to Heaven, and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him."

Now we know from other scriptures that angels are on a higher scale of being than human creatures. Psa. 8: 5 and Heb. 2: 7 show this. Man is described as "a little lower than the angels." We also know this from what we read of human powers as compared with the angelic. Angels appear and disappear in a way men cannot do; they invisibly surround men; they go from earth to heaven and from heaven to earth. Men can do none of these things. Had our Lord been resurrected only on the plane of an angel, He could have done all He did do after His resurrection and before His ascension to convince the disciples of His resurrection, but we are told that our Lord was raised to a higher position even than that of the angels.—Judges 13: 19, 20; 2 Kings 6: 17; Dan. 9: 21-23; 10: 12.

That our Lord was resurrected a glorious spirit being is also shown in 1 Cor. 15: 45.

"The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening [i.e., a life-giving] *spirit*."

Our Lord's nature since His resurrection is also described in Heb. 1: 3, 4.

"Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, . . . sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made *so much better* than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a better name than they."

*These will (D.V.) be taken up in a future article.

Rotherham gives (vs. 3):—

"Being an irradiated brightness of His glory, and an exact representation of His very being."

The American Revised Version reads:—

"Who being the effulgence of His glory, and the impress of His substance."

Now we know what *human substance* is, but we do not know the *substance* of which God's own person is composed. Consequently, we cannot know the substance of which our Lord Jesus is now composed. We do know that it is *not human*, but *spirit*; beyond that we cannot go.

The apostles themselves were not ashamed to confess ignorance on this matter; and we should not be. Though they were eye witnesses of His resurrection, and could give assurance that Jesus was alive, they realized that they had not seen or handled his *divine body*. John says positively (1 John 3: 2)—

"*He doth not yet appear* what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be *like Him*; for we shall see Him *as He is*."

Evidently John meant us to understand that Jesus, *as He is* since His resurrection as a divine being, is different in nature to what He *was* in the flesh as a human being.

A contrast between our Lord *as He was* in the flesh, and our Lord *as He is*, is also given in Phil. 2: 6-11. Our Lord first existed as a spirit being with the Father, as shown in the first address this afternoon.* He left that glory to become a man, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, as shown in the second address this afternoon.* "Wherefore" we are told:—

"God hath *highly exalted* Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow," etc.

These passages are sufficient to show that our Lord was not raised from the dead a human being, nor part human and part divine, but *wholly divine*. As a divine being He cannot be seen by eyes of flesh. Our eyes are not adapted to such effulgence of glory, as we are told in 1 Tim. 6: 16, where our risen Lord is called

"the Blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see. To whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

Now if the Apostles positively state that no man *hath seen or can see* our Lord Jesus in His glorious spirit body, we necessarily conclude that the disciples to whom He manifested Himself for forty days *did not see or touch* His spirit body. What then did they see? They saw what to them was convincing evidence that the *same Jesus* whom they had known, and whom they had seen crucified, was now *alive*; for they acknowledged that the proofs that were given them were "*many and infallible*."

"This same Jesus"

Here the question arises, If Jesus is now a spirit being and not flesh, as while on earth, is He the "*same Jesus*?"

"This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."—Acts 1: 11.

*See our issue of December.

"And behold a voice out of the cloud, which said: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. HEAR YE HIM."—Matt. 17: 5.

To which we reply:—The Jesus of whom the angel spoke was the resurrected Jesus who ascended up into Heaven; and the resurrected Jesus was the same being or personality which had been crucified. There was no change in the personality; the change was in position, nature and glory. Our risen Lord's identity with the crucified Lord is established by many passages, such as John 10: 11, 15, 17, 18; Acts 9: 4, 5; Rev. 1: 5, 7; and notably Rev. 1: 17, 18.

"I am the first and the last. I am He that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore."

There should be no more difficulty in realising that our Lord's identity was preserved through His two changes, from heavenly to earthly, and from the human to the divine, than there is in believing that the identity of the saints will be preserved in their change from the human nature to the divine.

Number and Object of the Manifestations

There are recorded at least ten appearances before Pentecost.

1. To Mary Magdalene—John 20: 14-18.
2. To other women who brought spices—Matt. 28: 9, 10.
3. To Peter—Luke 24: 34; 1 Cor. 15: 5.
4. To two disciples on way to Emmaus—Luke 24: 13-35.
5. To the eleven assembled in upper room—John 20: 19, 23; Luke 24: 36-43; 1 Cor. 15: 5.
6. To the eleven, Thomas being present—John 20: 24-29.
7. To the disciples fishing—John 21: 1-14.
8. To the eleven in the mountain—Matt 28: 16-18.
To over 500 brethren at once—1 Cor. 15: 6.
9. To James—1 Cor. 15: 7.
10. At the ascension—Acts 1: 6-12; Luke 24: 49-53.

There was one appearance after His ascension to Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9: 3-9). The vision seen by John (Rev. 1: 1-3) is often thought to have been an appearance similar to that given to St. Paul, but the context seems to favour the view that what John saw was a vision similar to other visions described in the same book.

These appearances were all made with three definite objects.

1. To convince the disciples of His resurrection.
2. To convince them of His change of nature from human to divine.
3. To encourage them, to instruct them concerning the Kingdom of God, and to give them the great commission recorded in Matt. 28, Luke 24 and Acts 1—to go into all nations preaching the forgiveness of sins in His name.

We come now to the second part of our subject,

Our Lord's Work during the Gospel Age which again emphasizes the grand fact that in all things He should have pre-eminence.

His work during the Gospel age differs only in some features from the work of the Kingdom age. We may say that it is the same in *kind*, but differs in the value of the rewards given to the obedient. This is shown by the titles he received at His resurrection, and the fact that He retains those titles and exercises the functions of His various offices from the time of His resur-

rection right down to the close of the Kingdom age. These offices may be briefly referred to as follows:—

- Lord and Christ.—Acts 2: 36.
- A Prince and a Saviour.—Acts 5: 31.
- Judge of the living and the dead.—Acts 10: 43.
- Lord of all.—Acts 10: 36.
- Lord of the dead and the living.—Rom. 14: 9.
- King of kings and Lord of lords.—1 Tim. 6: 15.
- The Lord Christ.—Col. 3: 24.
- Head over all principality, power, might and dominion.—Eph. 1: 21.
- Head over all things to the Church.—Eph. 1: 22; Col. 1: 18.
- Prince or Ruler of the kings of the earth.—Rev. 1: 5.
- God—"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."—Heb. 1: 8.
- One Mediator between God and men.—1 Tim. 2: 5.
- Mediator of the New Covenant.—Heb. 8: 6.
- Intercessor and Advocate for His people.—Heb. 7: 25.
- King of the Jews by birth and by resurrection power.—Matt. 2: 2; Acts 2: 15.
- Ruler over the Gentiles.—Rom. 15: 12; Psa. 2.
- High Priest after the order of Melchisedeck.—Heb. 5: 10.
- The Prophet like unto Moses.—Acts 3: 22, 23.

While Jesus possesses these titles and offices, He is during the Gospel age exercising His power and authority in the earth to a more limited extent than He will do in the future, but for higher purposes.

The Old Testament prophecies did not differentiate between the work of the Lord Jesus during the Gospel age and during the Kingdom age. That was one reason the disciples were perplexed over the lack of success attending His mission. Another reason was that they had quite overlooked those prophecies which foretold His suffering and death. The Lord had to explain that Christ should *first suffer* and *afterward* enter into His glory (Luke 24: 46; Acts 17: 3; 1 Pet. 1: 11), and the New Testament is required to make clear *what* the Kingdom promised in Exod. 19: 6 really was—a kingdom of priests and an holy nation; and how it was to be formed.

The Gathering of the People

The patriarch had said:—

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between His feet, until Shiloh come; and *unto him* shall the *gathering of the people* be."—Gen. 49: 10.

Hundreds of years later Shiloh was still in expectation—

"Behold I have given Him for a witness to the people, a *leader and commander to the people*."—Isa. 55: 4.

There can be no doubt that Jesus Christ is the Leader and Commander of the people unto whom should be the gathering of the people. And in the fulness of time God sent forth His Son to accomplish that purpose.

"That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might *gather together* in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in Him."—Eph. 1: 10.

This gathering together of the peoples to Christ will require both the Gospel and the Kingdom ages to accomplish; for "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet." It requires the exercise of His mighty power and his various offices in both ages to accomplish this work. Thus His work as Mediator of the New Covenant and as High Priest after the order of Melchisedeck (that is, the combined office of King and Priest) is required in both ages for His people, to give the remission of sins; and His authority as Judge and King is required in both ages in order

"Firm and fearless let us move on; let every step of thought or work be based on truth, friendship, justice; so shall we leave footsteps on the sands of time.—Moncure Conway.

to work out His glorious purposes, restraining the kings of the earth, overturning them when necessary, and sending the gospel light into the various nations and peoples of the earth.

The great work of our Lord Jesus during the Gospel age is the calling out and gathering to Himself of

A Limited Number of Persons

for a particular purpose. This purpose is referred to in various passages; such as—

Matt. 16: 18.—“Upon this rock I will build My Church.”

2 Thes. 2: 14.—“Called to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Rom. 8: 17.—“Heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ.”

Rev. 20: 6.—“They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”

Luke 12: 32.—“Fear not, little flock, it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.”

Many other Scriptures might be cited to show that during this age our glorious Lord and King is selecting as it were His Cabinet, or His bride, to be with Him, to share His glory, and to reign with Him during the thousand years of the Kingdom age.

The Process of Gathering

How are they being gathered together? By the sending out of the Gospel message, and by the power of the Holy Spirit given to those who believe the Gospel. None from among men could be worthy to be joint heir with the Lord in the honour and glory in His kingdom. No member of a sinful and dying race could aspire to such a position except upon divine invitation and with divine help. Here comes in the value of Christ's death and resurrection, and of the New Covenant; for in the New Covenant arrangement is made for the forgiving of our sins, as we read—

Luke 22: 20.—“This cup is the New Covenant in My blood.”

Matt. 26: 28.—“Shed for many for the remission of sins.”

Luke 24: 27.—“That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning with Jerusalem.”

As the command to repentance and the promise of forgiveness of sins were preached in His name, the effect was to call out and gather together, first from the Jews, and afterwards from the Gentiles also, those who were willing to forsake sin, and accept Christ as Lord. “To the Jew first and afterward to the Gentile” was the order.

Our Lord went after the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to gather them together unto Himself and to fulfil to them the promises (Matt. 15: 24; John 10: 1-14), but they would not come to Him (John 5: 39, 40; Matt. 23: 37). Only a remnant received Him, and to them gave He liberty to become the sons of God (John 1: 11, 12). Romans 11 describes how many of the branches of the olive tree were broken off because of unbelief. To the Jews pertained the promises and the covenants, but they despised their privileges (Rom. 9: 4, 5; 10: 3). They would not acknowledge Jesus as their King, nor yet their need of forgiveness of sins in His name.

The gathering of Israel was foretold by the prophet:—

“And now saith the Lord that formed me to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, That Israel may be gathered to Him, and I may be glorious in the eyes of Jehovah.”—Isa. 49: 5, margin.

Three thousand Jews were “gathered” on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 41); and from time to time others were “added” (Acts 5: 14; 11: 24, 21). But not all Israel would be gathered; they were stiff-necked and rebellious. They lost a great opportunity, but God's purpose was not really interfered with, for He had foreseen their hardheartedness, and arranged accordingly. They in their blindness had not noticed that their Messiah was to gather together and bless other peoples beside themselves—

“The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, “Yet will I gather others to Him, beside those that are gathered unto Him.”—Isa. 56: 8. Compare Isa. 56: 1-8 with Matt. 21: 12-14; John 4: 21-24.

And so the “gathering out” work has gone on; the Lord has been building his Church. When the Jews refused the Gospel, the Apostles turned to the Gentiles, as stated in Acts 15: 14—

“Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.”

As a remnant was taken out from the Jews, and gathered to the Lord, so by the same good tidings of a Saviour, a people is being chosen out from the Gentiles, and gathered to the Lord and to each other. All through the age Psalms 50: 5 has been fulfilling—“Gather My people together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice;” that is, those who have entered into the New Covenant over the perfect sacrifice which our Lord gave. He offered up Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin, and at the same time as the covenant victim* over which we may enter into relationship with God.—Heb. 9: 16-20.

All these holy ones were to be gathered together as members of that true Church which our Lord would build; for there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism,” one Church—the Church of the living God; and all true believers are members of that one Church. So says Peter (1 Pet. 2: 9)—

“Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light, which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”

The “taking out” and “gathering together” of this people for His name, this royal priesthood, this holy nation, have occupied the entire Gospel age. The testings and trials have been severe, but the reward held before the Church has been glorious, and the grace of God has been sufficient.

The Church has been called to walk in the footsteps of her Lord; and these steps are thus defined by Peter—

“Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him who judgeth righteously.”—1 Pet. 2: 22, 23.

The reward of the Church comes at the end of the Gospel age. The Lord said—

“If I go away, I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also.”

The Apostle Paul said—

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me at that

*For further evidence concerning Jesus Christ as the covenant-victim, see “Advocate,” Nov. 1909.

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day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing."

And Peter said (1 Peter 1: 3-5) that our inheritance, "incorruptible and undefiled," is "reserved in Heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Let us then who have been *called out* from sin and

death, from Gentile ignorance and vanity, from the darkness of this world and the power of Satan, realise that we are being *gathered to Him* in heart and mind and purpose; and may we all soon be gathered also into the glories which He has in reservation for those who love Him, and forever acknowledge Him as in all things pre-eminent!

R.B.H.



Christ's Second Coming and His Kingdom Age Work

OUR LORD'S RETURN has been the hope and expectation of all earnest Christian people, and well it might be, for we have the promise in His own words—

"I will come again, and receive you unto Myself."—John 14: 3.

We are also told to "comfort one another with these words"; "Surely I come quickly"—1 Thes. 4: 18; Rev. 22: 20.

But there are varying opinions as to the *manner* of our Lord's return. Many are looking for His appearing with a multitude of angels and a blowing of trumpets, at which signs all the saints shall go flying through the atmosphere to meet Him, leaving behind them many little ones without parents to look to their daily needs. Certain scriptures seem to support this view, but on being examined they will be found rather to contradict it. 1 Cor. 15: 52 is quoted in support of this theory.

At the Last Trump

Most commentators associate the "last trump" with the voice of the seventh Angel of Rev. 10: 7. Six of these trumpets are said to have already sounded, and yet no one has ever heard the voice of any of these six. Revelation is a book of symbols, and each of the seven trumpets is symbolic of a period of time during which a certain message has been given and a certain work accomplished, as described under the various "trumpets" (Rev. 8: 2 to Rev. 11: 19).

If the sounding of the six angels was symbolic, why should we expect the sounding of the seventh to be literal? We see our Lord's reply to the Pharisees (Luke 17: 20-21) to the effect that His coming would not be with outward manifestations; also the apostle's statement (1 Thes. 5: 2), the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night. This being the case, we must look for His return in some quieter manner.

In Matt. 24: 37-39, our Lord tells His disciples—

"As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."

A mistake on the part of the translators of the King James' Version has made the correct meaning of this passage and that of others in which the word coming

is used very obscure. The word "coming" is translated from the Greek word *parousia*, which is more correctly translated "*presence*" (See Matt. 24: 3, 27, 37, 39, R.V., margin). This mistranslation has done much to bring about the erroneous view on the subject of our Lord's return. Time will not permit us to go into all the passages now, but this will suffice for the present to show that instead of His coming with a great noise, it is to be secret, and earthly affairs will be going on for a time the same as they did in the days of Noah, and His *presence* will be realised only by a few of the watching ones. As the angels told the disciples when He went away, His return would be in "like manner" to His going—known only to the few watchers, the rest of the world being in ignorance of it.

The first work of Christ after His return will be to raise the sleeping saints (1 Thes. 4: 16), after which those that are alive shall be caught away at their decease, without sleeping as did those who passed away before His presence; but both classes shall be "caught up" to one place, as the apostle tells us, together to be associated with Him in the carrying out of the remainder of the work in connection with "the restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began."

The Kingdom Age Work

We have seen from what has been pointed out to us, that up to the end of the Gospel age our Lord has had the pre-eminence, as the Scriptures declare. (Col. 1: 17-19.) He has been the means used by God to accomplish His purposes. But many people think at this point His work, as far as this planet is concerned, is complete; that when the saints are taken away this earth is to be reduced to a molten mass, and that Satan being bound, means that he will have no one to tempt for the thousand years; and so, like a goat roaming over the mountains, he will roam over a desolate earth beholding the havoc he has wrought. This mistake is made by giving too literal an interpretation of 2 Peter 3: 7-10 and several other scriptures, which if read with their contexts, are sufficient in themselves to prove them to be composed largely of figurative language.

We will look at a few of the many Scriptures which refer to our Lord's work at His second coming in connection with this earth, and that concurrent with the closing of the Gospel dispensation. Dan. 2: 24, the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, refers to the days of the ten kings—

"In the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed."

Again, Dan. 12: 1-3. If we read the eleventh chapter we see the reference is not to 1000 years' desolation, but, on the contrary, to a time of activity.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was, since there was a nation," etc.

Again, Ezekiel 21: 27—

"I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him."

This was spoken against Israel. But the same sentiment can also be expressed of the world at large; for the present ruler, Satan, is only ruling by usurpation; it never was his right. He shall be bound, and his goods spoiled (Matt. 12: 29), which goods are the human race, which he has taken into captivity.

"He [Jesus] shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His Father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His Kingdom shall there be no end."—Luke 1: 32, 33.

We see also, in Rev. 20: 4, that Christ and the Church are to reign for a thousand years; and during all that time there is one great work to be accomplished, which will not be finished until the end of the Kingdom age.

Wars shall cease

Among the first works of the Kingdom age will be the cessation of wars, and the destruction of war machinery. (Psalm 46: 9; Isaiah 2: 4). How different from the present day, when we hear on every side that a nation's peace lies in the strength of her armies; and from what we see around us they really believe it. The nations are gathering their armies around them, trades unions are accumulating all the power they can, and yet it is all done in their own strength; but when the rightful King takes to Himself His great power "they will learn war no more."

A promise was made to Abraham that he should have for an everlasting possession the land wherein he was a stranger, and did not possess even as much as a foot of it (Gen. 12: 1-3; Acts 7: 3-5). In Jeremiah 31: 15-17 we read that the children were to "come again to their own border." In Ezekiel 16: 53-55 a promise is made that the children of Israel should return to their former estate, and in verse 62 He has promised to establish a covenant with them. We read also of the restoration of many of the nations which were destroyed.

Jer. 48: 47—Moab is promised freedom again.

Jer. 49: 6—The children of Ammon are promised deliverance.

Jer. 49: 39—Elam shall be restored.

Isaiah 19: 25—Egypt shall be called the people of God.

Ezek. 16: 44-63—Sodom and her daughters, Samaria and her daughters, together with Jerusalem and her daughters shall be restored to prosperity.

Many Christians tell us that there is no hope for the heathen, and they quote Jude 7 as a proof; and yet our Lord, when speaking to Capernaum, said that if the Sodomites had received the opportunity the people of Palestine then had, they would have repented. How good it is to know that they shall yet have the opportunity.

Rejoicing for all

He will turn to the people a pure language (the Gospel), that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent (Zeph. 3: 9). He is to lighten every man that cometh into the world (John 1: 9), and in 1 Tim. 2: 4 we see it is God's will that all men should be saved or preserved and be enlightened. Psalm 86: 9 tells us that all nations shall come and worship before the Lord, and glorify His name. He will wipe away tears from off all faces (Isaiah 25: 8). In Rev. 22: 17, an invitation is sent forth, that whosoever will may take of the water of life freely.

From these Scriptures we see that under the Kingdom age reign of our Lord, the rightful King, peace and happiness shall abound and there shall be a fulfilment of the Lord's prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as in heaven." The way is to be made easy.—

"An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness. . . . No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."—Isaiah 35: 8-10.

We see from John 5: 27-29 that not only they who are living on the earth at the beginning of the Kingdom age, but all that are in the grave shall come forth to be judged by the One whom God hath ordained, even our Lord Jesus Christ. He will have the office of the Judges of old, to teach, restore, and bless, not as a judge in the courts of our day, merely to pass a sentence. The Lord's judgment will be something to rejoice over (Psalm 96: 11-13; 98: 7-9). The passages concerning the work of the Kingdom age help us to understand why all men were not enlightened and given the opportunity to believe in previous ages.

The Apostle Paul tells us (Acts 17: 30, 31), concerning the heathen nations before his day, that—

"The times of this ignorance God winked at; because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained."

And we have already seen that the work of the Gospel age has been to take out of the nations "a people for His name," who should be joint-heirs with Christ, and reign with Him during the thousand years of the Kingdom age. Then all peoples not previously enlightened and judged will be given the opportunity to believe on Him and to have everlasting life.

We cannot take from this that all the world will be everlastingly saved, for the Scriptures do not teach universal salvation. On the contrary, we see that the

wicked are to be destroyed (Psalm 37: 9-11, 34-40). They shall be burned up (Malachi 4: 1). They shall be destroyed from among the people. (Acts 3: 22, 23). So we see that the work of our Lord in that age will be to bring peace on earth, even as the angel proclaimed—

"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."—Luke 2: 10.

He will destroy all evil and evil doers; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death (1 Cor. 15: 24-28). Then, with the earth restored to the perfection originally seen in Eden, and inhabited by a holy, worshipping people, He will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, and will Himself be subject unto the Father, that God may be all and in all.

H.S.

The Parables of Our Lord

(Continued from October issue.)

The Parable of the Sycamine Tree

Luke 17: 6.

To the Disciples.

6. And the Lord said, if ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea, and it should obey you.

THE FIRST ten verses of Luke 17 seem to be a continuation of chapters 15 and 16, the series of parables already examined. These parables, of increasing interest and intensity, showed up the Scribe and Pharisee class in their true colours—hard-hearted, self-righteous, and despising the publicans and sinners who drew near to hear the gracious words of mercy and forgiveness which fell from the Master's lips. Because of this proud and stubborn disposition, and their unfaithfulness to their stewardship, many offences would arise. Many of the repenting publican and sinner "little ones" would be discouraged, for the Scribes and Pharisees, instead of helping them and sympathising with them in their efforts to serve God, would continually taunt and mistreat them, and perhaps drive them back again into sin. Oh, how hard it is to be good, when those to whom you look for a kind word and a helping hand administer only rebuffs! How many publicans and sinners who would have followed Jesus were hindered by the attitude of the chief priests and elders and the Scribes and Pharisees! To the latter our Lord said—

"Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of Heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in."—Matt. 23: 13.

It were better for the whole Scribe and Pharisee class to be cut off from God's favour and experience the troubles predicted in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, than that one sincerely repentant publican or sinner should be turned aside from following the Lord. Not only so, it were better that so hard-hearted and perverse a character be cut off in the second death, fitly represented by the casting of the bringer of offences into the sea with a millstone about his neck,

than that one truly repentant (but timid and weak) follower of Jesus should be turned back again into the sinful life from which he had been rescued.—Luke 17: 1, 2.

"Take heed to yourselves." You expect the mercy of God for yourselves; fail not to extend the same to others. It will go hard with you if you do not! Do not take the risk of developing into a hard-hearted and hypocritical Pharisee, but—

"If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him."—Luke 17: 3.

The rebuking of the brother does not mean scolding or slandering him, or magnifying the offence into a mountain, but simply this:—Call the matter to his attention privately, in as kind and loving a manner as possible. If he sees the point, well and good; forgive him. If he does not see that he was in error, perhaps talking over the matter will reveal that you were yourself partly to blame, or that you had misunderstood him. Strive always to gain the brother. (Matt. 18: 15.) No matter how often he trespasses, always maintain toward him a kind and forgiving spirit.

No wonder the Apostles quickly cried out (verse 5)—"Lord, increase our faith!" It was a hard thing He was asking of them; they thought they should not be able to do it. They would need help from the Master, more confidence and trust in Him; more certainty that His was the right way, and that the old way of retaliation and stiff-neckedness was the wrong way. But really, the Lord replied, it does not take a large amount of faith to do it. It requires only a very small quantity. "All that is required is to say to yourself, Out with this old spirit of pride and vindictiveness! Do not attempt to chop off the branches of the tree and leave the roots strong and well spread out in the soil, but speak the word in the power of the Lord, and the whole tree will come out, roots and all, and be planted in the midst of the sea, never to trouble you again. It is not necessary for me to increase your faith in order to do this; you have only to ex-

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ercise the little faith that you have, though it be only as tiny as a mustard seed; moreover, what you most need in this case is *obedience*. I, your Lord and Master, tell you that you must do this; you must forgive, you must be kind and forbearing and loving. You have no choice but to do exactly what I tell you. Listen to the parable of the unprofitable servants and you will understand what I mean.

The Parable of the Unprofitable Servants

To the Disciples.

Luke 17: 7-10.

THE PARABLE.

7. But which of you, having a servant ploughing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

8. And will not rather say unto him, Make ready where-with I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

9. Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

THE INTERPRETATION.

10. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

IF THE DISCIPLES, the publicans and the sinners were in danger of priding themselves because they were not like the Scribes and Pharisees whom they had just heard denounced in such strong terms, the Lord quickly brought them down to a humbler state by impressing upon them that they must forgive their brethren until seventy times seven. (Matt. 18: 21, 22), and that there was in themselves a great tree of selfishness and unforgiveness which it was necessary for them to pluck out and cast away root and branch. Their pride was further lowered by the assurance that, far from requiring great and wonderful faith to accomplish such an uprooting, they had but to exercise a very small amount of faith—even as a grain of mustard seed. Besides, so far as forgiving brethren is concerned, it is not necessary to forgive seventy times seven trespasses all at once, requiring marvellous faith to do it. If each trespass be forgiven as it occurs, the faith and patience and love will develop, and when the 490th time comes, forgiveness will be more full, free and hearty than ever.

It was necessary for the disciples, as well as for the publicans and sinners whose cause the Lord so graciously espoused, to recognise that their exemption from the condemnation of the Scribes and Pharisees did not put them upon a high level of character attainment. It was also necessary for them to understand their exact position, both as concerned each other, and as concerned their Lord and Master. In their jubilation over the downfall of the doctors of the law, they must not themselves become unduly elevated. They were as yet

only as the lowest menials, plowing or feeding cattle. Their position was not to ask the Lord for special favours (as that their faith might be increased), as though a servant expected his master to minister to his comfort and welfare, but rather to continue as menials, subject to the Master's beck and call. If He sent them to the field, there they must plow or feed the cattle as He directed; if they came in tired and hungry, they had but to keep on obeying orders. Whether in their relations to fellow believers, or the outside world, or work in the Lord's vineyard, or personally waiting upon Him, their attitude throughout must be that of faithful and obedient SERVANTS. Under the Law the servants of God were under obedience. The Gospel promised them liberty from the bondage of that Law, but not liberty from bondage to God, to whom their obedience must be faithfully rendered. Obedience to God meant now obedience to Jesus, who was set over them by God to be their Lord and Master. "This is My beloved Son; Hear ye Him!"

And would not there be cause for justifiable pride if they faithfully performed all He laid upon them, if they had forgiven their brethren seventy times seven, and were wearying for a rest? Ah no! not even then; for they will have done only that which it was their duty to do. Not even can they expect thanks! Why should the Master be grateful to them? It is they who need always to thank Him for the great deliverance He wrought, when He called them out of darkness into His marvellous light; out of the service of Sin and Satan to the service of God; it is they who need to be ever grateful and thankful to Him for taking sufficient interest in them to command them for their own good.

If they do not see the advantage of forgiving the trespassing brother, no matter; the Master commands, that is sufficient. And so with all other duties and obligations to humility and holiness laid upon them.

Their obedience must be as implicit as that of a child; their humility as genuine; their forgetfulness of injury as complete; their sincerity as wholehearted.—Matt. 18: 1-10.

"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven."—Matt. 18: 3.

And afterward? When they have done all it was their duty to do; when they say humbly, We are after all but unprofitable servants, for we have really brought the Master no gain, whatever He does for us is only unmerited kindness and love: Then He will say—

"Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—Matt. 25: 21.

For the Children

"O Jesus Christ, my Master,
I come to Thee to-day;
I ask Thee to direct me
In all I do and say.

"I want to keep my promise
To be Thy servant true;
I come to Thee for orders,
Dear Lord, what shall I do?"

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What the Year 1910 has brought

UPON the threshold of a New Year, we pause to consider all that the Old Year has meant to us. Individually, it has meant, to all the Lord's trusting people, a variety of experiences—joy and sorrow, profit and loss, more vigorous health and youth, or increasing age and weariness. But each and all can say, with truth, that the Lord has been good; there has not failed one word of all He has promised us; not a hair of our head has been injured, not a grief has assailed us, but what it can work together—nay, *is* working together—for good, to those who love Him and are of the called according to His purpose. The good purpose of God is that we, having been delivered by faith from the condemnation, might grow in grace, knowledge and love, and be transformed into the image of His dear Son. Whatever, therefore, assists to those ends, we may all rejoice in, however painful or hard to bear it may be.

It has been a year of standing fast for the truth as it is in Jesus; of suffering for righteousness' sake; of holding aloft the standard of the Cross, proclaiming Him as the one Mediator between God and men, and the one only and complete offering for the sins of the human race. God grant His blessing upon all the efforts put forth during the year that is past by every sincere Christian regardless of age, sex, condition in life, country and language! And God bless every one, from the feeblest to the strongest, who during the year to come shall likewise do his or her little part in the great work of the Gospel!

But the wider our outlook, and the more deeply we sympathise with the time of travail and sorrow through which the whole groaning Creation is passing, the less heavy does our own cross press upon us; and the more glad are we to be one year nearer the time when *all* sighing and pain shall be no more, and when all the earth shall give praise and honour to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb.

The year 1910 has witnessed the progress of various movements begun and more or less brought forward in previous years.

Among these may be mentioned increased interest in the Temperance movement by all classes of people. Even the Kaiser is now following the water-wagon, as our American friends express it. He sees what thousands in the commercial world have already recognised and acted upon, that in any test between a teetotaler and a hard drinker, the man who has his wits about him is bound to come off best in the end. Now the Kaiser sees that Germany's chances of success in the next war will be increased by the possession of a *sober* army. What the army itself thinks on the subject the next few years will show. Russia also is taking part in this movement, the Holy Synod having

recently prohibited absolutely the drinking of "vodka" in the monasteries.

Another progressive movement is headed by the bandwagon inscribed—"Back to the Land!" Other banners are, "Give us Room!" "Give us Air!" "Give us a Chance in Life!" Increased interest in agriculture as a science, in irrigation, in fertilisers, in intense culture, in forest conservation, all show that mankind is realising what was ordained at the first, that the earth is his home; and that rightly to exercise his functions as caretaker, and to develop as a man, mentally, morally, and physically, individual possession is necessary, as well as national supervision and direction for the good of all.

Another progressive movement is the Socialist, in some instances clarified of the impracticability of the extremists, and brought within such limits as permit of its application under such constitutions as already exist. The fact that Socialism as a theory is spreading among the people does not prove that its extreme measures will ever be adopted by the majority, even of working people who (they say) would have most to gain; or that extremists will ever have the opportunity of putting their theories into practice.

In considering future possibilities, one must always bear in mind that the political *party in power*, or the social classes most prosperous, discredit all movements whose object is to alter the present order of things, and many bugaboos are raised to frighten the timid and ignorant. Any legislation for the benefit of the people at large is instinctively resisted by the autocratic classes who cling to the now exploded doctrine of the "divine right" of a small minority to wealth and ease and the service of the majority. The Kaiser's recent insistence upon his so-called "divine right" as a despotic sovereign will, the Socialists declare, if persisted in, only mean "the destruction of him and his house."

Although our Lord when on earth did not take sides between the classes and the masses or take part in political affairs, and His people now should not do so; yet, being in the world, it is right that their sympathies should be on the side of humanitarianism rather than that of oppression.—Jas. 5: 1-8.

As an instance of how Socialism acts when in office:—

"M. Aristide Briand, the French Premier, who has put an end to the recent railway strike with so strong a hand, is a man of relentless energy and unconquerable will power, which has made his political adversaries call him a 'dictator.'"

"It is generally admitted that the French Republic has not had a stronger man in any Cabinet, excepting, perhaps, M. Clemenceau, M. Briand's predecessor."

"M. Briand was once a Socialist. When a young barrister he proclaimed his belief in Socialism; when he became a

A Ransom for all, Shadows of Calvary, Salvation and the Covenants

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deputy he was a Socialist still. He became Minister of Public Instruction, then Minister of Fine Arts, then Minister of Justice, and he remained a Socialist. When he succeeded M. Clemenceau he introduced himself to the Chamber of Deputies at the first Socialist Prime Minister of modern times. That was a year ago. Since then M. Briand has gradually, but surely, tended towards a conservatism which is enterprising, direct, broad minded, and unmistakably stamped with the hall mark of common sense."

This "Socialist" was able to appreciate the fact that true Socialism concerns the welfare of *all* the people, and that the railway men involved in the recent strike did not constitute all the people. Socialism has its faults, but anarchy is not one of them; and in the recent crisis the spectacle was presented of a Socialist introducing legislation constituting a strike on the part of State servants treason. The greatest good of the greatest number is the aim of all enlightened government, call it by what name you will. It is not a terror to those who do well, but to the evil doer.—Rom. 13: 3, 4.

The reform of the House of Lords marks an advance step in English politics, and the process is being carefully watched by all the world, however various their opinions as to the best means to accomplish it. The bringing low of aristocratic power is the order of the day, and every autocratic government will have its turn. This does not, however, mean that there shall be no head to the government, or no heads to the various departments of state. Free and liberal government must be as orderly and as autocratic within certain recognised limits as the most severe despotism, else the public welfare would not be served, for there would be no authority to subjugate criminals or stamp out evils, no placing of responsibility, and no co-ordination of effort under recognised leaders and experts. Under no government, however liberal, can the criminal, the feeble-minded and the perversely selfish and self-indulgent be given license; and the restraint of any individuals means the giving of authority to other individuals to administer such restraint. A House of Commons without a check upon it might be as irresponsible and irrational as a weak-minded despot.

A review of the year would hardly be complete without a reference to the industrial and other movements among women. Some years ago it was freely asserted that it would be impossible to organise the women workers because women are instinctively hostile to each other, and are incapable of working together for any given object. This assertion and prediction originated, of course, with those who were profiting by their disorganised state, and who feared the consequences of organisation. These sentiments loudly proclaimed and scattered broadcast possibly had the effect of postponing trades-unionism among women. However, the same prediction had been made years before concerning unions for men, and the way in which working men have stood out together for higher wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions, has surprised many. Labour unions are being built up among women in the same way that they were built up among men: namely, by educating them up to an appreciation of the advantages of mutual co-operation, and by show-

ing them the folly of bickering and jealousy among themselves. When they have learned a few lessons and felt by experience some of the benefits of co-operation, there will be no question as to the loyalty of working-women to one another and to the cause they mutually espouse.

The first great strike organised by a women's labour union was the inter-city strike of the shirt-waist makers of New York and Philadelphia, and there were three noteworthy features; the steadfastness of the girls, the brutality of the police (attributed, it was said, to the fact that the girls had no vote), and the sympathy and practical co-operation of a number of women of wealth.

The enfranchisement of women is another movement gaining headway, and which will run more or less in harness with the movement for an extension of the franchise among men in Great Britain and on the Continent. Here, again, the old conservative elements cry "Danger," just as the aristocracy cried "Danger" when the enfranchisement of men was first broached. But in America they have male suffrage and in Australia female suffrage without any of the horrible things happening which were feared. For a working man to work eight hours instead of twelve and to have a vote were once dreadful calamities to contemplate; for a woman to have regular hours of work, fair wages and respectful treatment, and to have a vote are still to many people unthinkable. The large class who prosper by sweating and iniquity, and who are afflicted with the "divine right" delusion, prefer the old way of ignorance, semi-slavery, and disfranchisement for all except their own exclusive set.

The way in which religion is misused to maintain their entrenched position is illustrated by a recent utterance of the Kaiser.

In a speech delivered at the Benedictine monastery at Beureaux, he said:—

"The twentieth century has brought ideas which can only be effectively combated with the help of religion. The crown I wear can only give me an assurance of success if it is based on the word and personality of Christ. The symbol thereof is given by the crucifix of the monastery. You must help to strengthen the religious sense inborn in Germans and increase their reverence towards the altar and the throne."

The Roman Church, having its people, both male and female, under the greatest bondage of superstition and fear, and in the greatest ignorance on economical and social, as well as religious, questions, naturally appeals to the Kaiser as the institution most useful to him in the present situation. Apparently he does not fully count the ultimate cost to him and his realm.

The peace movement gains strength with the passing years, especially since the labouring classes have awakened to the fact that they were used to fight the battles for the capitalists, and received none of the spoils. In this respect, at least, men are acknowledging that women were right, in preferring their husbands, sons, fathers, and brothers at home supporting their families by honest labour rather than absent destroying the husbands, sons, fathers and brothers of other helpless

Christian Workers

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women. "War is Hell," and it is time that all men realised it and preferred the counsels of the Prince of Peace to those of the god of War.

In religious affairs the past year was a repetition of the preceding. More of the stars have been falling from "heaven"; that is, more religious teachers have lost the light of the gospel, and are falling like black, unlovely meteorites, to bury themselves in the social "earth." Of this we are reminded by the following:

The friends of F. B. Meyer will be saddened by the publication of his missionary sermon preached in 1906. We are told that there is need "to reconstruct a basis and an argument for Christian missions." The old representation that the heathen are perishing, and need the word of life has now, he tells us, lost its force; and no longer commands the needful collections and subscriptions in the homeland.

What, then, is the new basis which he proposes? It is an extension of the delusion of the so-called "higher life" doctrine. The heathen have already been saved in millions without any preached Gospel; and what the missionary ought to do is, he says, to ascertain the point to which they have already attained and help to raise them to a higher position!

He was asked at one of his meetings in India what had become of the ancestors of his native hearers. The reply was that if "they had exercised faith in such light as they possessed," all was well. "As soon as your forefathers," he said, "entered the other life, they would discover they were accepted in the virtue of what Jesus Christ did for every man when He tasted death on the Cross, and became a Propitiation for the sins of the whole world. The first thing, as it appears to me, which will happen upon the other side, is that God will explain to the souls of men who are accepted and crowned that it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by His mercy that He has saved us, through the Grace of the One Man, Jesus Christ."—*Bible Investigator*.

The old teaching concerning the eternal torment of all who do not accept Christ in this life is probably largely responsible for this defection from Scripture truth relative to the necessity of faith before salvation. Thousands are departing from the faith because they cannot reconcile eternal torment with a God of love and hope. Did they but study their Bibles more closely, they would discover that while faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only means of salvation, the opportunity to hear the Gospel and to believe is not confined to this life. God has not provided two ways of salvation, one by faith and obedience and another by ignorance. He has provided salvation in *His Son*, and to His Son is committed all judgment, that, whether in this age or in the next, all for whom He died may hear the glad tidings; and "they that hear shall live."

It is too bad to see religious teachers joining hands with ultra worldlings in telling the heathen how good they are. There can be no real success to such preaching. The Gospel is the only force vital enough to work reforms, and that is because it does not flatter men, but frankly points out their corrupt condition; and it offers them a power outside of themselves to save them from themselves.

The question of Church Union continues to excite interest; but an unprejudiced on-looker must admit that the headway is slow. If there are many in the denominations concerned who favour it, there are also many who are opposed to it. Among those

who favour it, there is difference of opinion as to the terms of union, the creed to be adopted, and the scheme of administration and management, some favouring federation rather than unification, and others desiring only an outlining of "spheres of influence" in home and foreign missionary work.

The Church of England in Australia is more concerned at present with two other problems; first, the complete separation of the Australian from the Home Church; and, second, the revision of the Book of Common Prayer. A reviewer of a series of pamphlets on the latter subject characterises it as "the burning question in the Anglican Church in every part of the empire." In America the Episcopalian Church is organically independent of the Church of England. Hence its acts in re Church Union are not binding on the English Church. And the inclination of the Church in Australia is not that of union with the American Episcopals, but toward its own independence, and its taking a more prominent part than it has hitherto done in Australian political and social questions. They also favour the Revision of the Prayer Book by Australians for Australians, rather than waiting for the Revision now in process by the Home authorities. As a recent writer put it—

"The younger generation of the clergy and a large section of the junior laity chafe under the fetters which still bind the church and her representative institutions. They want an Australian-born episcopate and priesthood; an Australian revision of the Prayer Book; an Australian code of canon; and an Australian name for the church which shall make it plain that theirs is an independent Church in Australia, in communion with the Mother Church in England, but in the fullest sense self-governing."

The General Synod meets every five years. As the next Synod will not meet till 1915, no definite changes can be made until then; and the questions of independence from the Home Church, and federation or union with other Protestant bodies in Australia, are necessarily postponed. In the meantime the discussion of the subjects will go on, pro and con, as before.

Several Anglican bishops and other prominent clergymen and laymen are opposed to any union which does not include the Roman and Greek Catholic and the Armenian Churches; indeed, they argue that union with these three ancient Churches should be an accomplished fact before any union or even federation is entered into with evangelical Protestant bodies.

The Anglican Church in England and in Australia, as well as the Episcopal Church in America, have within themselves two parties which make for disunion—the High Church and the Evangelical or Low Church. The former party are more favourable to union with the Roman, Greek and Armenian Churches, while the latter are more inclined to come to an understanding (re "spheres of influence" at least) with Protestant bodies. Concerning these two parties the above quoted writer says:—

"The Nationalists are weary of the everlasting struggle between High and Low churchmen. They would 'live and let live,' and accordingly allow the Low churchman to stick to his plain stole and surplice in the High Communion service, and let the High Churchman use the ancient Eucharistic vestments if he and his parishioners are edified thereby."

We shall be pleased to receive a call from any "Advocate" reader visiting the city, or to answer Bible Questions through the post.

But as things are at present, the High Church party holds many of the influential offices, and controls others. Neither party desires a split, but some observers think it is unavoidable.

Six or seven years ago a Victorian Committee was appointed, composed of representatives of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches, to draft a statement of Christian doctrine and church polity, to be submitted for acceptance or rejection by the churches. It took only a short time to formulate the creed, and three times as long to prepare a scheme of administration. The Victorian Committee worked

in co-operation with the New South Wales Committee, and with a knowledge of what the Canadian Committee was doing. At a meeting held in December, 1910, by the Congregationalists, to receive the report of the Committee, several speakers objected to the creed suggested, that they could not subscribe to it in detail. The Chairman said all that was asked was "a general approval of the creed. The representatives of the other churches had sacrificed a great deal to meet them on the common ground set forth in the report." Another speaker said it was just a "working basis to go on with." Consideration of the polity proposals was deferred to a future meeting.

Interesting Letters

From a Cheerful Worker

I received your letter and the books safe, and thank you for them. In the last four days of travelling on the country roads, and in small villages, I sold, with the Lord's blessing, thirty-one (31) "Bible Talks," and nearly two dozen booklets, "Church and Ceremonies." May the divine blessing now attend the reading of these books! Enclosed is remittance. Please send two more cases of "Bible Talks" and booklets. If the new book, "Everlasting Punishment," is ready, please send some along; and in any case send as soon as possible, as I have only ten books on hand.

Greetings to all. I hope to hear of more workers entering into the field.

Your sister in our Mediator's service,
_____, Victoria.

After Many Days

I write to tell you how much I enjoyed the article on "The Church" in the "Advocate" of December, 1909. It is a long time to refer back to, but I have only just read it, and that with such delight that I could not keep from writing to you straight away. You will wonder how I came to have this! Our dear Brother Hay, of Liverpool, sent it along as a sample, advising me to become a subscriber to the paper. Not noticing the date, I sat down to read, and was so interested that I read it right through to my wife, and immediately started to write this to you to ask for the January issue, when it should be published. Then I found that the paper was already a year old. But, praise the Lord, the date made no difference, for the Truth was there, and

we got it. The points on the "Mystery" seem to express what has long been in my mind. This article should appeal to many, and I hope it has done so by now.

Please give our Christian love and greetings (Eph. 6: 10-19) to all the believers in Jesus our Mediator and High Priest. Yours in the One Faith,

_____, Canada.

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E. C. HENNINGES, Editor

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The Cheerful Givers

"The God of Heaven, He will prosper us: therefore we His servants will arise and build." "Through God we shall do valiantly."—Neh. 2: 20; Psa. 60: 12.

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully; every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9: 6, 7.

"Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."—1 Cor. 16: 2.

Voluntary Donations, as under, have been received since our last report in the December issue, for the spread of the Good Tidings concerning the Grace of God in Jesus, our Mediator and Intercessor under the terms of the New Covenant.

The letter "G" after a donation number indicates that the donation is sent in harmony with the plan mentioned in the "Go Forward" letter enclosed with the November "Advocate."

It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way. Nevertheless, the receipts for this month are the smallest we have had to report. Doubtless next month's report will be better.

No.	Previously reported	£	s	d		
			£76	19	1	=	\$4.86
						=	\$373.98
64G	£0	5	0		
65G	0	16	0		
66G	0	6	0		
67G	0	5	0		
68	0	5	0		
69	0	10	0		
70	1	0	0		
71G	0	5	0		
72G	0	5	0		
73G	0	3	10		
74G	0	6	0		
75G	0	5	0		
76G	0	5	3		
77G	1	0	0		
78	0	2	6		

Total for 1 month ... 5 19 7 = 29.06

Total for 6 months ... £82 18 8 = \$403.04

The usual quarterly statement from America has been unavoidably delayed.

The "Advocate" 7000 Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report in the December issue. Let the good work continue! The cost of printing and posting 7000 "Advocates" is about £40 (\$200) per month.

Previously reported ...	...	£	s	d		
		£90	3	3	=	\$438.17
31	...	£0	1	0		
Total for 1 month	...	0	1	0	=	.24
Total for 6 months	...	£90	4	3	=	\$438.41

Advocate Renewals, &c.

FRIENDS are hereby reminded that nearly all subscriptions to "The New Covenant Advocate" will expire with the issue of March, 1911. It is essential, for the good of the Cause we all love, that subscriptions be promptly renewed; therefore we give this timely notice to all our readers.

A notice similar to this was given—and several times repeated—a year ago. Nevertheless, some of our readers have not been heard from, even up to the present date. It is not our wish to seem to slight a friend who desires the "Advocate," by stopping the paper, even though the subscription be long overdue. Neither is it our wish to annoy by sending the "Advocate" where it is not wanted. But how are we to know? YOU MUST TELL US! This is the only way.

It is quite the usual thing for publishers of papers to be in a state of perplexity over this question. Cannot the list of "Advocate" readers be the solitary exception to this rule? It can be, if you make it so. We therefore leave this with you, knowing that you would all wish to decrease our perplexities, rather than be the means of adding to them.

PLEASE, therefore, renew promptly, whether you be a paying or non-paying reader. Both are welcome, as long as the Lord shall enable us to publish the "Advocate"; but we must hear from every reader at least once in the year, so that we may know where the "Advocate" is desired. Now is the best time for all to attend to this.

"Everlasting Punishment"

THE NEW BOOK on this subject is now ready, and, as intimated, a copy is sent to every regular "Advocate" reader. It contains the articles on "Everlasting Punishment" that appeared in the "Advocate" for October and November. Besides these, there are two other chapters—one on "The Necessity of Punishment for Sin," and one on "Sins Punished in this Life." These chapters did not appear in the "Advocate," but they are required in order to round out the subject.

The price of this 112-page book on "Everlasting Punishment," in cloth binding (presentation edition), is 1s. (25 cents) per copy; postage to any address 2d. (4 cents) extra. By the dozen, 8s. (\$2.00); carriage extra. In paper covers, 6d. (10 cents) per copy; 3s. (75 cents) per dozen, post paid. This book is a companion to "Bible Talks." Please pray for the Lord's blessing upon the circulation of both, that the message of Truth may comfort many hearts. This book should be excellent to give and lend to Christians and doubters, who believe the Bible to teach "eternal torment," because it is an "Appeal direct to the Word," and should therefore be helpful to all inquirers and perplexed ones. Colporteurs Wanted, to sell it from house to house. Order from any of our offices.

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Kingdom Herald

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Making the World Better

FACING FACTS which are patent to all persons of discernment and discrimination, it must be admitted that there are many things in this world that sorely need improving. What these things are will certainly not be defined alike by all; the king will have his view, the merchant his, and the peasant his, and most likely the views will be very divergent. Nevertheless, all recognise the need for some improvement, even though they cannot agree as to the nature of the need nor as to the means by which the desired good should be achieved.

Each from his standpoint recognises some of the imperfections of the present arrangement. The kings of the earth think that the masses of the people are acquiring too much influence in the governing of their respective countries, and many of them, if not all, would favour measures curtailing the liberties and the influence of the people. In desiring such measures, the kings and courtiers persuade themselves, and seek to convince others, that they have at heart only the best interests of all concerned. This is the "improvement" desired by kings, nobles, and conservatives generally, including those in high positions in the various religious systems of Christendom.

On the other hand, the people are moving in the direction of greater power for themselves, as distinguished from those who suppose that they occupy high position "by divine right." The powers and privileges of kings and nobles are being diminished; so that in some cases royalty is described as a mere "figure head," while others, more radical, openly speak of kings as being merely "tolerated," such speeches being made in monarchical countries. In some countries, kings have been dethroned, and republics have been set up, in the endeavour to carry out the "improvements" desired by the people.

Some among the people would go much further than anything yet realised, and would have all forms of industry controlled by the whole people for the benefit of all, under regulations suitable to the circumstances. Others—anarchists—would do away with all regulation and subjection, leaving everything at the discretion of the individual. Both these notions would result in forms of despotism at the last, the one a despotism of the community over the individual, the other a despotism of each individual over as many of the others as he could cajole or compel. Yet despotism is the very thing these movements among the people are supposed to avoid! *

"DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS?"

All of these antagonistic elements in church and state seek to make it appear that the Almighty is on their side of the controversy—that is, if they have God in their thoughts at all, which many of them have not. On the one side we hear of the "divine right of kings."

Undoubtedly, Christians are commanded to be law abiding; and to render due respect to the rulers of the people

is also a Christian duty, as well as to pray for them that are in authority, to the end that God's people might "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." (1 Tim. 2: 1-3; Rom. 13: 1-7; 1 Peter 2: 17.) But it is nowhere stated that the Almighty has placed the Ameer of Afghanistan upon the throne, divinely endowing him and his family with certain inalienable rights to rule over the people of that country.

"VOX POPULI VOX DEI?"

On the other side we are told that "The Voice of the People is the Voice of God." But it must be recognised that the voice of the people—even of God's people—has not invariably been the Voice of God, not even when their voice was unanimous. When Israel in the wilderness murmured against Moses, they were not thereby expressing the will of God, but the contrary. So much was this the case that on several occasions God would have destroyed the people. Many instances of this are related in the books of Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. When the Israelites in Palestine desired a king, their expression being more unanimous than the expression of the popular will by any referendum of modern times, the voice of the people was not the voice of God. Notwithstanding the plausibility with which the elders of Israel broached the subject, the unanimous desire of the people was nothing less than a rejection of the Almighty. (1 Sam. 8: 1-22.) Again, when we hear the same Jewish people as it were with one voice crying "Crucify Him!" we are certain that the murderous voice of the blood-thirsty people was not the voice of God, even though in these circumstances a portion of the divine counsel was being accomplished. Again, when in more recent times we find that for some hundreds of years western Europe was unanimous in its acknowledgement of the Pope of Rome as the vice-gerent of Christ, we are sure that the voice of the people was not the voice of the Deity. "Vox populi vox Dei" is very euphonious, but it is not very truthful.

The voice of God has not been the voice of popular assemblies, much less of clamorous mobs. When it pleased God to express His will, He caused holy men of old—prophets, apostles and His own dear Son (2 Peter 1: 21; Matt. 17: 5; John 8: 40) to speak and write of the divine things, giving them, by the Holy Spirit's power, words and wisdom better than their own. The desire of a king or the clamour of a nation is not in and of itself the voice of God. The "improvements" in the present condition of things which they severally desire are not, therefore, infallibly right.

VARIOUS REMEDIES PROPOSED

Some earnest souls believe that popular education is the solution of all the great social, political and industrial questions that vex the world at the present time. But will education turn a rogue into an honest man? Will educa-

Whoever receives this paper, not having ordered it, is requested to accept and read it, and to consider it an invitation to become a regular reader. Subscriptions may begin with any number.

tion purge out selfishness? An educated person with criminal tendencies is more dangerous to the community than an uneducated criminal. It is evident that education, excellent and desirable though it be, cannot provide the complete remedy for the problems which confront the world to-day. Indeed, education, as far as it increases desire without diminishing selfishness, is an innocent contributory cause of many of humanity's difficulties being in their present acute condition. In saying this we are merely stating a fairly well-known fact, which very few—least of all the educated—would question. For all this, we should not advocate a return to the dark ages, but should like to see enlightenment more general, if possible.

Others think that the prohibition of strong drink would go far toward ridding the world of its woes. Most certainly it would. But the question always recurs, would selfishness assuredly go out with strong drink? And the answer is, No. It is well known that some abstain from strong drink for purely selfish reasons, and that others are most liberal when in a maudlin state. Evidently, then, the abolition of strong drink would fall very far short of doing for our race all the good that is so sorely needed. And what is true of this most desirable reform, and of education, is equally true of all the other cures proposed by the hundred and one reformers of all parties. While possessing many excellencies, every one of these "cures" is deficient in at least two outstanding points—

1. Not one of these remedies can cure the disease of Sin and Selfishness;
2. Not one of these remedies can abolish death and give life instead, without which education and every other blessing are but fleeting.

Now, these disputes and questions as between the governed and governing classes of humanity are by no means new. They have often been up in the centuries past. New features there are at present in the dispute, no doubt, and the agitation now is world-wide, whereas heretofore its range has been limited, but the root questions are still the same. For this reason, some, reading the present in the light of the failures of the past, have given up the hope of a settled state of the social order, believing that it is not in the power of man to govern himself properly as long as selfishness is the mainspring of conduct and the arbiter of relationships. Seeing no way to get rid of selfishness, these well wishers of the race are reduced to despair. And some scoff.—2 Peter 3: 1-4.

Truly, if the failures of the past were the only light available to illuminate the imperfections of the present, one might well consider our problems soluble only in the ultimate destruction of humanity in and by means of its disputes. But there is a better light; it illuminates the whole question so completely that despair is turned to hope, and the spirit of gladness and joy takes the place of sorrow and heaviness. Under the influence of this better light on these subjects, the pessimist becomes an optimist, and even the scoffer may remain to pray.

THE BETTER LIGHT

The Christian, if his religion be to him more than the sounding brass and tinkling cymbal of an imposing ritual, is as thoroughly alive to the world questions of the present day as the most ardent reformer could wish to be. Such a Christian, instructed not by the command of an earthly king nor by the voice of the people, but by the voice of God, expressed in His Word, is in the best possible position to realise what will be the outcome of the present agitation. He also realises what many do not, that inherent selfishness must, under present conditions, always frustrate the best desires of even the least selfish members of our race, and render impossible a satisfactory determination of the difficulties.

Many philosophers have expressed the conclusion that the only form of government suited to our race of variously imperfect beings is an unselfish, benevolent despotism in the hands of a perfect ruler. But to state this is to their minds merely an exhibition of our impotence; for they ask, where is such a perfect ruler to be found? And, if found, would he be strong enough to enforce his unselfish, benevolent will against the tremen-

dous opposition that would certainly arise? Appreciating this ideal, while admitting the total absence of the material necessary for its realisation, the philosophers know not which way to turn; they have no hope.

But the well instructed Christian, who keenly realises the imperfections of our race, and the difficulties which these imperfections place in the way of the approximation of the excellent ideal of the philosophers, is not hopeless or in despair. He has hope. The ground of this hope is not in himself, nor in the human race as a whole. Neither is his hope based on expectation that perfect success will crown the labours of those zealous men and women who are continually exposing themselves to hope-deferring, heart-sickening disappointments, in their efforts to make the world righteous.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE

for better things is based on the inspiring promise of God. Said Peter—

"We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3: 13.

This is the better light enjoyed by the Christian. This is the ray that illuminates the gloom and preserves him from despair. He apprehends from these promises that the need of the human race is noted by the Almighty, and that suitable provision has been made to meet that need. God, Who has all power, is interested, and has made an immutable promise that there shall be a reign of righteousness. And because He was willing to give a more abundant exhibition of the steadfastness of His purpose, He swore to it by an invocation of His own Name—there being no greater—so that by these two immutable things, the promise and the oath, the heirs of salvation might have an abundance of hope and consolation.—Heb. 6: 13-19; Gen. 22: 15-18; 12: 1-3.

On account of this promise the Christian prays, as instructed by the Lord Jesus—

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Matt. 6: 10.

The Kingdom of God, which is to come, is the "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," for which "we, according to His promise, look." We are not to expect a new planet and new starry heavens, but we are to "look for" a new order of things; because God's will is yet to be done here, on this earth, which has been the stage of strife and violence, and of doing everything but the will of God.*

PRAYING OR MAKING?

It is very necessary to observe, and at all times to remember, that the Master instructed His disciples to pray for the coming of God's kingdom to earth, but He never told them that their efforts were to make it come sooner. There is a time appointed in the divine counsel for the coming of God's kingdom to earth with power and glory, to accomplish its destined work of causing God's will to be done here. Until that time, God's people are to pray earnestly on this behalf, thus exhibiting and intensifying their own interest in the promised blessing. And while earnestly praying on this behalf, God's people are not to be idle; they are to show by their good works, doing good unto all as they have opportunity, the sincerity of their prayers. Otherwise, their faith is dead.—Gal. 6: 10; James 2: 14-26.

CHARACTER OF THE PROMISED KINGDOM

The Kingdom of God, which is promised, will not be established by a referendum of the people, nor by the consent of the present kings of the earth, nor by the voluntary surrender of Satan, the prince and god of this world. The latter must be bound so that his "goods" may be spoiled (Matt. 12: 29); the kings of the earth must be dethroned and their kingdoms carried away as the chaff of the summer threshing floors, so that God's Kingdom may fill the whole earth (Dan. 2: 35); and the people will be permitted

* For further Scriptural references concerning the new order of things that is to be established on earth, please see "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind," a 354 page book, handsomely bound, which we shall be pleased to supply for 2/6 (60 cents); postage 5d. (10 cents) extra.

to rage and storm themselves to exhaustion before the divine fiat shall go forth, commanding—

"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth."—Psalm 46: 6-10.

In order to accomplish all this, God's Kingdom must be strong; in fact, it will fully realise the ideal of the philosophers already mentioned, because it will be an unselfish, benevolent despotism, in the hands of a perfect Ruler, Jesus Christ, Who is commissioned by the Almighty to attend to this business, with all authority in heaven and in earth, and Whose unselfish benevolence is fully attested by the fact that He, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man. (Matt. 28: 18; John 5: 19-30; Heb. 2: 9; John 13: 34.) Under the strong rule of this Kingdom, shepherded with its iron rod, the nations shall learn war no more, shall learn righteousness and holiness, and shall be thoroughly reformed out of their selfish ways, if they will submit themselves to the Truth with which all shall then be perfectly enlightened. Those that are in the graves shall also participate in this blessing. (Rev. 2: 27; Isa. 2: 2-4; John 1: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4-6; Ezek. 16: 44-63; Isa. 25: 6-9.) If any will not obey the Truth, but will persist in disobedience, the consequence to such will be "everlasting destruction" from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."—2 Thess. 1: 9.

"HOW LONG, O LORD?"

A perfectly natural and reasonable question is, if God be interested in the welfare of the human race, if of His grace He has provided the Unselfish, Benevolent Despot needed by us to repair the ruin wrought in Eden, why has He allowed all these years and centuries to pass without overturning the evil and establishing the good? Why has He not long ago established His strong Kingdom in the earth to cause His will to be done here as it is done in heaven? Why are the efforts of reformers to make the world better apparently allowed to languish? A satisfactory explanation of this problem would be very much appreciated.

The answer to this is supplied by the Scriptures. They tell us that since the first advent of Christ, or, more accurately, since Pentecost, the divine program has been the visiting of the Gentiles to **take out** from them a people for His Name. (Acts 15: 14-18.) The selection, or election, of this people, which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God (1 Peter 2: 7-12), is conducted according to fixed principles. Faith in Jesus as the sacrifice for the sins of all, and particularly for the sins of *one's self*, is necessary, for He is the only means of approach to God. (1 Cor. 15: 1-4; John 14: 6.) Following this, the virtues of the Holy Spirit must be added to the foundation faith, if one would secure the prize offered in this, the High Calling. (2 Peter 1: 5-15; Phil. 3: 7-14.)

* For full examination of this subject, with quotation and explanation of every Bible text in which the words "Sheol," "Hades" and "Gehenna" occur, together with full explanation of the "Lake of Fire" and other symbols and parables wrongly supposed to teach eternal torment, please see the 112-page book on "Everlasting Punishment." It is an appeal direct to the Word, and will satisfy both head and heart. In cloth binding, 1/- (25 cents) per copy, postage 2d. (4 cents) extra; in paper covers, 6d. (10 cents) postpaid. Order it now!

And what is the prize? Nothing less than joint heirship with Jesus Christ, the Unselfish, Benevolent Despot, if we first suffer with Him. (Rom. 8: 17.) This is the way the Scripture, the voice of God, expresses it—

"He called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Thess. 2: 14.

"Walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His Kingdom and glory."—1 Thess. 2: 12.

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."—2 Tim. 2: 12.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Rev. 3: 21.

"He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father."—Rev. 2: 26, 27.

"And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."—Rev. 20: 4.

From the above and many other Scriptural testimonies that might be referred to, it is evident that it is part of the divine purpose that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Unselfish Benevolent Despot, shall have some assistants in the great work of the thousand years of the Kingdom age, and that the time from Pentecost to the end of the Gospel age is set apart for the selection and qualification of these assistants or joint heirs, sometimes called the Church, His body or bride. The realisation of this supplies the answer to the question—"How long, O Lord?" The general blessing, under the rule of the Despot, will not come until the particular blessing shall first have been given to those who are making their calling and election sure to a place in the throne. So the Apostle says—

"When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, THEN shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."—1 Cor. 15: 54; Isa. 25: 6-9.

Until then, making the world better must seem to many a task beset with tremendous difficulties. When the right time comes, the good things which we all sympathise with and long to see accomplished will be gloriously brought to pass by the invincible power of God's Despot, not by the will of present princes or peoples. The time for this is now very near. But until then the proper work for God's people is not to seek to impatiently go ahead of God's program, undertaking what He has not authorised us to do, and what we are not now fit to do. Rather let us give all diligence to make our calling and election sure to a place in that glorious throne with the Unselfish, Benevolent Despot; let us also endeavour to assist one another in the race for the prize of our High Calling; and let us diligently preach this Gospel of the Kingdom in all nations for a witness to them. Those who do this may confidently believe that even now they are helping to make the world better, not only in the reforms accomplished in themselves and in the help they are able to give to others in the race for the prize, but also in the fact that the work of the present age is an essential preliminary to the work of the future. Let us be up and doing! Then, having won by His grace, we shall be Reformers indeed, duly authorised and empowered to co-operate with our blessed Lord in His appointed work for the Thousand Years, of "Making the World Better"—Better—BEST! the beautiful home for evermore of a happy race, loving and serving God with all their hearts.

Accuracy in Reading and Interpreting Scripture

IN our issue of August, 1910, attention was called to the necessity of accepting the verbal inspiration of Scripture, inasmuch as the meaning of any passage is expressed by the words used. Since our heavenly Father chose to reveal Himself to men through His Words, which He put into the mouths of the prophets and of our Lord and the Apostles, it is a re-

flection on His intelligence to assume that the language used by them under inspiration was faulty. It is the highest privilege of His people to examine the words and phrases of Scripture with reverence and care, in order to learn exactly what they do say, rather than to attempt improvements according to what they consider the Almighty should have said.

The Reader is recommended to go through each article without interrupting the reading by turning up Scripture references. Look up references afterwards.

Careless interpreters, innocent of intentional wrongdoing, as well as wilful perverters of the Word, insert or omit words here and there, in order to bolster up some theory or other; they may even alter words, perhaps not always realising that the alteration of a small word, such as a preposition, may change the meaning of a passage more than the alteration of a larger word, such as a noun. If we alter the preposition in, "He was shot *near* John," to "He was shot *by* John," the idea is far more seriously interfered with than if we change the noun and say, "He was shot *near a man*."

As the Bible was written principally in Hebrew and Greek, it is desirable to get as close as possible to the meaning of the original, and here the inquirer familiar with (say) only the English language is to some extent at the mercy of the learned translators, who give their conception of the English words which most nearly express the meaning of the inspired Hebrew or Greek words. Reasonable caution must be exercised not to accept the translation of unqualified teachers, and the constant comparison of the various versions made by reliable and conscientious translators is advisable.

An example of the warranted alteration of a noun by the Revised Version, and of the unwarranted alteration of a preposition by an uninspired religious teacher, is found in that familiar passage, John 5: 29—

"And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."—John 5: 29.

The alteration of the word "damnation" (Authorised Version) to "judgment" by the Revised Version is a proper one, for the latter better expresses the meaning of the Greek word *Krisis*, which (according to all Lexicons) includes in it the thought of a judgment either *in favour of* or *against*; whereas "damnation" expresses only the thought of a judgment *against*. The word *Krisis* also means, by extension, "a tribunal" (Strong). Hence our Lord's statement that those who have done evil shall come forth to a resurrection of judgment leaves it open as to whether the result or decision of the judgment will ultimately be for or against the persons concerned. As a matter of fact, other Scriptures show that the great judgment or tribunal to which they will come forth will be the thousand years' rule of Christ and the Church, when all men are to be instructed in the necessary steps they must take to become citizens of that Kingdom, and will have the opportunity of believing in and obeying the Lord Jesus Christ, who died on their behalf.

An Unwarranted Alteration

A certain religious teacher, who makes the extraordinary claim of being the "only channel" through whom the Church is being supplied with meat in due season, recently substituted the preposition "by" for "of" in the phrase "resurrection of judgment," and added the letter "s" to the word judgment, thus causing the phrase to read, "resurrection *by judgments*;" he also placed after the phrase the letters "R.V." Now it is possible that he meant only to indicate that the word "judgment" was according to the R.V., but those unable to consult the Revised Version would readily as-

sume that the word "by" was also according to the R.V. In fact, we know a case where that assumption was made, and the individual was greatly surprised to learn that the substitution of the word "by" for "of" was not made by the Revised Version and was altogether improper. But no adequate excuse can be found either for altering the preposition or for changing the word judgment into the plural.

It is not necessary to be a Greek scholar in order to see the presumption attached to such an unwarranted alteration of God's Word; for the result is to give an entirely different meaning to that which the original Greek contains. The two phrases, "resurrection of life" and "resurrection of judgment" are constructed alike, the original words ("life" and "judgment") being in the genitive case, and properly rendered "of life" and "of judgment." It is no more permissible to alter the last phrase to "by judgments," than to alter the former to "by lives." When will Bible students "wake up," and repudiate such tampering with the inspired words of our blessed Saviour?

The Righteousness which is of Faith

Another subject concerning which it is desirable to note and to hold to the very words of Scripture is that of the "righteousness" which is "imputed" to the believer on account of his faith in Jesus. Following are a few passages—

"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith."—Rom. 9: 30.

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness which is of God."—Rom. 10: 3.

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness."—Rom. 10: 10.

"And therefore it [that is, Abraham's faith, vs. 20] was imputed to him for righteousness."—Rom. 4: 22.

"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ."—Rom. 3: 22.

"Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God."—Phil. 3: 9.

"But for us also, to whom it [that is, righteousness] shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."—Rom. 4: 24.

These passages show that God, who so loved the world as to send His Only Begotten Son to die for them, has arranged to forgive the sins of those who believe, and to *count their faith for righteousness*. It is not a righteousness attained by the works of the Jewish law, nor is it a righteousness attained by their own exertions; it is not Christ's personal righteousness attributed to them; nor is it God's personal righteousness doled out as required. It is simply "righteousness;" it is *of God*; that is, designed and arranged for by God; and it is given *through Christ* to the believer. In other words, the believer is *justified*, or declared right, because of his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and is thenceforth at peace with God.—Rom. 5: 1.

Righteousness Imputed—For what Purpose

Another phase of the subject requiring candid and fair consideration is the following: Is righteousness im-

"Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.—1 Pet. 2: 7.

puted to the believer for his own salvation, or for the salvation of others? On this point a correspondent writes:—

Dear Friends,—I am sorry to see how far professing Christians can be led away by a plausible semblance of truth when presented by one making great claims. The Apostle John said that, in his day, "many false prophets are gone out into the world;" and we find the same true to-day. (1 John 4: 1; 1 Tim. 4: 1-3.) How necessary then that God's people should hold fast to the faithful Word, and that they should have the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which alone is able to guide into all truth.

There are some who assert that they have never had need of Jesus as a Mediator, because (they say) they were never out of harmony with God. Such statements may be pleasing to the unconverted, for the natural man is ever ready to justify himself in the sight of God, and ever ready to do something to merit salvation. But to one who has been truly converted, and who realises that he was a sinner, and that before he could do anything pleasing in the sight of God he must be reconciled by a Mediator to God (Heb. 9: 15), such a repudiation of the mediatorial work of Christ in reconciling sinners is exceedingly repugnant.

One of two things is certain. Either they never recognised themselves as sinners and their need of reconciliation with God through Christ, and were consequently never converted; or else, having been once cleansed from their old sins, they have now forgotten the means by which they were reconciled, and their last state is worse than their first.—2 Peter 1: 9.

How strange, too, that such claim the imputation of Christ's righteousness! Where the need of such an imputation, if they were not sinners, enemies through wicked words, "dead in trespasses and sins," etc., even as others? (Eph. 2: 1-3, 17; Col. 1: 21.) Stranger yet is their claim that, after Christ's righteousness is imputed to them by God, they are accounted as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and consequently as, in a sense, the redeemers of the world. False and groundless presumption! As if a man should say, "My debt

is paid by my surety, I am as rich as he." Says Bradshaw—

"We think not that the righteousness of Christ is made ours . . . to make others righteous, but to make us so; not that we have the formal, intrinsic righteousness of Christ in us as it is in Him, . . . nor is it imputed to us as though Christ designed to make us the causes of salvation for others, but the subjects of salvation ourselves."

Thus the Redeemer was made a sin-offering for us, and we are made righteous in the sight of God through Him. (2 Cor. 5: 21.) On account of his faith, Abraham, the father of the faithful, was justified, and in this way all believers, who are counted as the children of Abraham, must be justified. (Rom. 4: 16, 17, 22-24.) Our righteousness comes through Christ, because He is the Surety of the New Covenant, and our holiness comes from Him through the quickening power of His Holy Spirit in all believers, so that they may develop characters like His own, and manifest the fruit of the spirit, which is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (Gal. 5: 22, 23.) Now these gracious habits, being formed in poor, imperfect creatures, whose corruptions abide and work in the very same faculties wherein grace has its residence, it cannot be that our sanctification be as perfect and complete as our justification, which adheres only in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 5: 17.) Justification cures the guilt of sin, but sanctification the practice of sin.

Think what a poor, naked, destitute and empty thing a poor sinner is in his natural, unregenerate state—having neither wisdom, righteousness, sanctification nor redemption. What presumption on the part of the natural man to assume any or all of these! All these must come from without himself, even from Christ Jesus, who is made all these to the repentant and believing sinner. (1 Cor. 1: 30.) What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?—1 Cor. 4: 7.

Let then the sense of our own emptiness by nature humble us, and increase our sense of obligation to Christ, through whom we receive all we have.—1 Cor. 6: 9-11; 15: 10.

W.J.S.S.

Christ in the Enemy's Country

WHEN the Son of God came into this world to do His Father's will, as it had been appointed for Him, He left a region of light for one of darkness. He left a region of life to come to one wherein death reigned. He left a heaven, where God's will was perfectly done, to dwell in an earth wherein God's will was not done, and where Sin reigned. He came into the enemy's country; and, as a matter of course, all the forces of Sin, the ruler, were at once arrayed against Him. Soon after His birth, at Bethlehem, an effort was made to accomplish His death, but the wisdom and power of God frustrated that attempt. Whether there were other attempts made on His life during His boyhood, youth and young manhood, is not related; it

would not be at all surprising to know that there had been such.

But the greatest efforts of Sin, the ruler, were made upon our blessed Lord after He began the appointed ministry, which was to culminate in His death as the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Thenceforth the enemy, in whose country Jesus was dwelling, made not only one but very many attempts on His life. Some of these attempts were by means of the gross violence instigated by rage-blinded Scribes and Pharisees. These, like that in His infancy, were absolutely harmless, and they could never hurt Him until His hour was come. (John 7: 30.) Since He was on God's service in this evil world, legions of angels would protect Him from

"The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."—Psa. 118: 22, 23; Comp. Matt. 21: 42-44; Acts 4: 10, 11.

the wrath of man. But whenever His hour would come, He would die for our sins, according to the Scriptures, whether at the instigation of violent men or otherwise. In this trust the Son of God reposed with the greatest confidence, and His flesh found rest in hope. (Matt. 26: 53; Psalm 16: 8, 9.) Would that all those who seek to follow in His steps might at all times similarly rest in the assurance of divine care, and might boldly say—

"The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What shall man do unto me?"—Heb. 13: 6, R.V.

The enemy of God was not content with attempts at gross violence against God's Son. These were not even the principal attacks against Him. They were only incidental to His steadfastness in obedience to God, and they would have ceased to be instigated had Jesus bowed Himself down to serve Sin instead of God. The principal attempts against Jesus were those in which He was enticed, with flattery or other form of persuasion, or hypocritical argument based on misapplied Scripture, to forsake His allegiance to God, and become the servant of Sin. These attempts were many and various. They began immediately after His baptism (as far as we are informed by the Gospel narratives), when Satan in person tried to deceive and mislead Jesus; they continued throughout the earthly ministry of the Saviour, various human agencies—both friend and foe—being used; they never ceased until in Gethsemane the last conflict was waged, and in submitting implicitly to the Father, the Saviour won the final and most glorious victory. Three times He prayed, using the same language—

"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."—Matt. 26: 39, 42, 44.

Now it is most noteworthy that whereas legions of angels were at His service to repel the violence of would-be murderers, the Saviour appears to have been left to Himself in the spiritual conflicts with temptation to sin. Only afterwards did the angels come to Him to minister to Him.—Matt. 4: 11.

"He Died unto Sin"

The Man Christ Jesus was never a sinner. He did always those things that pleased His Father. (John 8: 29.) Nevertheless, there was in Him to the very last the possibility of becoming a servant of Sin, and this possibility was intensified when He came into this world, the enemy's country, where Sin rules. This possibility never became a reality, thank God, but even as a possibility it needed to be utterly cast out by means of the victories won in spiritual conflict—"the things that He suffered." (Heb. 5: 7-9.) So it was done, and so did He die unto Sin. His character, being perfectly established in righteousness by these experiences, became totally unresponsive—as it were a corpse—to the enticements of Sin, which had so many slaves, and would willingly have added this One, in order to retain all the others. At last, having been perfectly established and fixed in the character of obedience toward God (Heb. 5: 9), He gave up His life; He voluntarily laid it down for our sins according to the Scriptures, in order that through His mediatorship we might be re-

conciled to God. He did not die *by* Sin; there was no sin in Himself to cause His death, neither did Sin as an external circumstance have power or authority to kill Him. He died *to* Sin as one that would have enticed Him; and He died *for* our sins in order that we might be delivered through Him. By the power of the Father, He was raised from the dead; death hath no more dominion over Him, nor is He now subjected to temptations and enticements to become a servant of Sin. He is beyond them now.

"Likewise . . . Yourselves."

We who have received the reconciliation accomplished through our acceptance of Christ's mediatorial work (Rom. 5: 10, 11, R.V.) are invited to follow in the footsteps of the Master. It is necessary that we do this, if we would be delivered from the slavery to Sin under which we all have been sold. So says the Apostle—

"In that He died, He died unto Sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto Sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not Sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto Sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God . . . Ye were the servants of Sin . . . Being then made free from Sin ye became the servants of righteousness . . . When ye were the servants of Sin, ye were free from righteousness . . . But now being made free from Sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of Sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. 6: 11-23.

Our Lord, although in the enemy's country, was never of it. We were both in it and of it, actual enemies to God. This important difference between Him and us must be borne in mind as the above instruction is considered. But now, we, while still remaining for a time in the enemy's country, are no longer to be of it. We are to reckon ourselves as having died to Sin, our former owner, and therefore as freed or justified (Rom. 6: 7, 11) from every claim that Sin might have had against us. We are also to reckon ourselves as alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and therefore rightly and justly His servants. We know that while we were the servants of Sin we were not under the dominion of Righteousness. But now the situation is reversed; having died to Sin, we are made free from it as a master, and are rightly become servants to God.

If, then, we reckon ourselves as having died to Sin, our former owner, no longer recognising Sin as having any right or authority over us, it remains for us to become actually dead to Sin, as far as responding to its enticements is concerned. Let us no longer yield our members to the lusts of Sin, to serve for its wages, death, but let us gladly yield ourselves to God as servants of Righteousness, exhibiting the fruit of holiness, and receiving at last the free and unmerited gift of His grace—Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

"There never did and there never will exist anything permanently noble and excellent in a character which was a stranger to the exercise of resolute self-denial."—Sir Walter Scott.

The Parables of Our Lord

(Continued from January issue.)

The Parable of the Importunate Widow

—Luke 18: 2-5—

(To the Pharisees and Disciples.)

THE PARABLE.

2. Saying, there was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

3. And there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4. And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man:

5. Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

THE INTERPRETATION.

1. And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.

6. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though he bear long with them?

8. I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?

THE LESSON of this parable is explained in verse 1, "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint." The Pharisees had "demanded" an explanation as to "when the Kingdom of God should come" (Luke 17: 20), and the Lord declined a direct answer, saying,

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within [margin—"among"] you."—Luke 17: 20, 21.

He then explained to the disciples that the time would come when they would desire to see one of the "days" of the Son of man, and should not see it, because the Son of man in His great "day" would be like the sun, illuminating the whole of mankind, as does the sun the natural earth. And when the Son of man is "revealed," it would be found that men were still pursuing their usual customs, as unprepared for His manifestation as were the people of Sodom and those in the days of Noah for the judgments poured out in those times. The disciples themselves might well be dismayed by the prospect, but they were to "Remember Lot's wife" (verse 32), and not set their hearts on the things they were called upon to forsake; for

"Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it."—Luke 17: 33.

The whole Jewish arrangement had been marked out by God for destruction, but the Scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites were interested in preserving that system, because under it they had gained a position of power and affluence. On different occasions they openly expressed their hatred of Jesus, because they saw that He was popular, and that His preaching was assisting the people to resist their unjust and unlawful impositions. The life of the Pharisees was bound up in that order of things, and they endeavoured at any cost to maintain their position. (John 11: 47, 48; Luke 22: 2.) But in thus seeking to preserve their lives, they were in a fair way to lose them, in the overthrow even then in process. On the other hand, those who would believe in Jesus, and who would lose all the temporal advantages of Pharisaism, and who would incur the dis-

pleasure of the dominant party, being persecuted from one city to another, and finally done to death, would really preserve their lives from the overthrow to come upon the Jewish nation as a whole. For a time their physical lives would be preserved in order that they might be witnesses of the New Covenant of forgiveness and mercy, and when that testimony was finished they would receive the eternal life, when the Lord would come to raise them from death; for He had said—

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." John 11: 25, 26.

All through the Gospel age it has been the privilege of the true believer to be out of harmony with the existing order of things, which the Pharisaical and hypocritical desire to perpetuate to their own advantage. The believer has "escaped the corruption that is in the world through desire" (2 Pet. 1: 4), and as a good soldier of Jesus Christ he must engage in a constant warfare against sin and deceit, thereby bringing down upon himself the wrath of all the powers of evil, fleshly and spiritual. (Eph. 6: 11-13; Matt. 5: 10-12; 1 Cor. 16: 9.) Such a prospect might well render the stout heart faint, not to speak of the already weak or cowardly. To run counter to public opinion is at all times difficult: it is much easier to drift with the crowd; one day to crown Jesus and hail Him King with the enthusiastic popular gathering, and next day or next week to deride and spit upon Him with the angered mob.

But the Lord's disciples have only the one course open to them, if they would receive the glorious heavenly inheritance; they must walk humbly and faithfully in His footsteps. And they will find that as the powers of evil outwardly triumphed over our blessed Lord, and over the early disciples, so they will in many cases outwardly triumph over them. Great religious systems and smaller off-shoots have arisen to bring God's people into bondage; and in them is found the blood of all the martyrs and saints. (2 Thes. 2: 7-12; Rev. 17: 6; 19: 1-3.) The Lord's people are called upon to suffer for righteousness' sake, and none who are unwilling to suffer can say their love of Christ and the gospel is of a worthy sort.

But if the sufferings are of a kind to make the timid shrink, should we for that reason be afraid to confess the Lord before men? No; for the simple reason that there is a store of strength always available, which will make the weakest babe in Christ as strong as the bravest veteran. "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

Prayer the Source of Strength

What sustained the widow of the parable was that she occasionally had audience with the judge, was able to lay her case before him, and had hope that he would ultimately interpose on her behalf by restraining her adversary. She persevered when her enemy was triumphing over her, and when there seemed no prospect of relief. She had no friend to protect her, no official to issue legal injunctions; her only hope was to arouse the interest and sympathy of the great stern judge, who

* Those of true inward nobility of character are ashamed of nothing but base conduct, and are not ready to take offence at supposed affronts, because they keep clear of what deserves contempt, and consider what is undeserved as beneath their notice.—Bacon.

feared neither God nor man, and who could destroy her with a look. But *she was confident that she had a good cause*; a good cause and a clear conscience gave courage; the judge at least listened patiently; she lived on the hope of finally securing his help, and so she endured the injustice of her adversary.

Now the judge was unjust, because he was willing for the woman to labour under an injustice rather than lift a finger to help her; yet he was, like most unjust persons, thoroughly selfish. So, while the woman's tears and prayers did not touch his heart, her perseverance touched his selfishness; and in order to be rid of her he granted her request.

His Own Elect

If the unjust judge, having no interest at all in the case, and unmoved by sentiments of love or pity, granted the petition of the poor widow, what is the attitude of our God toward those of His people who cry unto Him day and night, and in whose welfare He is most deeply interested? Be sure He does not repulse them by saying that their troubles do not concern Him; nor does He let them come again and again without giving them an encouraging word of hope. He says—

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."—Phil. 4: 6, 7.

"Casting all your anxiety upon Him, for He careth for you."—1 Peter 5: 7, R.V.

"For He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."—Heb. 13: 5, 6.

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."—Isa. 40: 31.

God's "elect" are those who believe in Jesus, who have been reconciled to God by faith in the finished work of Christ, and who are following His steps. As a class they were foreknown by Him before the foundation of the world; but the calling and election of individuals is, according to a well-defined method, repentance and faith being prerequisite to acceptance and forgiveness.

It is in our power either to faint by the way because of vainly trusting in our own strength, or to enlist the active sympathy and co-operation of a loving heavenly Father. Shall we not, then, come often to the throne of grace? Shall we not acknowledge our weakness; our inability to grapple with our adversaries; our entire dependence upon Him for strength to endure, and for deliverance at last? There are many exhortations to prayer, as well as to humility, which the "elect" do well to heed; for it is when they most feel their weakness and their need that they pray most fervently, and gain the greatest strength from the Lord.—2 Cor. 12: 9, 10; 1 Thes. 5: 17; Col. 1: 9; 4: 12.

Avenging the Elect.

The brethren are repeatedly exhorted not to avenge themselves; not to render evil for evil, but contrariwise blessing; to pray for those who despitefully use and persecute them. (Rom. 12: 19-21; 1 Thes. 5: 15; 1 Pet. 3: 9; Matt. 5: 44.) Is it consistent, then, for them to look forward to a time when God will avenge them? Does not the spirit of love in them require not only

that they make no effort to avenge themselves, but that they disapprove even of God avenging them?

The love of God for His saints, and His care over them are such, that without consulting their preferences in the matter, He has arranged to avenge them. There are good reasons for not allowing the saints to avenge themselves. Revenge is one of the strongest excitants to anger, wrath and malice, all strong traits of the old sinful nature which the saints are told to "put off" (Col. 3: 8); a person bent on revenge loses all joy, peace and blessing, his whole mind being given over to scheming against his enemy; he loses interest in everything but his own implacable hatred. Human nature, even of the saints, is too weak to allow it the exercise of its own vengeance. Only God and Christ, who are just, strong and incapable of vindictiveness, can wield such a power without self-injury.

There is, however, in every saint a proper desire to be vindicated before those who have misrepresented, misunderstood or otherwise done him injustice. One may be content, as was our Lord, to be branded as a felon, and to be crucified between thieves, but the heart cries out to the God above to make plain some day its integrity. The saint looks forward to the reward of faithfulness, not only because it means eternal life and happiness, but because it means a testimonial that he was not the reprobate his accusers represented him to be. As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so Jesus opened not His mouth to justify Himself, but "committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." This is the attitude of patient suffering which is praiseworthy in the eyes of God, and which all the saints must imitate.—1 Pet. 2: 19-23; Isa. 53: 7.

In the days of His flesh our Lord Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, and was heard because of His piety and obedience (Heb. 5: 7, margin.) His disciples may rejoice therefore at the privilege of likewise learning obedience and patient endurance by the things they suffer, and may likewise look forward to the day when He shall say, Enough; come up higher.

God's vengeance against evil and evil doers is a necessary corollary of His justice. For a good purpose He permits evil to prevail among men—that they may learn needed lessons, and especially that His people may be made perfect by the fiery trials which faithfulness to righteousness and truth brings upon them. But to permit the wicked to triumph forever, and His people to be permanently injured in the conflict, would be like denying Himself. For His own glory He must demonstrate the folly of opposing Him, and the benefits of obeying Him. Hence the certainty that sooner or later the evil doer will be cut off, and the righteous rewarded. The period of waiting for vindication may be long—twenty, forty or even sixty years, but it will come.

"Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday."

"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him; fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evil doers shall be cut off; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth."—Psa. 37: 5-9.

The poor widow did not need to attempt vengeance; she had but to enlist the power of the unjust judge. So we need not seek to recompense ourselves against those who spitefully use and persecute us: we need but pray always to the great Judge of all (Heb. 12: 23), and He will do all that is necessary. It may seem a long time to the suffering saint; nevertheless, it is "speedily" from the Lord's point of view.

"I tell you that He will avenge them speedily."—Luke 18: 8.

Strange, is it not, that, with such promises of divine protection and interposition, any child of God should care to take matters into his own hands? Yet the Lord intimates (verse 8) that notwithstanding this and other positive assurances of God's purpose to avenge His own elect, and notwithstanding the wonderful deliverances from trouble experienced continually by His people, few will be found willing to trust Him fully. The majority prefer the temporary triumph of the Pharisaical class. They prefer to faint under trial rather than to pray. Sad!

The Parable of the Friend at Midnight

—Luke 11: 5-13—

(To the Disciples.)

THE PARABLE.

5. And He said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6. For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7. And He from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

THE INTERPRETATION.

9. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

11. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give a serpent?

12. Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13. If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

THIS PARABLE and its interpretation, with parabolic enlargement on the theme (vss. 11-13), followed immediately upon the giving of "the Lord's prayer," in answer to the request of the disciples that they be taught how to pray. The Jews as a nation were not taught to address God in prayer as their Father, but as God, or God Almighty, and as Jehovah. He was a great and terrible and a covenant-keeping God, "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;" and He was also a merciful God, "showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments." (Deut. 5: 9, 10.) But now Jesus was come to reveal Him as a loving and gracious Father. (Matt. 11: 25-27; John 14: 6-9; 20: 17; 1

John 4: 9, 10.) Recognising God as their Father, and hallowing His name, they might freely present petitions relating to the expected Kingdom, their daily bread, the forgiveness of their sins, and their need of deliverance from the evil everywhere about them in the world.

Then again the Lord emphasises (as in the parable of the importunate widow) the propriety of continual prayer and repeated requests for the desires of the heart. Even an ordinary friend, aroused at midnight, will come down and give the bread asked for, though he has no interest in your visitor, and is annoyed at being disturbed. How much more will God give to His children those very necessary petitions they ask of Him.

Ask, Seek and Knock

Perseverance in asking, seeking and knocking, are as appropriate and as necessary in our relations to God as in those with our fellow-men, whom we do not hesitate to disturb even at midnight, if we really want what they can supply us. It is only by perseverance that the depth and genuineness of desire are manifest. If we do not think it worth while to ask God for anything, when we know He has the ability to give, He will not think it worth while to thrust His favours upon us. Of many it is true—"Ye fight and war" to obtain certain things, but do not receive them, because they forget to ask God for them; or if they do ask of God, they ask for things to gratify the flesh, and consequently receive not. (James 4: 1, 2.) Then there are those who go with "vain repetitions," thinking they will be heard for much speaking, while at the same time their hearts are far from Him, and they wish only for that which will make them great in the eyes of men.—Matt. 6: 5-15.

But the fact that some do not pray aright must not discourage the sincere Christian from obeying our Lord's exhortations to frequent and persistent prayer. Our loving Father waits to be gracious, and all our troubles and sorrows find in Him a sympathetic listener. If we told Him all about it yesterday, and the day before, no matter. Tell Him all about it again to-day and to-morrow. He will help us to bear it, and if we keep on trusting and praying He will ultimately make the whole trouble to work out for good. He knows we have need of temporal things, and if we are seeking first His kingdom and righteousness, He will answer our prayers for the daily necessities. (Matt. 6: 31-34.) And the spiritual things also, and especially, are ours for the asking. If earthly parents give good gifts to their children, "how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

The spiritual things are, after all, the most important, and the most worth asking for. "The things which are seen are temporal," and soon pass away; but "the things which are not seen are eternal," and will be enjoyed long after the trials and disappointments of this life are forgotten.—2 Cor. 4: 18.

"Ask What Ye Will"

All the Lord's children may come to Him freely with their petitions, but one thing they should never omit to say is—"Thy will be done!" And if they wish a

large proportion of their prayers to be answered in the affirmative (for No! is also an answer, and sometimes a very necessary one), they must remember our Lord's instructions—

"If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."—John 15: 7.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it."—John 14: 13, 14; 16: 23, 24.

"Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."—v. 24.

"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."—Mark 11: 24. Compare also 1 John 5: 14-16.

"And whatsoever we ask we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight."—1 John 3: 22.

These Scriptures show that the pre-requisites to granted prayer are—

1. Genuine faith in the efficacy of prayer.
2. Asking in the name of Jesus.
3. Abiding in Him as a true branch in the vine.
4. Having His words in mind and heart, and asking accordingly.
5. Praying without ceasing.

The ancients and the apostles, and the Lord, prayed day and night. Let us follow their good example.

"Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and He shall hear my voice."—Psa. 55: 17.

[Daniel] "kneeling upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God."—Dan 6: 10.

[Anna] "served God with fastings and prayer night and day."—Luke 2: 37.

"His elect which cry day and night to Him."—Luke 18: 7.

"Night and day praying exceedingly."—1 Thes. 5: 17.

"Without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day."—2 Tim 1: 3.

The Parable of the Rich Fool

—Luke 12: 16-21.—

THE PARABLE. THE INTERPRETATION.

16. And He spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully;

17. And He thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18. And He said, This will I do; I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

20. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee [marginal reading and Greek text]; then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

15. And He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisted not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

21. So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

The occasion of the present parable is stated in Luke 12: 13, 14.

13. "And one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me."

14. And He said unto him, Man, Who made Me a judge or a divider over you?

THE PRONENESS of the mind to think of earthly things and personal advantages, even in the presence of the great Teacher, is here illustrated. No wonder the Lord was weary, when His ethical and spiritual teaching fell on such deaf ears! To forsake and forget the things of earth, to take up the cross and follow Him; how few were willing to do it! It was easy to follow Him for loaves and fishes, or in the hope that He would give some other present advantage; but He rebuked such by saying—

"The flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."—John 6: 63.

To feed five thousand on "five barley loaves and two small fishes" was a wonderful miracle (John 6: 5-14), but it did not really profit those who partook, for the miraculously produced food had no extraordinary sustaining power, and their appetites were only temporarily satisfied. But there was real power and life in the words which He addressed to them. He offered them living bread and living water, saying—

"I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst."—John 6: 35.

"If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever."—John 6: 51.

How many of the five thousand became sincere followers of Jesus, and partook of the real bread from heaven? From that time many even of His professed disciples went back, and walked no more with Him.—John 6: 66.

"Beware of Covetousness"

According to the Jewish custom, the first-born son received a double portion of his father's estate, the remainder being divided equally among his other sons. The parable of the prodigal son illustrates the custom, the elder son being recognised as heir of the homestead, while the younger son was given a portion which he was able to spend in riotous living.—Luke 15: 12, 31.

The young man who appealed to the Lord may have been unjustly deprived of his share, or he may have wanted the elder brother to divide the extra portion with him. In the former case, his appeal should have been made to the heads of his own tribe, or to other members of his own family; in the latter case, he was wishing to deprive his elder brother of a right granted by the law. (Deut. 21: 17.) The Lord's immediate rejoinder, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness," would seem to indicate that the latter was the case; for covetousness is inordinate or unlawful eagerness to acquire and possess. No covetousness is involved in accepting one's legal share in an estate; but it is very much manifest in many families where one or more of the heirs wish to defraud the others of their just rights.

The Lord's refusal to interfere did not indicate that an heir should tamely submit to being done out of his portion by unscrupulous fellow-heirs, but rather that such matters did not come within the scope of His mission. He came not to settle various property and other disputes between man and man, but to preach the Kingdom of Heaven. He said—

"My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is My kingdom not from hence."—John 18: 36.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."—Matt. 7: 7.

He Himself was heir of David's throne, and had it been the Father's will to establish Him upon a visible throne over Israel, similar to that occupied by David, He would have been justified in fighting for it, just as David had fought seven years in Hebron.

Probably the young man's idea of the Messiah (which even the disciples appear to have entertained), was not only that He would fight for His kingdom, and make Israel a great nation, but that He would right all private wrongs, and restore to each tribe its original inheritance as received when they first entered the "promised land." All the early disciples were slow in learning the lesson of a spiritual kingdom; and many Christians even yet fail to understand that the kingdom of heaven is "not meat and drink," and property and authority, but "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 19: 27-30; Luke 14: 33; Rom. 14: 17-19.) Truly, "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth." (Luke 12: 15.) There are other interests far more important.

The Folly of Selfishness.

There is no intimation in the parable that the "rich fool" obtained his wealth dishonestly; for the fertility of the soil is given as the cause of his prosperity. His folly consisted in heaping his goods around himself for his own gratification and ease. Had he distributed his surplus wealth to the poor, he would have been just as comfortable; for even the quantity of food a millionaire can eat is limited, and the moths are ever ready to destroy his superfluous wardrobe. Those who can "eat, drink and be merry" when all around are poverty and suffering are hardening their hearts and misusing their opportunities in a most short-sighted way. They know not when those whom they despise and neglect will rise up to deprive them of their wealth and position. "Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" They may not even be left for the children to quarrel over. Better far to make good use of them; for—

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again."—Prov. 19: 17.

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth."—Luke 12: 33.

Better to lay up treasure in heaven, where the eternal life is reserved for the persevering believer, than to heap up riches only to lose them by death, or business failure, or otherwise to be deprived of them, and have nothing either in earth or heaven.—Matt. 6: 19-21; Col. 3: 1-4.

Not only is the heaping up of riches for self-gratification sheer folly, because of the transitoriness of life, but so also is the ardent pursuit of wealth as yet unpossessed, because the character becomes warped in the contest. The apostle's advice to Timothy is sound, and worthy of attention—

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

"And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

"For the love of money is a root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."—1 Tim. 6: 7-10.

"Children, how hard is it to enter into the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."—Mark 10: 24, 25.

The word rendered "fool" in the parable is *aphron*, meaning, according to Strong, "mindless; that is, stupid, ignorant," etc. The same word (or derivatives) occurs in 1 Cor. 15: 36; 2 Cor. 11: 16, 19; 12: 6, 11; Rom. 2: 20; 1 Pet. 2: 15; Luke 11: 40. The rich man showed by his course that he was lacking in understanding and judgment. *Aphron* is a different word to that translated "fool," in Matt. 5: 22, the use of which by one brother against another incurs so severe a penalty, though the Lord did not hesitate to use it in His denunciations of the Pharisees.—Matt. 23: 17, 19.

The derivation of this latter word, *maros*, is uncertain; but in its ordinary use, according to Strong, it means "dull or stupid (as if shut up), heedless, (mor.) blockhead, (appar.) absurd." "*Moros*" is translated "fool," "foolish," and "foolishness," in such passages as 1 Cor. 3: 18; 1: 27; 1: 25; and related forms occur in 1 Cor. 1: 18, 21, 23.

Wordsworth suggests that the allusion here may be to Numbers 20: 10. Moses was angry with the children of Israel, and instead of quietly speaking to the rock, as the Lord had commanded him, he "lifted up his hand, and with his hand he smote the rock twice." He said to the people—

"Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of the rock?"

The Hebrew noun translated "rebels" is from the primitive root *marah*, meaning to be or to make bitter; figuratively, it means to rebel, resist or provoke. Rebellion is always caused by a root of bitterness. And Moses himself fell short in allowing bitterness against the people to creep into his own heart, so that he failed to sanctify the Lord before the people as he should have done. Rather than denounce the people as rebels, he should have used the occasion to glorify the Lord in their eyes.

It is therefore as an expletive, in condemnation of a brother, that the use of this word is forbidden in Matt. 5: 22. Whether or not a brother is a rebel against the Lord, and worthy of the severest condemnation, is not ours to decide. Sufficient is it for us to determine whether or not he is holding and teaching the Gospel according to the inspired Scriptures. If he is not, we may freely criticise and condemn his false teaching, and counteract it as far as possible with presentations of the truth, and leave the exact state of His heart and His relation to God an open question. The Lord's condemnation of the hypocritical and Pharisaical is sufficiently strong, without our adding any condemnation of our own.

Following immediately on the parable, how consoling to those who have left all to follow Him are our blessed Lord's words recorded in Luke 12: 22-34! How stimulating to faith! How strengthening in righteousness! Let us read them again and again, that we be not like the rich young man on another occasion, who when he heard what following Jesus really meant, turned sorrowfully away.—Matt. 19: 16-22.

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The Parable of the Fig Tree

—Matt. 24: 32, 33—

(To the Disciples.)

THE PARABLE.

32. Now learn a parable of the fig tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

This parable also occurs in Mark 13: 28-31; Luke 21: 29-33.

THE INTERPRETATION.

33. So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

IN REPLY to the question of the disciples—"Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy presence, and of the end of the age?" (Matt. 24: 3)—our Lord gave His great prophecy of the events which were to transpire after His departure from the earth—the temple thrown down, Jerusalem trodden under the Gentiles, nation rising against nation and kingdom against kingdom, many false prophets deceiving many, the gospel of the kingdom preached in all the earth for a witness, etc., etc., and the gathering of the elect from one end of heaven to the other.

The Pharisees repeatedly asked a sign, and were invariably refused (Matt. 12: 38-40; 16: 1, 4; Mark 8: 11, 12; Luke 11: 29, 30; John 2: 18; 6: 30.)—with but three exceptions; His lifting up on the cross, the destruction of the temple, and "the sign of Jonas." (John 2: 19; 8: 28; Luke 11, 29, 30.) The Pharisees would not admit that the miracles which Jesus performed were an adequate sign; neither did they admit the other three signs when they came to pass; they always found excuse to discredit Him and all the tokens from heaven. The reason was that they were an "evil and adulterous generation," and merely asked for special "signs" in order to show their contempt for those that were given, and which were conclusive to all those of pure and humble mind, like the Galilean disciples.

Signs to the Disciples.

But the Lord does not condemn His true disciples when they ask a sign, if they do not lay down the law as to the kind of sign they require, but are willing to accept whatever means the Lord may choose to assist their comprehension. In this some of His people make a mistake, constantly asking the Lord to give special "signs" to them personally, as to whether they should believe this or that, or do one thing or another. They put a test on the Lord, and expect Him to measure up to the test. Thousands of trivial incidents are looked upon as "signs," and as a consequence the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the instructions of the Scripture are neglected, while the misguided people become slaves of emotion and superstition.

It is to be noted that all the "signs" or evidences of Jesus' Messiahship were not in secret, but were given openly before all the people, in their houses, in the temple, in the public streets, and before thousands of witnesses on the hillsides of Judea. (Matt. 4: 23-25; 11: 3-6; John 5: 32-39.) The place and circumstances of his birth, and other fulfillments of prophecy, were capable of verification by anyone who would take the trouble. And those "signs" have been as convincing to believers since as to those who were able to examine the birth-register at Bethlehem, or experience in their own bodies His healing power.

So in giving the disciples information for their guidance concerning the "end of the age," and the "presence" of the risen Lord, no "hole and corner" methods are pursued; no signs in the "desert" or in the "secret chamber;" no appeals to private emotion, prejudice or superstition. (Matt. 24: 23-26.) All the events of the age which were foretold for the disciples' benefit were of a public (and sometimes even a world-wide) character, such as wars between nations, and the sending of the gospel into all the nations of the earth. His "presence" also was to be like the sun, illuminating the whole heavens and earth with His glory; and also as the clouds, openly manifest to all who will turn their eyes in the right direction.

The Force of the Parable

The "fig tree, and all the trees," grow neither in the desert nor in the secret chamber, but in the open, for all passers by to see. The signs which they give of approaching summer are open and plain to all beholders. The tiniest bud or leaf is proof sufficient to one willing to be convinced; but, if not convinced, the "sign" (bud or leaf) does not disappear, and another sort of demonstration take its place. The sceptic may pass that way again the following day, and see the same tree with the same signs, *only a little plainer*, by reason of lapse of time and further development.

"So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled."

"Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away."—Luke 21: 31-33.

Our Lord's words have stood, recorded in the Gospels, for nearly twenty centuries, and every student of the Word has been able to compare His predictions with the progress of events both in the social order and in the ecclesiastical heavens. As time passes, the signs grow plainer, just as the fruit and leaves expand upon the trees, and each day brings us nearer to the fulfilment of all. When all the signs have been fulfilled, when the trees reach their full leafage, the "summer" will be here.

Let us not be more indolent or ignorant in observing and profiting by the signs of the times than are the simplest children in noting the advent of spring and summer!—Luke 12: 54-57.

The Cursed Fig Tree

Sometimes an attempt is made to connect the Parable of the Fig Tree, the interpretation of which our Lord Himself gave, as noted in the preceding pages, with the fig tree which our Lord cursed, as narrated in Matt. 21: 17-22, and Mark 11: 12-14; 20-25. But if both are carefully examined, it will be found that the lessons taught are quite distinct. The Parable of the Fig Tree was obviously given to encourage the disciples to watch carefully the fulfilment of our Lords' prophecy, and to judge their position relative to the end of the age by the progress of events. In this connection it is well to remember the rule of interpretation already suggested,* that each parable should be considered by itself, and not confused with any other, even though the same symbols be used; because the same symbols may be used in different settings to teach different things. See the

*See our issue of May, 1910, page 17.

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."—Matt. 9: 37, 38.

Parables of the Sower and of the Tares of the Field. In regard to the cursed fig tree, we suggest the following—

Our Lord might easily have composed a parable concerning a fig tree which a hungry traveller visited only to be disappointed, and which was cursed because of its lack of seasonable fruit; and from this parable he might have drawn a needed lesson for the disciples.

An Acted Parable

Instead, the lesson was given by means of an experience, the Lord Himself being the chief participant, and the disciples the amazed spectators. The reader is recommended to consult an encyclopaedia or other work (the Oxford Bible has a good note), for the characteristics of the fig tree. In Palestine, it "puts out its earliest fruit-buds before its leaves, the former in February, the latter in April or May. When the leaves are out, the fruit ought to be ripe." Our Lord was justified, therefore, in expecting to find fruit, for the time was just a little before the Passover, and the tree was in full leaf. The statement of Mark 11: 13, "for the time of figs was not yet" (R.V., "for it was not the season of figs"), must be understood to mean the season for gathering figs.

Did the Lord have the right to curse the fig tree? If He had authority to drive the money-changers from the temple, to denounce the Pharisees and Scribes, and to do miracles of healing for the poor, no doubt he had the right to do as He would with the trees by the wayside, which were considered public property. He was the great Prophet whom Moses had foretold; He was King of the Jews; He was "greater than the temple." (Matt. 12: 6.) His was the right to curse, not only the barren fig tree, but the whole Jewish nation, to whom He had come to gather fruit, and found nothing but the leaves of profession. (Matt. 23: 1-39; 21: 33-34.) (To be continued.)

43.) Indeed, it is significant that the incident of the fig tree occurred when He was passing from Bethany to Jerusalem, where he immediately proceeded to cleanse the temple, and rebuke the Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.

But the lesson which the Lord impressed upon His disciples when they called His attention to the fact that the fig tree had "dried up from the roots," was not that they should be fruit bearers rather than mere professors; but that they should have such faith in God that they should not only be able to curse an unfruitful fig tree, but also—

"If ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done."—Matt. 21: 21.

This also may be taken as a parabolic expression, for the Lord did not use his mighty power to curse literal fig trees except on this one occasion; and when He sent out His disciples under the great commission (Matt. 28: 19, 20; Luke 24: 46-48), it was not that they should go over the earth cursing literal trees and removing literal mountains, but that they should *teach the truth*, and let that truth do the work of blessing the fruitful and cursing the unfruitful. And so it came to pass that it was under the preaching of the Apostles that the great mountain of Judaism was overthrown, and that great Gentile nations were unsettled on their foundations.—1 Thes. 2: 14-16; Acts 4: 23-29; 19: 21-29; Rev. 8: 8.

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."—Matt. 21: 22.

Figs of Thistles

Again illustrating the different meanings attached by our Lord to the same symbol in different settings, is His use of the Fig Tree and its fruit in Matt. 7: 15-20; Luke 6: 43-45. Figs grow on fig-trees and grapes on grape-vines. "By their fruits ye shall know them," is the lesson in this connection.

"The Field is the World"

An interesting discovery recently was made at Wittenberg, in Saxon Prussia, which is of great interest to all Protestants. While repairing the weathercock of the town church, "Schlosskirche," the workmen found under the cross a metal ball, which they noticed would open. On examination it was found to contain two documents. One, dated 1530, is written by Martin Luther. This consists of four pages, of which three are written by the hand of the great reformer, the fourth bearing an attestation to the fact that Luther had written the document himself. The second document, dated 1556, also of four pages, is written by Phillip Melancthon, the friend and disciple of Luther, the hand writing bearing the characteristics of the "Confession of Augsburg." Both these manuscripts will shortly be published. Both Luther and Melancthon are buried in the Schlosskirche.—*Exchange*.

The year 1910 will be a memorable one in China on account of the anti-pigtail crusade. "Six Chinese elders, whose ages aggregate 449 years, set the example by publicly cutting off their queues on the platform of

the Chinese club. In three days 11,000 Chinese discarded their queues." There is still opposition to the movement in the provinces, as there is also to the liberation of women from the feetbinding tradition. It is to be hoped that these and other reforms will make the Chinese more amenable to the Gospel which is carried to them by some members of the white nations whom they are imitating in dress and economics.

"There are about 1,100,000 Jewish people in Greater New York, or over 26 per cent. of the entire population; while in Paris and in London there are a trifle over 2 per cent.; in Chicago, 3½ per cent.; in Berlin, nearly 5; in Constantinople, nearly 6; Montreal, 7; Vienna, nearly 9; Amsterdam, 11; Warsaw, 33; Lodz, Russia, 47; and in Jerusalem, 55. Fully 90 per cent. of the Jewish people in the United States are in the large towns and cities, preponderating in New York. There are 3,000 Jewish lawyers and 1,000 Jewish physicians there, and more than 75 per cent. of the students in Normal College are Jewesses."—*Exchange*.

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The Cheerful Givers

"The God of Heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build." "Through God we shall do valiantly."—Neh. 2: 20; Psa. 60: 12.

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully; every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9: 6, 7.

"Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."—1 Cor. 16: 2.

Voluntary Donations, as under, have been received since our last report in the December issue, for the spread of the Good Tidings concerning the Grace of God in Jesus, our Mediator and Intercessor under the terms of the New Covenant.

The letter "G" after a donation number indicates that the donation is sent in harmony with the plan mentioned in the "Go Forward" letter enclosed with the November "Advocate." It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way.

No.	Previously reported ...	...	£82	18	8	= \$403.04
79G	...	£0	5	0		
80G	...	0	15	2		
81	...	0	10	0		
82G	...	2	0	0		
83G	...	0	4	9		
84	...	1	10	0		
85	...	0	6	3		
86	...	0	17	6		
87	...	0	1	6		
88G	...	0	8	0		
89G	...	0	5	0		
90G	...	0	10	6		
91G	...	0	5	0		
92G	...	0	8	3		
93G	...	0	5	0		
94G	...	0	5	0		
Sundries	...	0	0	10		

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24	5.00
25	50.00
26	2.50
27	1.96
28	5.00
29	1.00
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31	50.00
32	2.90
33	3.00
34	5.00
35	2.02
36	5.00
37	4.07
38	5.00
39	2.25
40	1.50
41	4.00
42	5.00
43	25.25
44	1.25

\$183.95 = £37 17 0

Total since last report	46	14	9	= 227.14
Total for 7 months	£129	13	5	= \$630.18

The "Advocate" 7000 Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report in the December issue. Let the good work continue! The cost of printing and posting 7000 "Advocates" is about £40 (\$200) per month.

Previously reported ...	...	£90	4	3	= \$438.41
32G	...	£5	0	0	
33G	...	0	1	0	
34	...	0	4	6	
35	...	0	3	2	
At Brooklyn—					
11	5.00	1	0	7	
Total for 1 month	...	6	9	3	= 31.40
Total for 7 months	...	£96	13	6	= \$469.81

Advocate Renewals, &c.

FRIENDS are hereby reminded that nearly all subscriptions to "The New Covenant Advocate" will expire with the issue of March, 1911. It is essential, for the good of the Cause we all love, that subscriptions be promptly renewed; therefore we give this timely notice to all our readers.

A notice similar to this was given—and several times repeated—a year ago. Nevertheless, some of our readers have not been heard from, even up to the present date. It is not our wish to seem to slight a friend who desires the "Advocate," by stopping the paper, even though the subscription be long overdue. Neither is it our wish to annoy by sending the "Advocate" where it is not wanted. But how are we to know? **YOU MUST TELL US!** This is the only way.

It is quite the usual thing for publishers of papers to be in a state of perplexity over this question. Cannot the list of "Advocate" readers be the solitary exception to this rule? It can be, if you make it so. We therefore leave this with you, knowing that you would all wish to decrease our perplexities, rather than be the means of adding to them.

PLEASE, therefore, renew promptly, whether you be a paying or non-paying reader. Both are welcome, as long as the Lord shall enable us to publish the "Advocate"; but we must hear from every reader at least once in the year, so that we may know where the "Advocate" is desired. Now is the best time for all to attend to this.

Encouragement to Place "Bible Talks" in Public Libraries

I enclose remittance as payment for "New Covenant Advocate" for the ensuing year, and for your book entitled "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind." I chanced to have the above book in hand from a library, but being greatly interested in it I want to have one of my own. I am delighted with its exposition of Scripture, but am still puzzled how to reconcile it with parts of God's Word. I hope by getting your monthly paper now and then to find these difficulties made a bit clearer.

Yours sincerely,

_____, New Zealand.

The Memorial Supper

The anniversary of our Lord's death will fall this year on Thursday, April 13th, being 15th Nisan. The evening before this, namely, Wednesday, April 12, after sunset, being the beginning of Nisan 15, will be the anniversary of the institution of the Memorial Supper, which is to be observed in remembrance of Him. On that evening let all observe the solemn Memorial, with the simple emblems of unleavened bread and wine, in the manner commanded by the Lord and the Apostle. The subject will, D.V., be considered more fully in our next issue.

Christian Workers

For "Bible Talks" are wanted everywhere. Substantial discount allowed. "Go ye into all the world." "Let your light so shine."

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The Lord's Table. An exposition of 1 Cor. 10: 14-21. What it means to "partake of the altar."

This issue also contains valuable answers to questions on the Mediator and the Covenants.

AUGUST, 1909.

The Few and the Many. An interesting explanation of Rev. 7: 1-17. Explains also the figure of the Olive Tree described in Rom. 11; Gideon's Band, an illustration of the tests to be endured by the "Few." Who are "Saved so as by Fire" (1 Cor. 3: 6-15); Who are the "Great Multitude," with palms in their hands (Rev. 7: 9, 10).

Questions on the Covenants.

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Other Sheep I Have. A clear interpretation of the parable of the sheepfold. (John 10.) **The Oneness of the Father and the Son.**

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Did Our Lord Drink of the Memorial Cup? Evidence that He did not do so.

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Rest and Restitution. The true meaning of "Sabbath."

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Chronological Order of Types and Antitypes. Compare article, p. 145, in December issue.

Was the Abrahamic Covenant Unconditional? The Conditions Defined. The Nature of the Blessing. Sins "Remitted" are "Blotted Out."

We do not Deny Suffering with Christ. An answer to misrepresentations of our Position.

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The Judge. God the Judge of all; all judgment committed to the Son; the King on Zion's Hill; when did the judgment begin? The Judgment to Come.

One Effect of the Bible in India.

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The Memorial Supper; How to Find the Date for the Annual Observance.

Report of Hampton Conference. Topics—The Abrahamic Covenant; the New Covenant; its terms, blessings and Mediator; The Time and Parties of the New Covenant; the Ransom type, the Sin Offering type, and fulfilments in Christ Jesus.

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Jacob's Ladder, and its Significance; Jacob's Vow; "Greater Works shall ye do" (John 14: 12).

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The Atonement a Covering Price. Jesus, the propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only.

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"Faith in the Promises." A Bible Reading of 40 texts.

We shall be pleased to receive a call from any "Advocate" reader visiting the city, or to answer Bible Questions through the post.

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Seven Parables of the Kingdom. Rules of Interpretation. The Parable of the Sower; of the Tares of the Field; of the Mustard Seed; of the Leaven; of the Treasure Hid in a Field; of a Merchant Seeking Goodly Pearls; of a Net gathering Fish.

Our Point of View. The Gospel preached to all Nations; more Reflections by the Quiet Observer.

Scriptural Meaning of Justification. Examples of usage throughout Old and New Testament. "Justified from all Things," to Declare Righteous.

That Night of the Lord. The Importance of the night on which the children of Israel were delivered. Our Pass-over and Deliverance.

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Parables (continued).—The Unmerciful Servant; the Labourers in the Vineyard; the Two Sons; the Wicked Husbandman; the Marriage of the King's Son.

Set Down in His Throne; our Lord's Position and Authority.

Destroy this Temple.—An Exposition of John 2: 18-22. How the Temple was raised up in three days.

The Faith Once Delivered, No. I; John Milton [1608-1674] on the Inspiration of the Scriptures.

Eternal Torment not in the Bible. An extract from a work published in 1866.

Papal Sophistry, A.—and other Items of Interest.

JULY, 1910.

The Offerings of the Day of Atonement; an Examination of the details of the Furniture and Ritual of the Tabernacle, which reveals that some facts are commonly overlooked or mis-stated and become the basis of false interpretations.

Report of "Cheerful Givers" Fund, etc., for year ending June 30.

Motives for Service; Reasons for whole-hearted Devotion to God.

The Faith Once Delivered, No. II. John Bunyan [1628-1688] and His Conversion; Daniel Whitby on the Death of Christ and the New Covenant [pub. 1710].

AUGUST, 1910.

The Inspired Word and Words of God; the Necessity of Verbal Inspiration; Use and Misuse of Words; True and False Teachers; Examples.

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Parables (continued); the Two Debtors; the Good Samaritan; the Pharisee and the Publican; "the Blade, the Ear, and the Corn."

Mrs. Wicks on "Selfish Saints."

SEPTEMBER, 1910.

An Altar and a Pillar in Egypt; a Suggestion that the New Testament contains a more likely interpretation of the prophecy of Isa. 19: 19, 20, than a heathen monument, such as the Great Pyramid of Gizeh is shown to be; the history of Egypt, the pyramids, and Phallic worship among the Canaanites and Hebrews; the Gospel preached to the Egyptians; a "Saviour and a Great One"; "Signs and Wonders" in New and Old Testaments.

Parables (continued); the Lost Sheep; the Lost Silver Piece; the Lost Son (the Prodigal); the Unjust Steward.

OCTOBER, 1910.

Death Abolished; How Christ brought Life and Incorruption to Light; "Neither can they die any more."

Parables (continued); the Rich Man and Lazarus.

The Scriptures on Future Punishment; Sheol, hell, grave, pit, in the Old Testament; Every Text examined; literal and figurative language.

The Faith Once Delivered (No. III.); Rev. S. R. Maitland on the High Calling and Earthly Blessings, published 1835. Glasgow; a Criticism of "Paradise Lost," by G. K. Chesterton.

Losing the Sense of Sin; What Honesty means in business and other relations of life; "little sins," so-called, often make more unhappiness in homes than large crimes.

"All Things Lawful for Me;" showing that the Apostle did not by these words justify doubtful practices, but reprobated a Corinthian proverb of license and expediency.

NOVEMBER, 1910.

The New Testament on Future Punishment; an examination of every N.T. text in which the words *hades* and *gehenna* occur; What is a soul? Destroy both soul and body in Gehenna; the Beast and the False Prophet; the Mark of the Beast.

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Prayers for the Dead not Authorised in Scripture; Protestant interpretation of Scripture contrasted with the Roman; the Supremacy of God's Word over Church Councils and Decrees.

DECEMBER, 1910.

Jesus Christ; that in All Things He might have Pre-eminence; Hampton Conference Addresses.

The Prehuman Existence of Christ; a much disputed point; Our Lord's own Testimony concerning Himself; "Before Abraham was I am."

Christ's Earthly Ministry; His pre-eminence over His nation, in Temptation, in Teaching, in Death; the New Covenant sealed by His blood; the High Calling.

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Interesting Questions on Rom. 6: 7; Gal. 3: 19; Rom. 5: 11.

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Unto Us a Child is Born; the genealogies of Matthew and Luke, showing that Jesus could not have been the son of Joseph; Jesus, the Son of God.

Jesus Christ, that in All Things He might have Pre-eminence; Hampton Conference Addresses (concluded).

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Kingdom Herald

Vol. 2—No. 12.

MELBOURNE, LONDON, AND BROOKLYN, N.Y., MARCH, 1911

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The Lamb and the LAMB

ACCORDING to the progress of events in the divine programme, the time came when Jehovah would deliver Israel, His afflicted people, from Egypt the oppressor. Jacob and his little company had come down to Egypt in peace, and had been hospitably received by the Pharaoh of that time for the sake of Joseph, the honoured Prime Minister, whose God-given wisdom and prudent dealings had brought Egypt through seven years of drought and famine. A district had been assigned to Jacob and his people for a dwelling place, and all seemed well with them.

After a while there arose a Pharaoh who knew not Joseph. Observing the rapid increase in the numbers of the children of Israel, and filled with a fear of what might happen, this ruler devised measures by which he hoped to check the increase of the Israelites and to retain them as a subservient race. He put them to laborious work, and from time to time increased his demands. He issued an edict commanding all the male infants of the Israelites to be killed at birth. Notwithstanding all these hardships, the people continued to increase. But they groaned under the oppression, and their cry ascended to heaven at the time which God had arranged in His great purpose for their emigration from Egypt. Therefore He came down to deliver them.

God's Judgment upon Egypt

The Lord God would not deliver His afflicted people without executing great and well deserved judgments upon their Egyptian oppressors. (Gen. 15: 14.) Accordingly there was raised up to the throne a Pharaoh of particularly hard heart, that he might be, on the Egyptian side, the instrument through whom the punishments should come upon his nation. (Ex. 9: 16; Rom. 9: 17.) How this hard-hearted man resisted the will of God, and made his heart yet harder after every manifestation of mercy, is well known, and all may read about it in Exodus, chapters 7 to 14 inclusive, where the plagues sent upon Egypt are described. Such determination as this Pharaoh manifested is really marvellous, and should accomplish wonders if rightly directed.

The Passover

The last of the plagues visited upon Egypt before the departure of the children of Israel was the slaying of the firstborn, and this was made the occasion of a great national festival, divinely instituted and to be continuously observed by the Jews on its annual recurrence. (Ex. 12: 14.) This festival was also to have a significance of great value to Christians, as were all the arrangements and many of the experiences of the Jewish people. (1 Cor. 10: 1-11.) The festival was called "Passover," because the destroying angel, smiting the firstborn of Egypt, would "pass over" the houses of the Israelites, who were obediently observing the divine commands given them for this occasion, and would not smite them.—Ex. 12: 12, 13.

On the tenth day of the month, which was to be henceforth regarded by them as the first month of the year, each Israelitish family in Egypt was to take up a lamb or kid of the first year. (Ex. 12: 1-5.) This lamb or kid was to be kept until the fourteenth day of the month, and on that day, "between the two evenings," the animal was to be slain. (Ex. 12: 6, margin.) The blood of the slain animal was to be sprinkled beside and over the door of the house within which it would be eaten. The flesh was to be roasted, and the children of Israel, with loins girded, staff in hand and shoes on their feet, were to eat it in haste and with bitter herbs. Nothing of it was to be allowed to remain until the morning; and any that did remain was to be burnt with fire. (Ex. 12: 7-11.) Lastly, none of them, neither firstborn nor other, was to go outside the door of his house until the morning, by which, judging from what afterward transpired, it is understood that very early morning was meant—perhaps after the destroying angel had passed over. (Ex. 12: 22, 31, 34, 36, 39.) In connection with this, there was to be a week in which nothing leavened should be eaten. Every crumb of leaven was to be removed from their houses on Nisan 14.—Ex. 12: 15-20.

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Alterations In the Service

Some of the details of the Passover observance were altered by divine direction, after the Israelites came into the promised land and God had indicated the place which He would choose, to put His name there. In Egypt on that first occasion, the Passover lambs had to be killed by the several heads of the families on their own premises; after the Israelites came into their own land they were not to kill the lambs at any other place than the tabernacle or temple. (Deut. 16: 2, 5-7.) In Egypt, the lamb had to be taken up on the tenth day of the month and kept until the fourteenth by the family that was to eat it. This could not be done after the Israelites entered Canaan, and began to observe the command that all the lambs for the Passover should be killed at Jerusalem, and the feast observed there; accordingly, no mention of this detail is made in the Palestine observances. (Deut. 16: 16.) In Egypt, the blood of the slain Passover lamb was to be sprinkled over the doorposts of their residences, as a sign to the destroying angel, and they were not to leave their houses on that night before the destroyer had passed over; after they came into their own land, and all the lambs had to be killed at the one place, it is manifest that the blood could not be sprinkled on the doorposts all over the country, neither was it necessary, for no destroying angel was passing over the land. For the same reason, it would not be necessary for the Israelites in Palestine to observe the precaution about not leaving their houses. Accordingly, it is understood that it was about midnight when the Lord and the Apostles left the house after having for the last time eaten the Passover together. In Egypt, the Passover Supper was eaten in haste, in anticipation of the hurried departure which took place. (Ex. 12: 11.) But the subsequent observances in Palestine were memorials of the great deliverance from the destroyer and from Egypt. As there was no anticipation of a hurried departure from Palestine, provision was made for a more leisurely observance of the Supper, including an explanation of the meaning of this service, by the head of the family in answer to a question from the children. (Ex. 12: 24-28.) But the central point was always the same, whether in the original observance or the subsequent memorials—praise and gratitude to God for the wonderful deliverance. (Ex. 12: 42.) And, as we shall see, the stated time for the service remained the same as at the first ordered.

"Christ our Passover"

The Jewish Passover was typical, as were all their authorised festivals and sacrifices. The antitype, to which the typical Passover lamb pointed, was Christ Jesus. "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." (1 Cor. 5: 7.) And as the Israelite had to memorialise his passing over, as the date came round from year to year, so is the Christian commanded to show forth the Lord's death. The Jewish Passover Supper was rather elaborate, but the Christian Memorial Supper is exceedingly simple. The Jewish Passover Supper had the roast lamb and bitter herbs. The Christian has the flesh of the antitypical Lamb, whereof he eats by faith, to strengthen him for the journey through this wilderness of sin, and to give him everlasting life. (John 6: 53-57.) The Christian has also the bitter herbs of

affliction as he makes his way through the present evil world. These cause him to relish more thoroughly the flesh of his Lamb. These are the facts of Christian experience typified by the lamb and bitter herbs of the Jewish Passover. Every true believer in Jesus has these experiences more or less every day. But in the Christian's Memorial Supper the only emblems used are unleavened bread and wine.

The Memorial of our Lord's death was instituted by Himself just after He and the apostles had for the last time celebrated the Jewish Passover according to the rites of the law. That supper being concluded, the Master

"took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is My body. And he took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them; and they all drank of it. And He said unto them, This is My blood of the New Testament [Covenant], which is shed for many."—Mark 14: 22-24. See also Matt. 26: 26; Luke 22: 19; 1 Cor. 11: 23.

Thus did the Master institute the Memorial of His own death, to be observed by His faithful, for He said—"This do in remembrance of Me."—Luke 22: 19; 1 Cor. 11: 24, 25.

Purposes of the Memorial Supper

Two principal objects are intended to be served by the observance of the Memorial Supper by believers in Jesus—

1. A Memorial of Him.—Luke 22: 19; 1 Cor. 11: 24, 25.
2. The showing forth of His death.—1 Cor. 11: 26; 15: 3; Heb. 2: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4-7.

In proportion as the believer's love for his Saviour is increased by meditation on the sufferings of Jesus, the first of these purposes is served. To the extent that the believer obtains a better understanding of Christ's death, the reality and the value of it, what it implies to the Redeemer and to the redeemed of authority and subjection respectively, and what that means which says that He by the grace of God tasted death for every man and gave Himself a ransom for all, being thereby placed in position to act as Mediator between God and the ransomed ones, the second object is obtained.

The Eater Is not the Sacrifice

It has been thought that the Apostle's language in 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17 might bear the construction that the consecration of the communicant at the Lord's Table is represented in the "loaf." But the teaching is rather that Jesus Christ is the loaf, and that the communicant is in the body *because he partakes of Jesus Christ, the loaf*. (V. 17, R.V., margin.) In other words, *because the "Loaf" is in the communicant*, he is a member of the one body, or association of Believers; consequently, not the believer's sufferings and death, but those of Jesus are memorialised in the eating and drinking at the Lord's Table.

The idol worshipper did not reckon himself part of the sacrifice of which he ate. The Jew did not consider himself part of the offering which he brought. Neither was he a part of it, nor was the priest who ate a portion part of that sacrifice, nor was God part of the sacrifice because a portion was consumed on His altar. But the worshipper was brought into fellowship

with God and with His priest, because all had, in a manner of speaking, partaken together. By the same rule, the Christian, partaking of the emblems of our Lord's body and blood, is not authorised to consider himself as also represented in the bread and wine. These emblems stand for the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ only, and the believer is constantly, by the exercise of faith, to appropriate the benefits of His sacrifice to himself, for his soul's health and the upbuilding of his spiritual strength.*

"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." "He that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me."—John 6: 53, 57.

Who Should Partake?

When instituting the Memorial Supper, the Saviour defined that the unleavened bread used represented His body, "which is given for you." (Luke 22: 19.) Everyone, therefore, who would observe the Lord's Supper must believe that Jesus Christ died for his (the believer's) sins, according to the Scriptures. The Master further defined that the cup in His Memorial Supper represents His "blood of the New Covenant," "which is shed for you" "for the remission of sins." (Matt. 26: 28; Luke 22: 20.) Every one, therefore, who would observe the Lord's Supper, must believe that Jesus shed His blood for him, and that His blood ratified the New Covenant, the only arrangement by which God forgives sins. Every believer must accept the body and blood of Jesus as having been given on his behalf. Besides this, the believer must approach the sacred table with a full desire that the two purposes already mentioned might be more and yet more realised by himself, to the glory of God and the blessing of others, as well as at his own upbuilding. Thus coming, the communicant will be blessed. These are the only conditions mentioned in the Scriptures; but they must be observed. The responsibility is in each case with the believer himself.

"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."—1 Cor. 11: 27-31.

Unworthy eating and drinking at the Lord's Supper would be participation contrary to the explanation and intention of the Supper, as set forth by the Lord and the Apostle. So to eat and drink would be to profane the sacred things, and to demonstrate that the Lord Jesus Christ was not truly discerned as the One whose body (flesh and blood) is partaken of.

If possible, the communicant should, of course, meet with others of like precious faith. If this be not feasible, let him seek out a quiet place where he can have an hour to himself, shut in from the world, and let him there meditate upon the goodness of God, the love of Jesus, and the value of the precious sacrifice. Let him offer thanks for the bread, representing the body of Jesus, given for him, and let him eat thereof in remembrance of the Lord. Thus let him give thanks for the cup representing the Blood of the New Covenant, shed for him, for the remission of his sins, and let him drink in memory of the Saviour's love. Let him sing a hymn of praise to God, and then go forth, still medi-

*For further comments on this phase of the subject, please see booklet, "The Church and its Ceremonies," which we can supply for 6d. (10 cents), postpaid.

tating upon the great things accomplished at Calvary, and upon the pain suffered by the Saviour—

"Who loved me, and gave Himself for me."—Gal. 2: 20.

When should the Lord's Supper be partaken of?

Many Christians think this a question of little or no moment, so much so that they observe the ceremony at any hour from early morning until noon, and still call their observance "The Lord's Supper." One would think that, having in mind the time of day, some other designation of their ceremony would be more appropriate. Night is the appropriate hour for the commemoration.

Most Christians apparently think that the Lord's Supper may be observed as frequently as one may find convenient or desirable. But it is submitted that when the Lord instituted the Supper, He commanded its observance as a Memorial of Himself. This He did just after He and His disciples had observed the Passover memorial of the deliverance of Israel from the destroyer and from Egypt, which memorial was regularly observed on its anniversary. It is further submitted that in view of this, and without explicit instructions to the contrary, the disciples must have understood that the Master meant them from that time out to observe annually this Memorial of Himself, instead of the other memorial of the deliverance of their forefathers from Egypt. This thought is, we believe, very much emphasised by the Apostle. After stating that the frequent meetings of the church were not for the purpose of eating the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11: 20), he reminds them of the revelation he had received on this subject.

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, THE SAME NIGHT IN WHICH HE WAS BETRAYED took bread."—1 Cor. 11: 23.

It seems clear that the intention was that the Memorial Supper of our Lord should be observed annually on the anniversary of its institution; that is to say, the night He was betrayed.

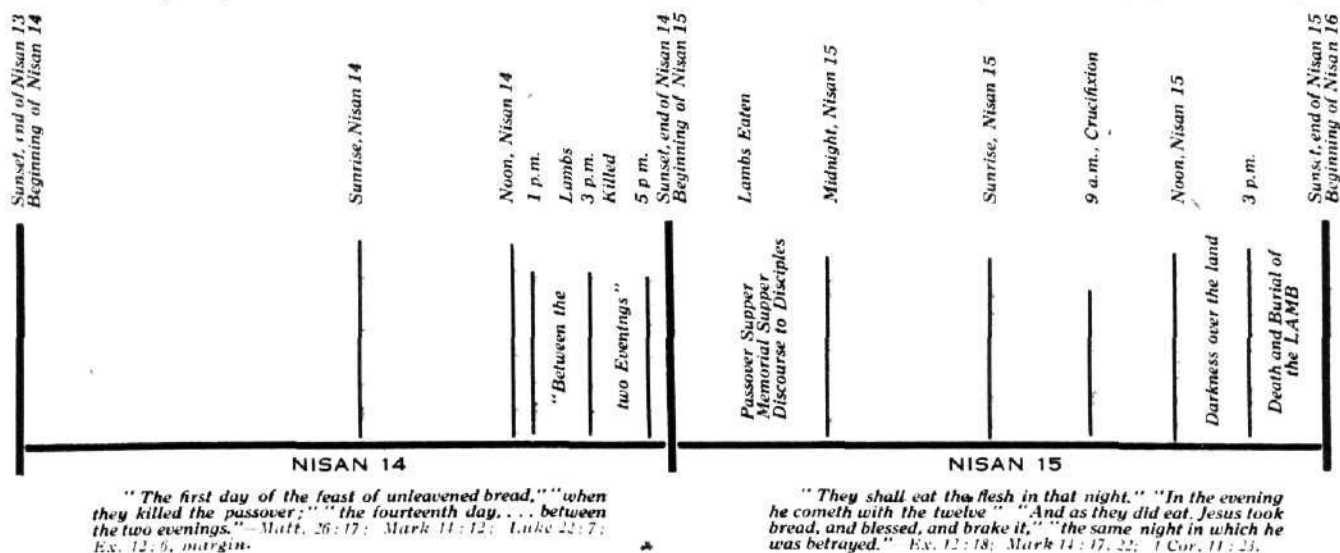
One text (Acts 20: 7) is referred to by those who believe the Lord's Supper should be observed weekly, but the claim based upon this text has no weight, because the text does not speak of the Lord's Supper at all; it tells merely of "breaking bread," which, according to Acts 2: 42, 46, means nothing more nor less than partaking of the ordinary daily food. They "did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." If Acts 20: 7 had intended to refer to the Lord's Supper, it would have done so in language more to the point.

It may further be noted that the meeting mentioned in Acts 20: 7 took place at night—that is to say, Saturday night, being the beginning of the first day of the week. The fact that the meeting took place at night appears in verses 7 and 11, and it is good evidence that the disciples had not come together on the Sunday morning for the purpose of "breaking bread," so that those who take Acts 20: 7, as authority for observing the Lord's Supper weekly, on Sunday mornings, are astray on every item of their contention; for the passage refers neither to the Lord's Supper nor to Sunday morning, as may easily be seen.

When did Christ die?

If the Lord's Supper is to be observed annually on the anniversary of its institution, the question as to the date of Christ's death is one of great interest and importance. Fortunately, the question is fairly easy of solution, when one bears in mind that it was fixed according to the Jewish calendar, according to which the disciples would have known from year to year when to observe the Supper. The Lord's Supper was instituted at night, immediately after the Jewish Passover Supper had been eaten, and it takes the place of the Old Testament observance. The Jewish Passover Supper was eaten every year on Nisan 15; and as the night was the beginning of the day, according to Old Testament usage still followed by the Jews, it is easy to see that on the last day of His life as a man, our Saviour ate the Jewish Passover with His disciples, instituted the Memorial of Himself, discoursed to His disciples, suffered the agony in the garden, was betrayed, tried, and crucified, and, before sunset, was dead and buried. Truly, it was a full day!

In Ex. 12: 6 (margin), the Jews were commanded to kill the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the first month, "between the two evenings." This meant Nisan 14, in the afternoon. According to Philo, a Jewish author contemporary with our Lord, and to Josephus, who was contemporary with Philo, and nearly so with our Saviour, the Passover lambs in our Lord's time were killed on Nisan 14, from 1 to 5 p.m., or from 3 to 5 p.m. The supper would therefore not be eaten until the following date, even if prepared with the greatest expedition, because at sunset, about 6 p.m., only an hour or so after the killing of the lamb, another day, Nisan 15, would begin. Let it be illustrated by the following diagram:—



Observances of the Passover

The following are the most important observances of the Passover mentioned in the Scriptures, as cited in Smith's Bible Dictionary:—"1. The first Passover in Egypt. (Ex. 12.) 2. The first kept in the desert. (Num. 9.) 3. That celebrated by Joshua at Gilgal. (Josh. 5.) 4. That which Hezekiah observed on the occasion of his restoring the national worship. (2 Chron. 30.) This

Passover was not held till the second month, the proper time for the Little Passover, 5. The Passover of Josiah in the eighteenth year of his reign. (2 Chron. 35.) 6. That celebrated by Ezra after the return from Babylon. (Ezra 6.) 7. The last Passover of our Lord's life."

Attention is drawn to these to show that whatever other details of the Passover service the Lord may have altered, after the Israelites were established in Palestine, the time for the killing of the Passover lambs always remained as at the first—on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the afternoon. The account of Josiah's great Passover observance is particularly explicit.

"And they [the Levites] roasted the Passover with fire according to the ordinance. . . . And afterward they made ready for themselves, and for the priests; because the priests, the sons of Aaron, were busied in offering of burnt offerings, and the fat UNTIL NIGHT; therefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the priests the sons of Aaron."—2 Chron. 35: 13, 14.

This shows that during the daylight hours of Nisan 14 the priests were too busy to take time to kill Passover lambs for themselves; therefore the Levites prepared for them. But as Nisan 14 closed at nightfall, and a new day began there, it is evident that the Passover sacrifices which were killed in the closing hours of Nisan 14 could not have been eaten until the night with which Nisan 15 began.

The Lord's Last Passover

It is clear, from the accounts of the first three Gospels, that our Lord was alive on the first day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed, and that He ate the Passover with His disciples, just before instituting the Memorial of His own death. (Matt. 26: 17-20; Mark 14: 12; Luke 22: 7, 8.) The disciples,

following the Master's directions, made ready the Passover at the place appointed, and when the even, or night, was come, He and they ate it together. The record in John 13: 1 is not out of harmony with this, because "before the feast of the Passover" does not say how long before, and just before the eating of the supper would seem to be required by the context. This shows that our Lord did not die on Nisan 14, for that day

"Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul."—Psalm 66: 16.

was already more than half gone when the disciples asked Him where they should prepare the Passover. After receiving the directions from the Lord, the disciples had to go into the city, meet the man, follow him to the house, deliver the message, take the furnished room which had been "prepared" by the removal of all leaven from it, and then make ready the Passover, the lamb for which could not be obtained at the Temple until 3 p.m., or later, and after that must be carried to the room and roasted. In view of all this it was simply impossible that our Lord should have even eaten the Passover on Nisan 14, and much less have been crucified on that date as well. But He could, and did, eat the Passover after night had fallen, being the beginning of Nisan 15, and be crucified before another night came round.

John 18: 28 is sometimes thought to be contradictory of the definite statement of the first three Gospels, but it harmonises with them, if it be understood in a general way, as intimating that the reluctance of the Jews to enter Pilate's judgment hall was in order that they might go on with their observance of the Passover Feast, without being interrupted and marred by the defilement that would be occasioned by their entry into the judgment hall. Had they been defiled for only one day of the eight days of the feast, their observance of the Feast would have been incorrect, and they would perhaps have considered themselves under the necessity of observing the so-called "Little Passover" in the second month, which they would naturally be reluctant to do, because it would make them conspicuous in a rather unfavourable light. (Num. 9: 6-13.) If John 18: 28 be not taken in this general manner, there would seem to be no way to harmonise the various Gospel accounts of the Lord's last days, and no violence is done to John's words by understanding them as above proposed.

John 19: 14 is sometimes mentioned as though it were contrary to the accounts of the first three Gospels, because it is thought that "preparation of the Passover" must mean the day before the time to eat the Passover lamb. But this is not the necessary thought, nor is it even the idea expressed by John, because in 19: 31 it is shown that it was the day before the weekly Sabbath which occurred during the Passover week that was meant. This was a "high day," because it happened to be on this occasion not only the weekly Sabbath, but also the day on which the wave-sheaf had to be offered. Mark 15: 42 supports this view—

"And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath."

Moreover, while the day before the weekly Sabbath was sometimes called the "preparation," there was no specification of a day before the Passover, or other festival, as a "preparation" day.—Mark 15: 42; Luke 23: 54; John 19: 31.

The evidence is thus complete that our Saviour died on Nisan 15, and that the day of the week on which He died was the "preparation," or day before the Sabbath, known to us as Friday.

Some have thought that because our Saviour was the antitype of the Passover lamb, He should die on Nisan 14. But this does not at all follow. Our Lord was doubtless the antitype of the Passover lamb; but He was also the antitype of the Day of Atonement sacrifices,

and of the Covenant sacrifices. (1 Cor. 5: 7; Matt. 26: 28; Heb. 10: 4-12; 9: 18-21; John 1: 29; 1 John 2: 2.) His one sacrifice was the antitype of all of these; but He did not die at the three different dates of these typical sacrifices. No Scripture says that He must have finished His sacrifice on the date on which the typical lambs were to be slain, and the evidence, as above cited, shows that His sacrifice took place on the day following the killing of the typical lambs. Nevertheless, some insist that it is appropriate to remember our Lord's death on Nisan 14, the date on which the typical lambs were slain. To such we would propose the question—The Lamb, or THE LAMB; which? Nisan 14, if one desire to celebrate the death of the lamb; but Nisan 15, if one desire to remember the death of THE LAMB.

The Emblems

These should conform to those used by the Lord in instituting the Memorial; viz., unleavened bread and wine. Concerning the unleavened bread, there can be no question. But as the expression, "fruit of the vine," is employed in Luke 22: 18, we accept it as allowing some latitude, and have therefore adopted the use of unfermented grape juice, while recognising and freely admitting that the wine in use in Palestine 1900 years ago, at the Passover season, being six months after the vintage, must have been fermented, since it does not appear that the people in those times were acquainted with the art of preserving grape juice unfermented.

Let us ever have in grateful remembrance the love of God and of Christ for a lost world, and as these thoughts are specially before us at the Memorial season, let them incite us all, who recognise what has been done for us, to greater devotion to God's service and the service of our blessed Redeemer, Mediator, Sin Offering, and Intercessor or Advocate, Whose memory we revere.

"Let Us keep the Feast"

Following the first day of the Passover, upon which the lamb was killed, came seven days of rejoicing, the unleavened bread being eaten by the Jews during those days. To this the Apostle refers in 1 Cor. 5: 8—

"Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

This shows how the entire life of the Christian, after partaking of Jesus, the antitypical lamb, should be purged of malice, wickedness and hypocrisy; not for seven days merely, but for always, the seven signifying, as it frequently does, completeness. (Luke 12: 1; Matt. 16: 6-12; 2 Cor. 7: 1.) It is a time of rejoicing for a greater deliverance experienced by us than that of the children of Israel from Egypt.

"Till He Come"

From the reading of 1 Cor. 11: 26, it appears that the observance of the Supper, "in remembrance of Me," is not to be kept up after He comes; and the question inevitably occurs—If these are the days of the presence ("parousia") of the Son of Man, is it not even now appropriate that the observance of the Supper "in remembrance" should cease? To this we would suggest

"He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away."—Luke 1: 53.

that "in remembrance" implies separation from Him we love, and that as long as His prospective joint heirs are separate from Him the Supper "in remembrance" is appropriate to be observed. Whenever they are joined with Him in the kingdom, "remembrance" observances will cease. "Till He Come" should therefore be understood as including the joining to Himself of the faithful footstep followers, as He said—

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—John 14: 3.

Then there will be no more solemn Suppers in remembrance of His death; but He and they will drink together the "new wine" of the Kingdom joys.—Luke 22: 18.

Memorial Supper, 1911.

According to the Jewish style, the first day of Nisan will correspond this year with March 30, beginning at sunset, March 29. The fifteenth of Nisan will, therefore, fall on Thursday, April 13, beginning at sunset of April 12. The anniversary of the "night in which He was betrayed," and therefore the time for the observance of the Memorial Supper, this year, will be Wednesday, April 12, after sunset. It is recommended that the friends everywhere observe the Supper at this time. If you can meet with others for the purpose, by all means do so; but if denied the privilege of fellowship with others on this solemn occasion, by no means should you forego the privilege of "doing this"—

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LAMB.

Obedience vs. Murmurings and Disputings

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, . . . holding forth the Word of life."—Phil. 2: 14-16.

AN EXAMINATION of the Scriptural account of the great original disaster which befell the human race, and all the various phases of it since, reveals a principle underlying all which is at the present time particularly impressive to contemplate.

Although it is true that, beneath the darkness, superstition and ignorance which have prevailed in great measure since the fall, we have come to see that there is a "purpose sweet," and that there is as much order as in all others of God's works, we also recognise that there is opposition to the order and purpose of God, by the Adversary, as each successive feature of His purpose is revealed. This is tantamount to saying that there is "war" in the spiritual regions. And it is so: the victory, finally, being a foregone conclusion, to those who now see something of the Divine purpose. This opposition of the two great spiritual powers is reflected in the affairs of the human race; and so far as it affects them, the adversary may claim a temporary victory; but never for his own part can he really realise it.—Heb. 2: 14.

This condition of affairs indicates that the adversary, as well as God Himself, has the power to take hold of the minds of men and lead them captive at his will, to the extent of their submission or inherent imperfection (2 Tim. 2: 26); and, thus causing them to prefer evil to good, he belittles God's power and authority, and makes himself appear as the victor, and that things will never be any different from what they now are. (2 Pet. 3: 4.) But we are assured that God is allowing all this for the effective working out of His own purposes.—2 Pet. 3: 5-7, 11-13.

Being thus the objects of the activity of two superior opposing powers, the history of the race must be largely, if not entirely, an account of the workings of both. And so we have it. God's love for creatures intelligent and capable of worship is shown, beside others of His attributes, in the creation of man. The provision which He made for a blissful and continuous life for man, are an evidence of His care. This is the first word of the history of man. (Gen. 2: 8-17.) The pride and

ambition of the adversary, and his utter lack of sympathy incidentally working the ruin of the race is the second word of that history. (Gen. 3: 1-6.) God's purpose in their recovery from ruin, and in their ultimately glorious standing before Him is the third word of that history. (Gen. 3: 15.) Broadly speaking, the subsequent words of the same history are a repetition of these, and in the same order; for every purpose of God, kind, good and beneficent, is opposed by the adversary, immediately it is put in operation. But in so far as his opposition would, if successful, thwart those purposes, they are overthrown or undone.—Gen. 3: 14, 15; 1 John 3: 8.

All the works and words of our Lord and His Apostles in the Truth, which first began to be spoken and continued by them, their exhortations to holy living, their admonitions and prophetic utterances, are in substantiation of these considerations.—Luke 11: 19-23; 13-16; Acts 26: 18; etc.

The Obedience of Faith

But sometimes, for the purpose of enforcing an exhortation or an admonition, specific reference is made to some past event, usually in the history of the Lord's people, by way of illustration. This is particularly apparent in 1 Cor. 10: 10, and the same idea is again expressed in Phil. 2: 14, 15.

Reading from the 12th to the 16th verse, it is to be observed that the Philippian were not of the spirit intimated of the Jews in 1 Cor. 10: 10, but, on the contrary, they had "always obeyed." (Vs. 12.) This was one of the reasons why the apostle could rejoice with them. Nevertheless, he improves the occasion, and exhorts them to carry the same good spirit of obedience into all the details of life. This course would insure their spiritual progress; and, if continued in, the crown for the obeyers would assuredly be won. Then Paul would rejoice that he had not run in vain, neither laboured in vain, on their behalf.

By continued obedience they would "work out your own salvation," for it is God who gives rich promises as incentives to do His will. They should not only do His will, according to the apostolic commands, but they should do it willingly and cheerfully and lovingly—

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings."

"Courage, combined with energy and perseverance, will overcome difficulties apparently unsurmountable."—Smiles.

The knowledge which the Philippians had gained through the preaching of Paul and others, and by virtue of which they had become "obeyers," was to them, as to all who hear the truth, a "savour of life unto life," as it was to the "disobeyers" a "savour of death unto death." (2 Cor. 2: 16.) As obedience to the Word of Truth (and the faith implied by obedience) would bring them life, so also to be murmurers and disputers would lead them in the way of estrangement from God, and in the way of ultimate death. The history of the Jewish nation was an illustration of this, and their utter extinction as a nation, in A.D. 70, the same apostle also prophesied—1 Thess. 2: 15, 16.

But what does Paul mean by "murmurings" and "disputings?"

"Murmurings against God"

A glance at the account of the march of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan will show that their murmurings were invariably preceded by some wonderful deliverance, wherein God's power was exerted on their behalf, and of which they all were witnesses. When the natural difficulties of the journey arose, such as lack of food and drink in the desert, their previous experiences of God's care and love for them should have been a sufficient basis for faith in future difficulties. The obstacles in the way to Canaan were chiefly physical, and while these must have brought about national ruin ultimately, they were small matters to Jehovah, as the knowledge already gained of Him should have proved.

Their murmurings were really a manifestation of discontent with conditions which, taken as a whole, were the best possible for them, and which should have called out a ready acquiescence of mind, and the fullest thankfulness of heart. For relief from the Egyptian bondage was no small matter, nor were the miracles by the way, while the additional promise of a land of their own, "flowing with milk and honey," offers a contrast to their former condition of slavery so great as to leave them without excuse for the slightest unthankfulness. Of a truth they were deserving of those epithets so frequently applied to them—a stiff-necked, perverse, and crooked nation.—Phil. 2: 15; Deut. 32: 5; Acts 7: 51.

Although severe punishments invariably followed the "murmurings," a reference to the matters described in John 6: 41; Luke 15: 2; 19: 7, shows that the Jews had not learned much by those experiences, and that in our Lord's day the old spirit was as strongly entrenched as ever.

God's Providence over His People

On the whole, then, it may be stated that the Scriptural usage of the term, "murmurings," is in the sense of being dissatisfied with conditions ordered or permitted of God to bring about results most beneficial for His people. To the Jews, on their journey, the conditions enabled God to display His power in providing the necessities of life, etc., under circumstances in which otherwise they must have died, and therefore faith would not be misplaced in the promise which He made to the progenitor of their race. (Gen. 15: 13-16.) In the Gospel age, the conditions are such as to enable God to prove to the eyes of faith of His people His power to keep them, and His love and watchful care over them, so that they gain a knowledge of Him which does not seem possible in any other way; faith also that He will fulfil His rich promises to them, will not be

misplaced in present adversities.—Heb. 6: 17-20; 2 Cor. 1: 20; Heb. 12: 5-9.

To fall in line with the conditions which God graciously orders or permits, and to be glad for them, would seem to be the apostle's thought in the exhortation to—"Do all things without murmurings."

This is an exhortation suitable for all times and circumstances of Christ's followers; for it is probable that at some time in the life of each one the old nature, not yet absolutely dead, will assert itself. "If only I were differently situated in life;" "if only I had the power of ready speech, or the money, or the influence, what great things would I do for the Lord." Yet small matters and opportunities just at hand, if faithfully dealt with, would keep us plentifully occupied. As a reward of faithfulness in the little things, it may please the Lord to widen our sphere of action in due time. Let us, then, "do all things" which are to be done with a ready mind, free from all contrary or dissatisfied thoughts or murmurings.

Nothing in what has been said of the murmurers contains the thought of wilfulness to the degree of actively opposing the Divine order. They may be dissatisfied with God's way, yet may not actively oppose themselves thereto, rather submitting after the manner of a "grumbler." We may be sure that such submission or service, if it can be so described, is by no means acceptable to God.—Mal. 3: 13-15; 1: 12, 13.

"Without Disputings"

The "disputer" is the active party. The first of this class is the Arch-enemy himself, who would dispute the sovereignty of God over His works, as at the beginning, when he led our first parents to disobey God's commands. He was a "murderer from the beginning," said our Lord. (John 8: 44.) And this spirit has been present in the hearts of some of Christ's followers throughout the Gospel age, subtle and refined though its form may have been.

The apostles Peter (2 Pet. 2: 15), Jude (vss. 4, 19), and Paul (1 Tim. 4: 1, 2) give explicit warnings against this class, who once were in the right way, as also was the first great disputer. These passages seem a striking fulfilment of our Lord's words as recorded in Luke 17: 1, 2; and, if that be so, may that end described in the second verse overtake any of us, before we should be open to the charge of teaching contrary doctrines and actively opposing the Truth!

Yet Paul himself is described as a "disputer." (Acts 9: 29; 17: 17; 19: 8, 9.) His disputations were not against God, however, but against idolatry and other evil institutions. It was also in a manner entirely different from that referred to in the abovenamed passages in Peter, Jude and Timothy. It was in the nature of preaching the "wonderful works of God" (Acts 2: 11), and of answering questions; proclaiming the Glad Tidings, and making known the Divine Purposes.

This "message of gladness" had first to be made known to the people by the mouths of the apostles, as it is now first made known to us through their writings, and it falls upon all as a test of willingness to obey or to dispute.

Disputing with Stephen

A very clearly stated example of this effect of Truth on the minds of some is found in Acts 6

"If thou only knewest the evils which others suffer, thou couldst willingly s
to those thou now bearest." Philemon.

It is obvious from this passage that those of the "synagogue of the Libertines" were for the old order of things—for Moses and the Law. There would have been no wrong in this, had not Stephen or someone else enlightened them to the extent of showing (as Stephen doubtless did) that the time had come in the Divine Purpose when Moses and the Law Covenant had been superseded by Jesus and the New Covenant. Knowingly to continue in their allegiance to Moses as leader, when God had appointed Jesus to supersede him, amounted to wilful opposition to the Divine Order. Stephen had laid the facts so clearly before them, that they stood speechless. Moreover, they had been witnesses of the great wonders and miracles which he did. The genuineness of the wonders and miracles, of which there could be no question, was a direct appeal to their senses. There could therefore be no doubt about the truth of what he said. They were not able to gainsay nor resist the preacher (Acts 7: 54), but they could, and did, make themselves responsible for his death. The activity of these in opposing the truth was the reason for Stephen's apology, which is an earnest contention "for the faith once delivered unto the saints."—Jude 3.

Further illustration is well shown in the matter of Korah and his company. (Num. 16.) "All the people are holy," they say. (Vs. 3.) True enough; they were—typically so. (Deut. 7: 6.) But in the relationship of the people to God, certain offices were to be filled, and to all of these Moses was appointed. He was their Leader, Administrator, Judge, Ruler, Mediator, Intercessor. (Exod. 3: 10-12; 17: 4, 9; 18: 13; 19: 3; 32: 11.) And all the various offices in which Moses acted came under the general term of "mediator-ship," because he performed these offices for God, on the one hand, and for the people on the other. Notwithstanding the most certain evidences of his exclusive appointment as Mediator, Korah, Dathan and Abiram rose up to dispute it. (Num. 16: 3.) Many of the Israelites seem to have thought much the same, and joined themselves to Korah. These were the Disputers, the Gainsayers. (Jude 11.) There was no reason, they said, why any one of the people other than Moses should not take all the offices of Moses upon himself, nor was there any reason why a number of the people should not take upon themselves these offices, as they said—"Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them." In other words, there might be a mediator other than Moses. That other mediator might have divided the various offices, to all of which Moses was appointed, so that many of the holy people would then constitute the one mediator between God and the people! How terrible this insurrection against God! Two hundred and fifty princes of the people, famous in the congregation, men of renown, rallying around the standard of Korah! Were they ignorant of the divine decree respecting the exclusive appointment of Moses? This could not be, for the Lord had most unmistakably shown His preference for Moses in a variety of ways. (Exod. 7: 1-7; 17: 1-7; 19: 3, 9, 20; 31: 18, etc.) Was it that they were discontented, and jealous of the exclusiveness of Moses? This might be, for no exception is made of any of them when the stiff-necked, crooked, perverse and murmuring characteristics of the people are described.

Might we not add to these reflections the suggestion that their swollen pride and exalted view of their own importance in the eyes of Jehovah, due to the fact that "all the congregation are holy, every one of them," and therefore that no one was to be preferred before another, had blinded them so they did not any longer see that God had really selected one (Moses and Aaron being considered as one—Exod. 4: 10-17, 27-31) to minister unto him out of all the congregation? (Num. 16: 3; 17: 1-10.) And the selection of one to this great office could not in any wise be changed, for it was typical.—Deut. 18: 15; Acts 3: 22-26.

The confidence of these disputers waxed very great, so that they did even dare to appear before the Lord in a mediatorial capacity. (Num. 16: 10, 17.) But all who were for the Truth, for the Divine Order, separated themselves (Num. 16: 26, 27), and stood together, as against the Princes, famous in the congregation, men of renown!

Contending for the Faith

As the apostle exhorts us to put away the murmuring spirit, which is opposed to the Holy Spirit, the spirit of obedience, and eventually brings disaster, so may it not be in us to dispute with God, to actively oppose the Divine Order. Such a role belongs to the great adversary; it is the "gainsaying of Korah;" it is the way of the "synagogue of the Libertines." Rather, let us humbly submit ourselves to the plain statements of the word of God in all these great matters, and pray for power to stand for the Truth as plainly revealed. Let us stand for Jesus and the New Covenant, as Stephen did, and for the One Mediator between God and men, as Moses did, and of whom he was the type. And shall we not take courage when we perceive that in all the heavenly warfare it is the privilege of the saints, having on the whole armour of God, to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints?"

That faith was delivered in its purity by the Lord and the apostles, but many have arisen "of your own selves" (Acts 20: 30), to dispute and to pervert it, thus proving themselves the "enemies of the cross of Christ." (Phil. 3: 18.) The opposing forces of open evil are less difficult to contend against than those which creep in "unawares," and which through "feigned words make merchandise of you." (Jude 4: 16-19; 2 Pet. 2: 1-3; Tit. 1: 10, 11.) The necessity is thus laid upon every one who would be loyal to the Cross, to render obedience to the inspired commands of the apostles, and to defend the faith against all attacks; to wield the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph. 6: 11-18), with vigour and precision, that the demonstration of the truth of the Gospel may be as unmistakable in the eyes of the Israel of God, as were the demonstrations of the will of God before Israel in the wilderness, and before the men of the synagogue of the Libertines.

"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."—Titus 1: 9.

"But thou, O man of God, . . . follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life."—1 Tim. 6: 11, 12.

F. S.

"FOR CHRIST AND HIS COVENANT"

The Parables of Our Lord

(Continued from February issue.)

The Parable of the Great Supper

—Luke 14: 15-24—

(To the guests at a Pharisee's table.)

15. And when one of them that sat at meat with Him heard these things, he said, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16. Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

17. And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready.

18. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21. So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

24. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

THIS PARABLE has many points of resemblance to the parable of the Marriage of the King's Son (Matt. 22: 1-14), already examined.* As before stated, our Lord probably repeated His parables many times to different groups—at the temple, at the tables of the publicans or Pharisees, and in the market places. The variations in the accounts of the same parable, and the variety of parables closely resembling one another, in no way destroy confidence in the truth of the Gospel narrative. In the parable of the Marriage of the King's Son, the purpose of the parable was to enforce this lesson:—

"For many are called, but few are chosen."—Matt. 22: 14—to predict the overthrow of Israel by the Roman army, and to show that only those who fulfil the conditions have a right to enter in to, or to remain at, the feast.—Matt. 22: 11-13.

The parable of the Great Supper was given when Jesus sat at meat in the house of one of the chief Pharisees, and in response to a remark by one present, to the effect that whosoever should eat bread in the Kingdom of God would be blessed. The parable came as an intimation that this view would not be shared by all who were invited to that Kingdom, because the invitation would in many cases be treated with indifference, and even contempt.

The parable also indicated that God Himself, in His dealings with men, carried out the line of action recommended by the Lord to the Pharisee whose guest He was, as recorded in Luke 14: 12-14—

"Then said He also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest

they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

God has called to a great feast of spiritual blessing those who cannot hope to recompense Him again, but who accept gladly and gratefully His generous invitation. If we wish to be His "children," to be perfect as He is perfect, we must imitate Him in this (Matt. 5: 45-48), and be generous toward all.

The children of Israel, to whom pertained the invitation to receive a blessing, and have part in the Kingdom (Rom. 9: 3-5) were professedly waiting the announcement that the "great supper" of Gospel privilege was "now ready." But when our Lord and the disciples made the proclamation, saying, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand;" Enter in and partake of the bounties provided, the majority made excuse. The making of excuses is stated in Matt. 22: 8 to be an indication of "unworthiness."

Three Kinds of Excuses

Land, cattle and family were the chief worldly possessions among the Jews, who were a pastoral people. They would represent the concentration of their minds upon personal and selfish affairs, to the neglect of their covenant to be God's people, and to live in expectation of the promised Messiah. They were not even polite enough to express regret at the disappointment and inconvenience caused by their refusal to attend the "Supper." Their hearts had indeed "waxed gross;" they were indeed proving themselves "unworthy."—Matt. 13: 14-15; Acts 13: 46.

The Christian believer, whether Jew or Gentile, may take a lesson from this, not to set more store by worldly possessions and prospects than by the heavenly inheritance and the High Calling privileges at the feast which God has prepared in Christ. The apostles frequently referred to the temptation to worldliness and earthly-mindedness which besets God's people, even though they have outwardly and openly professed that their citizenship and treasure are in heaven.—Phil. 3: 20; Col. 3: 1-3.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching that, *denying ungodliness and worldly desires*, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."—Titus 2: 11, 12, margin.

"Many walk . . . *who mind earthly things*."—Phil. 3: 19.

"For they that are *after the flesh* do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are *after the Spirit* the things of the Spirit."—Rom. 8: 5.

In addition to centring his mind on his own personal and worldly affairs, the Jew had concentrated his attention upon those features of the Law Covenant which were of an earthly kind, entirely overlooking the fact that God might have, in His providence, some better provision of good things which it would be decidedly to his advantage to obtain, and quite ignoring that he was under bond to do the will of God, whatever that will might prove to be; also ignoring those time prophecies

*See "Advocate," June, 1910, page 38.

which indicated at what time the Messiah was to be expected, and their duty to be ready to receive and honour Him as the Messenger of the Covenant.—*Mal. 3: 1.*

In this view, the excuse of the man who had bought a piece of land would represent the absorption of the Jews in the land of Palestine as their home, and their rights as the "seed of Abraham" according to the flesh. (*John 8: 33; Luke 3: 8.*) The excuse of the man who wished to try his five yoke of oxen, which were beasts of burden, would represent how the scribes and Pharisees were making oxen of the common people, placing upon them heavy burdens of Law and tradition grievous to be borne. (*Matt. 23: 4; Acts 15: 10.*) The excuse of the man who had married a wife would represent how the Jew was bound to the Law, not recognising his liberty to be free in Christ.—*Luke 16: 18; Rom. 7: 1-4.*

The Streets and Lanes of the City

The poor, lame and blind gathered in from the streets and lanes of the city may represent the publicans and sinners as contrasted with the haughty and self-righteous scribes and Pharisees, of whom our Lord said, that they neither go into the kingdom themselves, nor suffer those who are entering (i.e., the publicans and sinners) to go in. (*Matt. 23: 13.*) In this view the "city" (symbol of government) would stand for the government of Israel, the streets and lanes would stand for the outcast publicans and sinners, and the "highways and hedges" would stand for all the world outside of Judaism.

There are two objections, however, to this interpretation; first, all the people of Israel, including Pharisees and common people, were as a nation the seed of Abraham, and heirs of the promises; some of both classes made excuses, and some of both classes accepted the High Calling invitation. Second, the city or government most in evidence in the days of our Lord and the apostles was the Roman Empire. It was the fourth universal empire described by the prophet Daniel, and held sway over most of the known world. (*Dan. 2: 40.*) When the Jews, to whom the invitation originally pertained, including the "dispersed among the Gentiles," either accepted or rejected the Gospel, the message was sent forth to all parts of the Roman "world," to Gentiles of every nationality and tongue. These were indeed "mained, halt and blind" in a spiritual sense, having no hope, and being without God in the world. (*Acts 13: 46; Eph. 2: 11, 12; 1 Cor. 6: 11.*) Possibly the very extremity of their state assisted them to appreciate the grace and love of God in providing a Saviour from sin, and a feast of nourishing and stimulating food for their sin-weary souls; as we read—

"And they of the circumcision were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit."—*Acts 10: 45.*

"And when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."—*Acts 11: 18.*

"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord."—*Acts 13: 48.*

"Yet there is Room"

During eighteen centuries of the Christian era the Gospel covered the countries originally constituting the

Roman empire, and barbarian states more or less originally Roman spheres of influence. The invitation was availed of more or less sincerely by many; but still all the places at the Supper were not filled; "yet there is room." What shall be done for the Host will not be satisfied until all the seats originally arranged for are filled. (*Verse 23; Rom. 11: 19-22.*) Shall a second invitation be given, and much pressure be brought to bear upon those originally invited Jews, that they may yet come in, and partake of the feast? Not so; said the host—

"For I say unto you, That none of those men which were omitted shall taste of my supper."—*Vs. 24.*

So long as there were others available, fresh guests would be sought, that the dignity of the Host might be upheld, and His Supper be partaken of in a manner consistent with His wealth and position. And thus has it been fulfilled.

"Constrain them to Come in"

The original of the word rendered "compel" (*vs. 23*) has more the thought of "constrain," or "urgently press," than of absolute compulsion. The invitation of the New Covenant is an open one, to be freely accepted or rejected by the person who hears it. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord," "Whosoever believeth in Him," show that there is no compulsion in the invitation to salvation.—*Acts 2: 21; Rom. 10: 9-13; John 3: 14-17.*

As none can believe unless he hears, and none can hear unless someone be sent with the message, God has from the first used preaching as the means of extending the invitation. (*Luke 24: 47; 1 Cor. 1: 17-24.*) The preaching of the cross was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; nevertheless, it found acceptance among the humble-minded of both Jew and Gentile. And so the Gospel was spread from one to another still further and further afield. But with the growth of the apostasy, and the assumption of universal political as well as religious power by the Papacy, there came a change in the method of spreading the Gospel so-called. Instead of the preaching of the foolishness of the cross touching the hearts and securing the conversion of the as yet unevangelized, as in Apostolic days, Rome made the acceptance of "Christianity" compulsory. (The "Nestorians," who did not acknowledge Rome, are credited with spreading their version of the Gospel, by establishing communities and sending out missionaries, first in Persia, and afterward in India and China; but their work was largely ruined by subsequent Mongol aggression.) The barbarians, instead of being individually converted to Christ, were received into the church in hordes, and the heathen temples, with little alteration, turned into "Christian" churches. The theory that the Pope is the Vice-gerent of Christ on earth, and that the church has the right to use the secular arm for the extension of the "kingdom" and the punishment of heretics, was accepted by all Europe, with the exception only of those districts which acknowledged the authority of the eastern church, which, however, made the same claims on its own behalf.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."—*Col. 3: 1.*

Origin of Modern Missions

During the middle ages many small sects arose, which protested against either the doctrines or practices of Rome, or both, including the methods employed in the "conversion" of non-Christian nations. But when the Great Reformation was brought about, the Romish theory as to the relation of Church and State was not among the errors discarded by Luther, who was glad to avail himself of the help of German princes, who, in turn, while glad to throw off the Papal yoke, repeated the Papal error by establishing the new religion as the required faith in their realms, thus making an "image" of the Papal "beast." The early Protestants were zealous missionaries in spreading the truth as they saw it in the countries under the Roman yoke, such as Germany, France, the Netherlands, Britain, etc., but the exigencies of the times, as well as their doctrines, prevented them reaching out to non-Catholic countries. It was only after the Reformation had made considerable progress, and after the discovery and settlement of the Indies, and of America, that serious thoughts were given by Protestants to missionary work among the "heathen." And, significantly, too, it was studying the Scriptures which impressed upon a few earnest souls here and there the fact that our Lord's command, to "disciple all nations," made no exceptions, and had not lapsed; that "the field is the world;" and that peaceful preaching and persuasion were the only lawful methods.*

Early in the seventeenth century the Dutch and Danes secured colonial possessions in the East, formerly belonging to Portugal, and already Romanised, and the Dutch State Church sent out Protestant clergy with the Dutch East India Company. The methods of evangelisation were, however, similar to those practised by Rome. They also, in like manner, treated their West Indian possessions.

In the seventeenth century the persecution of Protestants in Europe sent refugees (principally English, Scotch and Dutch) to the newly-discovered America, where liberty of conscience and Puritan standards of morality might be maintained. Here was discovered a large field for aggressive trade with the native red Indians, or for their evangelisation, or both, according to the disposition of the settler. John Elliot's (1646) and Wm. Penn's (1682) peaceful methods of barter and conversion, as well as the efforts of others, gave evidence that the Gospel was glad tidings even to the red man; that he was capable of understanding and believing the doctrines of the Cross; though it is to be regretted that many "traditions of men" were also taught as gospel. The evangelising done by the French and Spaniards in North and South America must also be referred to, as showing the propagation of a false religion in the new land, and as showing that the "Gospel" which has gone forth has been to a large extent a false one, the French and Spaniards themselves, and their descendants, being subjects of evangelisation by Protestants. In this century the Moravian brethren sent missionaries to Greenland and other parts of America and the West Indies.

During the eighteenth century the Scotch Presbyterians, the Moravian Brethren of Germany, the Eng-

*Concerning these beginnings of modern missionary work, see Warneck, "History of Protestant Missions."

lish Methodists, and others, formed small groups for missionary activity, but it was not till the end of the century that missionary societies as now known were organised.

May we not, then, consider that the almost simultaneous discovery of new lands; the re-discovery of the Christian duty and privilege to spread the glad tidings to the uttermost bounds of the earth, and the growing conviction that the "heathen," sunk in idolatry and corruption as they were, were still the objects of divine love and mercy, correspond to that portion of the parable which says, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and constrain them to come in."

The Good Seed of the Kingdom

Another significant fact is that, while mission stations have been opened by Protestants of various shades of belief, sometimes even in more or less a spirit of antagonism against one another, all Missionary Societies have shown extraordinary zeal in placing the Bible itself into the hands of the people. No tribute can be too high to pay to the memory of those pioneers who, under extraordinary difficulties, first learnt, and then translated, the Bible (in whole or in part) into the language of the natives, nor to those whose means and efforts secured their publication and wide distribution. In the year 1910 the British and Foreign Bible Society distributed 6,620,024 Bibles, New Testaments and portions of the New Testament. Of this total, 1,500,000 were distributed in China, and 99 per cent. of these were sold. The fact that this large number of Chinese versions was sold indicates that many Chinese are sincerely inquiring after truth.

Another truth which impressed itself on many minds was that it was the privilege of Christians living in security at home to send out, and to assist by their interest and prayers, as well as financially, the workers far afield. It also became more and more recognised that persons other than ordained clergymen might be used by the Lord to declare the Gospel to non-Christians, and gather them into mission communities. This led to the organisation of Missionary Societies as a lay rather than a clerical institution. The Baptist Missionary Society was founded 1792; the London M.S., 1795; the Netherland M.S., 1797; the Church M.S., 1799; the British and Foreign Bible Society, 1804. Many others followed in Great Britain, America, France, Germany, Australia, etc. Dr. Warneck remarks—

"In accordance with the fundamental character of Christianity as a missionary religion, missions are from the beginning a law of life in the Christian church: the Christian church is a missionary church. The Christian nations of today were all originally heathen. The whole Christian church of the present is the result of missionary work in the past. That which gave it its origin abides as the condition of its life. Missions are a natural outflow of the life of faith in the church, a necessity for its own preservation, and therefore a self-evident duty. The church is untrue to itself, it is false to its origin and false to the essential character of Christianity, if it withdraws from its missionary obligation. On the other hand, the discharge of this duty brings to it the richest blessing, according to the old principle of the kingdom of heaven, 'Unto him that hath shall be given.'"

Warneck estimated that there were, in 1900, 6300 missionaries of all denominations, besides 700 medical missionaries, and that the expenditure for the year on

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."—Col. 3:16.

missions had been approximately £3,000,000 (\$15,000,000). There were 20,000 mission schools, with a million children. "More than 300 translations of the Bible in whole or in part have been made by evangelical missionaries; of these more than half into languages entirely without literature." There were over 60,000 native helpers. The grand total of native Christians, including the negroes of the United States, he estimated at 11,323,000.

Future Prospects

Considering the almost insurmountable obstacles placed in the way of mission work, both by unfriendly natives, disease and death among missionaries, opposition at home by nominal Christians having no interest in the spread of the Gospel, and lack of financial assistance, and considering that most of these efforts are confined to the last century, the results are most impressive and encouraging, even granted that many of the "converts" are only civilised rather than true disciples of Christ.

But comparing these results with the large number of non-Christians still untouched by the Gospel (at least 1080 millions), and bearing in mind that many in so-called Christian lands are only nominal Christians, and that the natural increase of non-Christians exceeds the rate of "conversion," the outlook would be exceedingly dark, did we not realise from the Scriptures that the "great Supper" to which the invitation has gone out during the Gospel age is not the only preparation which God has made for the salvation of men. Rather the "great Supper" represents the "high calling," the opportunity to be among the few, who are being "taken out" from Jews and Gentiles as "a people for His name." These are to be taken out from all nations, peoples and tongues, as a first fruits of His creatures. But those millions who have passed into the grave without a knowledge of the Saviour, and those millions who are to-day perishing, and will perish to-morrow before the Gospel message reaches them, do they for that reason fall out of reach of the Almighty? Thank God, no! There is to be a resurrection. (John 5: 28, 29; Acts 24: 15.) All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth. And we may be sure that the glad tidings of a Saviour, of whom they have never heard, will then be testified to them; for we read that when God's Kingdom is established in the earth, all things are to be made new, and that only wilful and perverse sinners shall be deprived of the privileges of that day.—Rev. 21: 1-9.

But while we take comfort from thinking of the blessings God has for these in the future, let us to whom the invitation has come to partake of the "great supper" not despise our privileges nor offer excuses which should only display our unworthiness of a place at the feast. And let us not, having entered through faith in the only Name of Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our Saviour from Sin and Death, for any reason despise His mediatorial and intercessory work on our behalf; but let us honour Him as the One who has lifted us, and all believing Gentiles, out of darkness and despair into light and hope. (Acts 26: 17, 18; Col. 1: 13, 14.) And let us run with patience the race that is set before us!

The Parables of the Tower and of the King Going to War

—Luke 14: 26-33—(To the Multitude)—

THE PARABLE.

28. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

29. Lest, haply, after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

30. Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

31. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32. Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an embassy, and desireth conditions of peace.

THE INTERPRETATION.

26. If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

27. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

The R.V. rendering of verse 27 is "his own cross."

33. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

OUR LORD was plain and outspoken in stating the terms upon which any might become heirs of the Kingdom of God. In the parable of the "great supper," just preceding the present parable, He had shown that the invitation was to be sent out far and wide, among all classes of people; and now He reiterates what He had shown on many other occasions, that a very obvious condition is attached to the invitation. Each one who accepts an invitation to a banquet, and attends, thereby shows that he values the friendship and hospitality of the host above other things, which for the time being must stand in abeyance. He must "forsake" home, family, friends and business while in attendance at the palace or mansion. No host would desire the company of a guest who came grudgingly, all the while preferring to be elsewhere. Moreover, it is the duty, as it is the pleasure, of an appreciative guest to enter heartily into all his host's plans and arrangements, doing his best to make the affair a success.

Hating Father and Mother

So it is in regard to those who accept the high calling invitation, and become followers or disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is useless to make a pretence of following Him, if the heart and mind are really set on other things. If home, family, friends and other earthly considerations rank higher in our estimation than the Lord's friendship and invitation, we are not *really* His disciples. Our Lord did not mean to intimate that failure in duty to home, family and friends is justifiable after becoming a disciple of Christ, any more than it is justifiable before becoming His disciple; nor did He mean that becoming a follower of Christ requires us to be unkind or even discourteous to earthly relatives. Many err in this respect, and so bring discredit instead of honour upon the name of Christ.

To "hate" father and mother does not mean to despise or ill-treat them, but rather to "love them less" than

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we love the Lord, who must have first place in our affections and thoughts. *Pearce* explains this expression thus:—

"This is one amongst many examples in the sacred writings of Oriental figurative language, where the expression is hyperbolic in order to render the truth meant to be conveyed in it more striking and impressive. Matthew, in chap. 10: 37, expresses the literal meaning of this passage, when he says, 'loves his father and mother more than me;' and in chap. 5: 24, uses the word *hate* with similar force. So when we read in Rom. 9: 13, 'Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated,' the meaning is, I have loved Jacob more than Esau; and that this is no arbitrary meaning of the word *hate*, but one agreeable to the Hebrew idiom, appears from what is said in Gen. 29: 30, 31, where Leah's being hated is explained by Rachel's being loved more than Leah; see also Deut. 21: 15-17. Something resembling what Jesus here teaches is said by Philo (de Monarch, lib. ii., p. 230) concerning the duty of a high priest; that he was to 'strange himself from all his relations, and not, out of love to his parents, his children, or brethren, to omit any part of his duty, or act in anything contrary to it.'"

Just as a high priest serving in the temple, and just as a man attending a feast, must give his attention to the business in hand, so must the disciple of Jesus. And what is the business of the disciple? Our Lord answers—to "*bear his own cross*," and to follow in his Master's footsteps—

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."—Luke 9: 23; Matt. 10: 38; 16: 24; Mark 8: 34.

The main thought in cross-bearing is self-denial—denying one's self not only indulgence in what is wrong in itself, but legitimate pleasures, which are not to the glory of God and the advancement of the Gospel among men; to do all things with an eye single to the will of God, rather than one's own will. Father, mother, brothers and sisters, husband or wife, do not as a rule assist one in cross-bearing for Christ's sake; on the contrary, they often succeed in making the cross heavier, and in many cases would urge the disciple to discard it altogether. It is only when earthly relatives are also disciples that they understand the believer's position, and properly sympathize with him in his endeavours to follow in the footsteps of the Master. The consequence is that each believer must bear his cross alone, with the Lord's help, expecting little sympathy or assistance from others, even his fellow-disciples being often too absorbed in their own cross-bearing to enter fully into the cares and anxieties of other disciples.

The Point of the Two Parables

Although our Lord Himself interprets these parables, by assuring the people that in order to be true disciples they must *forsake all that they have*, these two parables are continually misrepresented as teaching that after a man has become a disciple, he should consider whether he would take up the cross or refuse to take it up; because, say they, it would be better for the man never to take up his cross at all than that he should take it up, and then find his love of earthly things so strong that he would not be able to make all the sacrifices required. Indeed, these parables are treated as though becoming a successful disciple of Jesus depended upon the personal qualifications and capabilities of the individual which (they say) are represented by the wealth of the man in the parable; in fact, according to this interpretation, the person who begins to carry the cross, and lacks strength of character to continue

carrying it, is represented as being laughed at, whereas the hardened heart which considers the cost of discipleship too severe, and never undertakes it at all, is represented as the more clever person of the two.

But look closer at the parables, and at our Lord's comments thereon. Consider that He addressed, not His own disciples, who had already taken up their cross of self-denial and suffering, but the "great multitudes" (vs. 25) that followed Him about in order to witness some fresh miracle or some new exposure of the Pharisees and Scribes. Take it that the man who wished to build a tower, and found that after laying the foundation he had not sufficient to finish it, and thus became a laughing stock, represents the exact predicament of every person who thinks he can get along in this world without the Lord; and particularly of every Jew who, because he was a child of Abraham, considered himself as a rich vineyardist (a tower being usually built in the midst of a vineyard.—Isa. 5: 2; Matt. 21: 33), or a king with ten thousand men, and had not fully considered the insufficiency of his capital or equipment for the demands to be made upon it.

The Jew would not sit down quietly, and under the guidance of the Master take an inventory. He had undertaken to justify himself in a certain manner, and he would keep on in that way, even though time was revealing that his funds were giving out, and he had succeeded no further than in laying a foundation hidden in the earth, and of no practical value—only wasted labour. The Lord was ready to show that the only labour of real profit and permanent value was to forsake all schemes of self-righteousness and vanity; to take up the cross daily and follow Him.

A Treaty of Peace

The parable of the King going to War brings out even more forcibly the insufficiency of the Jews to obtain salvation by their own methods. Our Lord Jesus, as a mighty King, had come against them, and called upon them to lay down their arms, to acknowledge their unpreparedness for a conflict, and to accept Him and His Gospel of love and mercy. But they would not capitulate; they preferred to waste valuable men and treasure fighting in defence of a cause which a little consideration and foresight would show them was hopeless. The only sensible Jews were those who, realising the true position, came to Jesus, and (so to speak) made a treaty with Him. The others suffered the consequences of their own folly in the complete destruction of their polity and nation.—Matt. 5: 25, 26; 23: 37, 38; 1 Thes. 2: 14-16.

Since then the Gospel of Christ has reached many peoples. It has come to us who read these pages. Are we of those who foolishly oppose with our ten thousand of pride, self-sufficiency and self-interest Him who comes against us with twenty thousand? Be assured, he who does so will get the worst of it—

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."—Matt. 21: 42-44.

Not only is this true of individuals, but also of nations. The whole of Christendom is in much the

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same position as was Israel in apostolic days; professing to be Christian, they yet (with noble exceptions now as then) set themselves against Jehovah and His Anointed, and must suffer the consequences.—Rev. 19: 11-21.

But happy are they who forsake their own paltry and inadequate "ten thousand," their wealth, social position, their pride and self-righteousness, and go out with an olive branch to meet Him who comes against them with all power in heaven and in earth, that they may accept His sovereignty and be blessed under His beneficent rule!—Col. 1: 12-14.

(To be continued.)

With those who enrol under His banner, who take up their cross daily to follow Him, there is no need to wonder whether or not they will be able to finish, for not only is the Lord Jesus Christ their unfailing source of riches and strength, but the Heavenly Father Himself is pledged on their behalf—

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us; for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus."—Rom. 8: 37-39.

Justification by Faith

JUSTIFICATION by faith was an important feature of the Gospel preached by the Apostles, and received by them from the Lord as a sacred trust. The Apostle Paul says he failed not to declare the whole counsel of God, and his writings are most explicit on this subject.

Remembering that justification by the works of the Law had been for centuries the hope of the Jew, one can readily picture the consternation with which the creed-bound Israelite viewed the teaching that justification could not be obtained by rigid observance of the ceremonies of the law and of Pharisaical tradition (e.g., Gal. 2: 16), but must be obtained in another way. Even those Jews who distinguished between the Law itself, holy, just and good, and the traditions of the elders, saw no other means of acceptance with God than by the keeping of the Law. Indeed, that was the Covenant into which Israel had entered at Sinai, saying, All these things will we do, and be obedient. And those who appreciated their inability to keep the Law perfectly were in the condition described by the Apostle Paul in Romans 7: 7-24.

In the "Advocate" for May, 1910, appeared an article on the "Scriptural Meaning of Justification," in which it was shown that the word "justify" is used in both the Old and the New Testaments in a legal sense, and means to declare right. Thus a Jew who would keep the Law perfectly would be declared by the Law, and by God the Law Giver, to be right or righteous. Unfortunately, however, no imperfect Jew could keep a perfect law; and that which they thought would give them life, they afterward found brought only death. (Rom. 7: 10; Gal. 3: 10.) Paul expressed a self-evident truth when he said, "if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." The fact that every Jew died showed that he was not righteous.

Habakkuk (2: 4), as quoted in Gal. 3: 11, had said, "The just shall live by faith," or, "The just by faith shall live;" but not many had realised all this statement meant, and that the faithful all through the Jewish regime, although striving to keep the Law to the best of their ability, were really approved by God on account of their faith.—Heb. 11.

The mental attitude of the majority of Israelites in apostolic days is described in Rom. 10: 3—

"They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."

They were ignorant of God's righteousness or righteous character, in that they considered the Law Covenant under which they were bound the only possible revelation of God; that He had no interest in the surrounding nations, only in themselves; and that no further effort would be made for the salvation of men, save the perpetuation of the Jewish arrangements. They were also ignorant of God's righteousness in that they considered that He could be satisfied with the blood of bulls and goats as offerings for sin, and with half-hearted or hypocritical service.—Rom. 3: 25, 26.

Further, they were ignorant of the nature of the righteousness which God required, and of the fact that He had arranged to give it through Christ. They were ignorant because they closed their ears when the Lord and the Apostles attempted to explain these things to them (Matt. 13: 13-17; Acts 14: 32-46; 26: 20, 21; 28: 25-28); and they persistently went about establishing a standard of righteousness of their own, based on outward forms and traditions of men. By so doing, they became in reality law breakers; whereas the law required absolute submission to God and to His prophets, they resisted the commandments of God and destroyed the prophets He sent unto them, including John the Baptist and even His own Son. (Acts 7: 51, 52; Luke 20: 9-16.) Their confidence that as Abraham's seed they were irrevocably in the line of blessing begat in them a spirit of self-righteousness and hypocrisy, while they neglected the weighty matters of judgment, mercy and faith.—Luke 16: 14, 15; 18: 9; Matt. 23: 23.

The reason of Israel's failure is further explained in Rom. 9: 33. Israel had a righteous Law, the keeping of which would have demonstrated any Jew to be righteous. The perfection of our Lord Jesus was thus demonstrated. As a perfect Jew, He kept the perfect Law. But, says the Apostle,

"Israel, following after a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law."—Rom. 9: 31, R.V.

They were, so to speak, following it a long way off, and never attaining either to its perfection or to the

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lesson it was really intended to teach them; namely, that they were sinners, and needed more than the blood of bulls and goats and legal ceremonies to secure the forgiveness of their sins.

"Wherefore? Because doing it not by faith, but as it were by works, they stumbled at the stumbling stone."—Rom. 9: 32, Am. R.V. margin.

Had there been more faith, more real reliance upon God, a more sincere desire to serve and honour God, they would, when the due time came, have been able to realise the true purpose of the Law, as stated in Gal. 3: 24—

"The Law was our schoolmaster [or slave] to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

The same thought is expressed in Rom. 10: 4, which may be paraphrased—Christ is the end toward which the law pointed, for the attainment of righteousness, and in Him righteousness is obtainable by every one who believes. The righteousness of the law was, He that doeth the works shall live by them; but the righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ says—

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made into salvation."—Rom. 10: 9, 10.

The Gentiles, who had never had a Law, and had never attempted to justify themselves in the eyes of God, because they knew Him not, found it comparatively easy to see their own sinful condition, and to accept justification and salvation as a free gift through Christ. They attained to righteousness, but not that of the law; rather that which was of faith.—Rom. 9: 30.

Righteousness Imputed

This "righteousness" was "imputed" to both believing Jew and the believing Gentile, for there is no difference, the same God being rich unto all that call upon Him. (Rom. 10: 12; 3: 28-31.) Just as Abraham's faith had been "imputed to him for righteousness," the faith of a true believer is now imputed for righteousness. (Rom. 4: 20-25.) The same thought as to how "righteousness" is obtained is expressed in Rom. 4: 3-5, where the word rendered "imputed" in vs. 22, 23 is translated "counted"—

"Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

The same word is rendered "reckoned" in verse 4. The Revised Version simplifies the whole chapter by invariably using the words "reckon" and "reckoned." The constant repetition of the same word gives force to the Apostle's argument. Had Abraham's works been of such a nature as to justify him in God's sight, he would have been able to glory in himself, "but not toward God." Had the Jews been able to keep the Law perfectly, their reward would not have been a free gift from God, but would have been owing to them as something they had earned. (Rom. 4: 2-4.) Not so the believer, the man of faith. God is not in his debt; the one whose faith is counted or imputed or reckoned for righteousness receives that righteousness as a free gift, as of the Lord's grace. He acknowledges that there is nothing in himself to commend him to God (Rom. 3: 9-18), and thus places himself in line to receive a blessing—

"Even as David also pronounceth blessing upon the man, unto whom God reckoneth righteousness apart from works, saying:

"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin."—Rom. 4: 6-8, R.V.

The simple Gospel truth is that God reckons the believer's faith to be righteousness, *as instead of* works of righteousness, knowing him to be incapable of the latter. He accepts the believer, not because he is very good, or clever, but simply because he sincerely believes. As the Apostle puts it, He reckons righteousness to the believer *apart from* works. Any good works he may do after becoming a believer are pleasing to God, but are not the ground of acceptance.

Forgiveness and Reckoned Righteousness

By the quotation from the Psalm the Apostle in the above passage shows that reckoned righteousness is impossible without the forgiveness of sins. It is God who "reckons" one either righteous or a sinner. If a man's sins are forgiven, they are not reckoned to him; they are not laid to his charge or piled up against him; but righteousness is reckoned to him. Up to the time he believes, his sins have been accumulating, hence the "forbearance" of God, in remitting or forgiving them all (Rom. 3: 25) as soon as he believes, and hence the favour of God in allowing him to start the Christian life with reckoned righteousness. Such a believer is "justified," or declared right, and it is not in the power of any human being to interfere with the new convert's standing in God's sight. Praise God for it!

"It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth?"—Rom. 8: 33, 34, R.V.

The necessity of forgiveness in order to reckoned righteousness is shown by the stress laid upon it by the early evangelists. (Matt. 26: 28; Luke 24: 47; Acts 2: 38, 39; 3: 26; 5: 31; 10: 43; 13: 38, 39; 26: 18.) Sin placed a barrier between the sinner and God; it made him God's enemy, both in his flesh and in his mind. (Col. 1: 21; Eph. 2: 1-3.) No progress toward life and holiness was possible while that barrier remained. Hence the first work of the New Covenant of mercy to those who believe—

"For I will be merciful to their transgressions, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. 8: 12.

Then, their sins having been forgiven, they which were called could receive the promise of eternal inheritance, and not before.—Heb. 9: 13-15.

Peace with God

The Apostle continues his argument in Romans 5—"THEREFORE, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have access into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."—Rom. 5: 1, 2. Some ancient authorities omit "by faith" after "access."

Being counted or reckoned by God as righteous (as explained in the previous chapter), the believer is at peace with God. In other words, he is reconciled, whereas before he was an enemy; he is forgiven, and no longer under condemnation (Rom. 8: 1); and, being forgiven, he has received the Holy Spirit, which was promised as an essential part of the blessing (Acts 2: 38, 39; 3: 26; Gal. 3: 14); he is a Son, having received

the spirit of adoption (Gal. 4: 5-7; Rom. 8: 14-17); and not only so, he may "rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Justification is not a temporary experience of the believer; it is a state which must be continued until his course is finished in death; for so long as he is in the flesh, he will need to have righteousness reckoned to him. He must maintain his justification by continued believing, and by works which will manifest the genuineness of his faith.—James 2: 21-25.

R. B. H.

The New Covenant Advocate, Vol. 3.

Subscriptions Now Due.

THIS issue completes Vol. 2 of the "Advocate," and at the same time nearly all subscriptions are due for the new volume that will begin with the April issue. Friends are hereby reminded that the good of the cause we all have at heart requires that subscriptions be sent in promptly to the head office or branches, whichever may be most convenient for you. Our desire is that everyone interested in this paper should have it regularly, and we shall be pleased to hear from you at least once a year, so that we may be assured of your continued interest, and that we have your address correct on our list. Subscriptions being due, now is the best time to attend to this matter, and we shall be greatly obliged by the kindness of friends in responding promptly. The price is 2/6 per year in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) per year elsewhere.

"The Blood of Bulls and Goats"

I thank you very much for carefully written reply to mine under the above title in December, 1910, "Advocate." In answer, I must say that I agree with all you have written in that reply. I may also say that I had come to your view, before receiving your letter, by a more careful consideration of Heb. 9: 9-14, together with the article—"Types, Symbols," etc., in the November, 1909, "Advocate." From this I see with you that the mingled blood of the different animals typified the one enduring sacrifice for sin, as it is written—"It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul." The Apostle in Hebrews does not particularise, but groups all the mingled blood together as one type of the one spotless sacrifice. From Lev. 4, I see, too, that the different kinds of animals were appointed for persons of different stations in life, and with you I believe that shows the sufficiency of the blood of Jesus for all. Oh! I praise the Lord for His wonderful Word, and for the way He, through His servants, is shedding more and more light upon it. I believe that the "Advocate" is at present about the best help to earnest seekers after truth. My subscription and contribution will, D.V., be sent to the American office.

Praying the Lord's richest blessings upon you for the coming year, I subscribe myself,

Your humble brother, by God's mercy in Christ our Mediator,

—, U.S.A.

"Dead Unto Sin"

Please find enclosed Postal Note as payment for the "Advocate" for the ensuing year. I was very glad of the further explanation in the February "Advocate," page 166, on the subject that Jesus died *unto* Sin. I had looked up the dictionary meaning of the word "unto" as far as I was able some time back, when this subject came up, and some expressed the opinion that it should read, He died for sin, or *by* sin—by the sins of the Jews who put Him to death. This view was new to me, and did not seem to coincide with the context of the chapter, Romans 6. Now, the "Advocate" explanation has helped me, and I am thankful for it. I always look forward to each new issue, and again and again have I received through its pages the help I was needing at the time.

Yours very sincerely,

—, South Australia.

The Cheerful Givers

"The God of Heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build." "Through God we shall do valiantly."—Neh. 2: 20; Psa. 60: 12.

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully; every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9: 6, 7.

"Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."—1 Cor. 16: 2.

Voluntary Donations, as under, have been received since our last report in the December issue, for the spread of the Good Tidings concerning the Grace of God in Jesus, our Mediator and Intercessor under the terms of the New Covenant.

The letter "G" after a donation number indicates that the donation is sent in harmony with the plan mentioned in the "Go Forward" letter enclosed with the November "Advocate." It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way.

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The "Advocate" 7000 Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report in the December issue. Let the good work continue! The cost of printing and posting 7000 "Advocates" is about £40 (\$200) per month.

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The New Covenant Advocate — and — Kingdom Herald

Vol. 3

MELBOURNE, LONDON, AND BROOKLYN, N.Y., APRIL, 1911

No. 1

UNIVERSALISM

Unscriptural and Antiscriptural

THAT form of teaching which asserts that every person who has ever lived will ultimately be brought to a state of harmony with God, and permanent salvation, is known as Universalism. Universalism has been professed as a belief by a few now and again in the past hundreds of years; but notwithstanding the apparent desirability of what it sets forth, Universalism has never gained wide acceptance among Bible Students, the evidence of Scripture and reason against the theory having been deemed by most students to be incontrovertible. The theory of Universalism among professed Christians has sought, by a thousand and one devices, to adapt itself to the requirements of Scripture and reason. The arguments advanced by its adherents have been based with all the ingenuity of special pleading upon everything that would seem to give them a footing, however slight. But whether based on (1) a consideration of the value of Christ's death as the purchase price and atonement for the entire race; or on (2) certain allegations—emanating from the Universalists—concerning the responsibility of God for the present and the future of His creatures; or on (3) the well known fact that both divine and human preference would be for the everlasting salvation of all; the hearer is certain—unless he allow himself to be unduly influenced by his feelings—to rise with a sense of the serious deficiency of the arguments in behalf of Universalism.

Universalism Unscriptural

The unscripturalness of Universalism—that is to say, the total absence of scriptural foundation for it—is clearly shown by reference to those passages which the Universalists cite as the basis of their hope. A selection, which is believed to be fairly representative of the whole, is here given, and the Student is exhorted to examine the texts carefully, that he may clearly discern how the Universalists have misused these Scriptures.

1. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."—John 12: 32.

By laying some stress on the words "all men" in the

above text, the Universalist seeks to use it in support of his belief. But drawing is not compulsion, and it is evident, even if all men were to respond favourably to the drawing influence of the Crucified One, which the text does not say they will do, that some might afterwards take themselves away from Jesus. And the most careful scrutiny fails to find in this text even an inference, much less an assertion, that all men will be everlastingly saved. See "Advocate," March, 1910, page 196.

2. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2: 9-11; Cf. Rev. 5: 13.

Again it is easily discerned that this passage falls far short of fulfilling the demands made upon it by the Universalist; for while it is here declared that every knee must bow to Jesus (See Rom. 14: 9 in this connection; also John 5: 22, 23, 27; Matt. 28: 18), and that this submission and obedience will be to the glory of God the Father, it is nowhere stated, that all those who bow the knee will be everlastingly saved. It is, however, intimated that some of the obedience will be "feigned." (2 Sam. 22: 45; Psa. 18: 44; 66: 3; marginal reading in each case.) This being so, one can understand why Phil. 2: 9-11 does not predict endless salvation for all.

3. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."—1 Cor. 15: 21; compare Rom. 5: 18, 19.

Here again it is easy to see that the Universalist has erred in citing a passage which neither states nor infers that all will be everlastingly saved. The life in Christ is not unconditional; it is only for those who believe into Him (John 3: 16), just as the death in Adam came only upon those who were in him when he sinned. And as the Scripture plainly says that at the last there will be some "fearful and unbelieving" (Rev. 21: 8), who will perish on account of their unbelief (John 3: 16, 36), it is a most serious error to suppose

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that 1 Cor. 15: 21 could be used as a basis for Universalism.

4. "And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself: by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."—Col. 1: 20; Eph. 1: 10.

This passage speaks of the great work of our Saviour in the present and future ages, as already mentioned in No. 2; but No. 4, like all the references preceding it, gives no aid and comfort to the Universalist, because it quite omits to say, or even to infer, that all will be permanently saved.

5. "God . . . will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."—1 Tim. 2: 4.

The Universalist relies much on these words. But, unfortunately for his contention, the "salvation" comes first, and the knowledge of the truth, with its attendant responsibility, comes after the "salvation," in this statement of the divine will. The text is so far from being favourable to the Universalist as to be positively against him. At the utmost, the word "saved" in No. 5 can refer to nothing more than a temporary preservation of the individual, operating either in this life, or, by means of the resurrection of the dead, extending into the next life, until every individual of the race shall have him brought to that knowledge of the truth, stated in 1 Tim. 2: 5, 6, which it is God's determination all shall have. Having been brought to that knowledge, the exercise of faith in it and obedience to the Lord does and will permanently save, unless subsequent falling away shall render the original belief of the Gospel vain. (1 Cor. 15: 12.) Faith and obedience must not be against the will of the individual; in order to be acceptable they must work by love.—Gal. 5: 6.

This leads us to—

6. "We trust in the living God, Who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe."—1 Tim. 4: 10.

This is a grand comment on No. 5, showing that God is the Saviour or preserver of unbelievers only for the purpose of giving them the opportunity to believe the Truth when fairly brought before them, either in this life or in the next. If they become believers when the opportunity is given them, they shall enter into the "special" salvation provided for all believers regardless of distinctions of rewards. The "special" salvation provided for all believers is called "Everlasting Life"—"that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." If one must believe in order to avoid perishing, it is obvious that wilful unbelief must involve one at last in perishing, or destruction, not only in missing the everlasting life but also in losing in death—the second death—such life as he has.—John 3: 36; Rev. 21: 8.

Other texts which the Universalist is fond of citing are—

7. "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."—Isa. 45: 7.

8. "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"—Amos 3: 6.

9. "And all things are of God."—2 Cor. 5: 18.

The Universalist cites these texts because they seem to him to throw upon Jehovah the responsibility for the present evil conditions of persons and affairs. From this, if his premise be granted, the Universalist argues that if Jehovah be responsible for present evil conditions, He is also responsible to see that they be put right; therefore, says the Universalist, every one will

be made good at last by Him Who has made them evil at first. This is nothing less than blasphemy against God's righteous character. Besides being blasphemous, this "argument" of the Universalist is most unreasonable. For if Jehovah made the people evil, and is therefore more evil than they, as a creator is greater than his works, and a cause is greater than the effect it produces, what reason is there to suppose that so evil a being—the worst one in the Universe—would become so righteous as to desire to undo his evil works? Or if He were to change once, why might He not afterward change back to the evil? And if Jehovah made a human liar what he is, then the Almighty must be a greater liar than the one he made; this being so, would it be possible to repose the least confidence in any alleged word of God? This line of reasoning would of course extend to every evil trait and revolting practice that manifests itself in mankind. If Jehovah made them evil as they are, He is necessarily greater than His creatures in all their evils. Into this filthy quagmire does the so-called "argument" of Universalism lead.

But this "argument" of the Universalist is not only blasphemous and unreasonable, it is also wholly without warrant in the texts above cited to support it. The word translated "evil" in references Nos. 7 and 8 means either moral or natural evil. It pleases the Universalist in these texts to attach the meaning of moral evil; but the context in both of them shows that natural or physical evil—that is to say, distress, trouble or calamity—is meant, these things being brought upon Israel in fulfilment of warnings such as those expressed in Lev. 26: 14-39. That "evil" in these two texts means trouble brought upon Israel for their sins against their covenant, so that they might know that Jehovah was the only God, is made clear by reading Isa. 45: 4-7; Amos 3: 2-6.

As for reference No. 9, its misuse by the Universalist is, if possible, a more glaring illustration than the others of the evil of neglecting the context. The Apostle has been telling about Christian experience, the wonderful change in status that comes to the true believer in Christ. He says—

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ."—2 Cor. 5: 17, 18.

What things are of God? Certainly not the sinful "old things" that "are passed away," for they are viewed as non-existent, having "passed away." But the "new" things, pertaining to the "new creature" in Christ, are of God, because it is by the power of God that the "new creature" has been called into being. (James 1: 18.) These new things, which are all of God, are holy and good, all of them (Eph. 2: 10), so that one can see that the Universalist's use of a few words lifted out of 2 Cor. 5: 18 is wholly unwarranted, and is a libel on the divine character.

The lack of scriptural foundation for Universalism, as shown by reference to the texts mostly relied on by its advocates, demonstrates its unscripturalness. It is without Scripture. It is certain that there is absolutely no Scripture which either plainly or inferentially asserts that all men will be everlastingly saved. Therefore, much as the adherents of Universalism may desire scriptural authority for their belief, they are left without it.

Universalism Antiscriptural

The teaching that all will be everlastingly saved, which has been shown to be unscriptural, that is, lacking Scripture, is also positively antiscriptural, that is, against Scripture. The Universalist believes that all men will ultimately be brought into a condition of harmony with God which will never be jarred by a note of discord. He also believes that if one has made a start in the right direction, and has apparently fallen away, lapsed or backslidden, such a transgressor is not beyond recovery, but will be subjected—in this life or the next, and as many times as may be necessary—to processes which will assure his ultimate and permanent recovery. This teaching is directly contrary to Scripture, which, while teaching the possibility and duty of reclaiming some backsliders (James 5: 19, 20; John 5: 16), also tells of a falling away from which recovery is impossible.

"For it is IMPOSSIBLE for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world [literally "age"] to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance."—Heb. 6: 4-6.

Again, the fact that great responsibility accompanies enlightenment is stated.

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

"For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And, again, The Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

"Now the just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."—Heb. 10: 26-31, 38, 39.

To "die without mercy" was the sorest punishment inflicted under the Mosaic law. But we are here told of a "sorer punishment" of which he shall be thought worthy, who sins wilfully after enlightenment. The ultimate punishment mentioned in the New Testament is death, the Second Death. (Rev. 20: 15; 21: 8.) Wherein is the Second Death a "sorer punishment" than death "without mercy" under the law of Moses? Not in painfulness, for death is destruction, the absolute extinction of life.* But let it be remembered that those who suffered death "without mercy" under the Law are bought back by Christ, Who hung on the tree. (Gal. 3: 10, 13.) Let it also be remembered that "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more" (Rom. 6: 9); and that He is "alive for evermore." (Rev. 1: 18.) Then it is seen that whereas redemption from the curse of the Law is provided, there is no provision made or proposed to be made for redemption from the Second Death, the "sorer punishment" of those who sin wilfully after enlightenment, the "perdition" to which some "draw back," thus making it impossible for the Lord to have pleasure in them. The

"Second Death" is therefore an endless punishment (Matt. 25: 46; 2 Thess. 1: 9), and its endlessness constitutes it "sorer" than death under the Law, a sacrifice on account of the latter having been offered once for all by Jesus Christ, making it temporary, whereas for the wilful sin after enlightenment "there remaineth no more sacrifice."

Invitation, Not Compulsion

The divine policy in regard to the offer of salvation to men is to invite, beseech and urge them to come unto God by Jesus Christ, but without compulsion. (2 Cor. 5: 20; Rev. 22: 17.) By the activities of this age and the next one, all men, living and dead, will have been reached with this gracious invitation, and will have had the opportunity to choose life and live. Undoubtedly every person must have a proper opportunity to make his choice intelligently, and such opportunity will certainly be provided for all. But it is distinctly foretold that at the last there will be some (the number is not stated) ready to rise in rebellion against God's arrangements, and that such will be devoured by "fire out of heaven," the "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Rev. 20: 9; Matt. 25: 41.) This is clear teaching that some will be lost, and it demonstrates that Universalism is antiscriptural—contrary to the Scripture.

The Victory of Christ

Universalists are very fond of saying that if even one soul were forever lost the Saviour's victory would be incomplete. But it might be asked, Does the Scripture say this? Since when has your soul or mine, or any person's, become so necessary to the Saviour's happiness that He must mourn through all eternity, if any of us or all of us were lost? One must have very spacious views of his own importance if he can think and teach so. Would it not be more becoming to count ourselves "as the small dust of the balance" (Isa. 40: 15), which is neither here nor there, not being worth the trouble of blowing it off the scales? Taking this view of our value to God, which is the correct estimate without doubt, we are blessed with a better appreciation of the love of God and Christ toward us, and of their marvellous condescension, which caused them to stoop down to beings so insignificant—albeit originally formed in the divine likeness—as ourselves. Not unto us; but unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, be glory for ever.

Christ's victory will be complete. But his victory will not depend on your salvation or on mine to make it complete. His victory will be complete in the salvation of the believing and obedient ones and in the destruction of all His enemies, whether these enemies be systems, doctrines, or wilfully sinful persons. If, then, you, or I, or any person, or any number of persons, wilfully oppose ourselves to Jesus after sufficient enlightenment has been granted us, it would not be our salvation but our destruction that would be required to make His victory complete. May we not be found among those who stand against Him!

Universalism Impudent

The colossal impudence of Universalism is shown in its desire to "rescue" those who have been consigned to "everlasting punishment"; as though the Lord, who loved them, and died for them, were not competent to decide what to do with them at last, if they retained their enmity against Him. With a curious mixture of

*For further explanation and citation of every Scripture text containing the words "Sheol," "Hades," "Hell," "Lake of Fire," etc., please see the 112 page book, "Everlasting Punishment." Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); postage, 2d. (4 cents) extra; in paper covers, 6d. (10 cents), postpaid.

humility and self-assertion, *Robert* is made to say, in "Robert Falconer," by George Macdonald—

"Weel, gin I win in there, the verra first nicht I sit doon wi' the lave o' them, I'm gaen' to rise up an' say—that is, gin the Maister, at the heid o' the table, disna bid me sit doon—an' say: 'Breithers an' sisters, the haill o' ye, bearken to me for ae minute; an', O, Lord, gin I say wrang, jist tak the speech frae me, an' I'll sit doon dumb and rebukit. We're a' here by grace and no by merit, save His, as ye a' ken better nor I can tell ye, for ye hae been langer here nor me. But it's jist ruggin' an' rivin' at my hert to think o' them 'at's doon there. Noo, we hae nae merit an' they hae nae merit, an' what for are we here an' them there? I call upo' ilk ane o' ye 'at has a frien' or a neebor down yonner, to rise up an' taste nor bite nor sup mair till ye gang up a' thegither to the fut o' the throne, and pray the Lord to lat us gang and du as the Maister did afore's, and beir their griefs, and carry their sorrows doon in nell there; gin it may be that they may repent and get remission o' their sins, and come up here wi' us at the lang last, and sit doon wi' 's at this table, a' throw the merits o' our Saviour Jesus Christ, at the heid o' the table there. Amen."

Fancy one newly arrived in heaven signalling his "first nicht" there by presuming on the Master's love and kindness, and intimating that His wisdom had not been sufficient to devise everything necessary on behalf of the wilfully wicked to try to save them before sending them "down yonner." "Robert" and the others might go down to them and supply something which the Master had overlooked. He would even propose to be a sin bearer, thus usurping the position of our blessed Saviour, and intruding into things to which no believer is invited. Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God that beareth away the sin of the world. He was once for all offered to bear the sins of many. (John 1: 29;

Heb. 9: 28; 10: 18.) "Robert" would get off easy by being allowed to "sit doon dumb and rebukit," with no worse befalling him. But this is the manner of Universalism, from which may we all be spared.

Conclusion

Limitations of space have prevented as full a discussion as one could have desired to present of the above texts that are cited by Universalists. Some of these texts have been more particularly dealt with in past issues of the "Advocate," to which readers are referred for details. But it is hoped that sufficient has been said in the foregoing pages to clearly show that in citing these texts in support of their theory, the Universalists have strangely neglected those principles of careful interpretation and consideration of the context, which must be observed by those who would rightly divide the Word of Truth, and would avoid confusion. Universalism is therefore an absolutely foundationless assumption. But as the student looks more closely at this assumption; as he notes its reflection against the divine character in its allegation that as God made men evil, He is bound to make them good; as he notes the meddlesomeness of Universalism in its intimation that "everlasting punishment" is inflicted by the Lord upon those whom it might reach down and save, after God's love and wisdom and power have given them over to the destruction deserved by their obstinacy; as the student notes all this, he will conclude that Universalism is something more than a foundationless assumption; Universalism is blasphemous presumption.

TOLSTOI

WHO has not read of the death of the celebrated Russian author and philosopher, Count Leo Tolstoi? In leaders by the yard, the various European editors could scarcely do enough in praising, not to say idolising, this man, whose greatness and significance as an author and a humanitarian, even we would not seek to diminish. Only one question concerns us. Considered from the standpoint of belief in the Bible, what shall we think of such mighty ones as Leo Tolstoi? What shall we say, if in their comparisons our daily papers throw out strong sentences, of which we cite the following specimen—

"Who are they, the fanatical prophets of the Old Testament, these narrow souled zealots, when compared with the sublime greatness of this man?"—the "uncrowned Czar of Russia!"

From the Christian standpoint it is always suspicious for a man if the world praise him; therefore we cannot do better than to draw the attention of our readers to "Die Aussicht," No. 9, 1908, containing an article, "Tolstoi and the Peasant," in which the hero of our day certainly came off with diminished laurels. It is there shown that Tolstoi could use out of the whole Bible nothing more than the Sermon on the Mount (exactly the tendency of our free thinking reformed clergymen)—the remainder of the Bible he considered useless, if not indeed dangerous, ballast; and the Person of Jesus Christ he needed not at all.

Now it may be that the fact that the idol worshipping Greek Catholic Church has placed Tolstoi under the ban has caused some believers to think that he is a martyr for the evangelical Christian faith; that this is not so will be perceived by the readers with horrifying distinctness from the following letter*—

From Count Leo Tolstoi to Mr. K. A. Klischowski

Yasnaya Polyana, Feb. 8th, 1910.

"I hold the teaching mentioned in your letter, of redemption for the sins of men through the blood of Christ, to be one of the most unreasonable, senseless and baseless teachings, and at the same time a gross superstition which exerts a pernicious influence on the morals of men.

"I believe this because I hold the sin of the first man, for which God has punished all men, to be a coarse, disgraceful and silly fable, which men should have forgotten long ago. God is love; and men do well with the life which God has given them if they but fulfil the will of the Giver. Therefore, men do not require to be saved from anything; they need no blood of a Saviour; they must only do the will of God. But the will of God is that men love one another, and that they increase this love in themselves. 'God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.' (1 John 4: 16.) Christ did not say to the Pharisees that the greatest commandment was to believe in any blood whatsoever, but said very clearly, simply and intelligibly, love God and thy neighbour. Therein consists the whole Law. This is my view. Further particulars you can find in all my later writings."

LEO TOLSTOI.

*From the Russian paper, "The Morning Star," October 15th, 1910.

We make no attack on the greatness of this man as an honoured one of *this* world; nevertheless we must reply to the several Scripture texts occurring in the above letter. "It is also written"—

"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood [believe therein], ye have no life in you." "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him," and "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—John 6: 53; 1: 9; 14: 6; 1 Cor. 3: 11.

These Bible texts of course agree most poorly with the contents of the letter, and from this it appears that Tolstoi, notwithstanding his towering greatness and knowledge, did not know the "one thing needful"—*the Truth*—JESUS CHRIST. But his unbelief in regard to the redemptive work of our Saviour is easily

explainable, when one thinks of the circumstances, in many respects so wretched, which surrounded him in Russia, and reflects, besides, that the sad state of the Greek Catholic religion and church, composed of so much idolatry and superstition, is not calculated to lead anyone to Biblical faith in Jesus.

We rejoice in the hope that in the coming day of Jesus Christ this great man also can yet learn to know the personal need of a Redeemer, and the blessing of the long misunderstood word of the Apostle concerning "God our Saviour, Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2: 4), and that perhaps he too, convinced by powerful proofs, will join in the cry—"My Lord and my God!"—John 20: 24, 28; Isa. 53: 12; 25: 9.—(G. B. in "Die Aussicht." Translation made for "The New Covenant Advocate.")

The Parables of Our Lord

The Parable of the Vine and Branches

—John 15: 1-8, 16—(To the disciples).—

1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.
2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.
3. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.
4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.
5. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me [margin: severed from me] ye can do nothing.
6. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.
7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.
8. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.
10. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

HOW GRACIOUS of the Lord to give us this beautiful illustration from nature, to assist our understanding of spiritual things! and how good of Him to explain the illustration, lest in our ignorance and inexperience we should draw from it a different lesson from that which He intended!

It is necessary to notice, firstly, that these words were addressed to the Eleven; yet they are doubtless recorded for the instruction of all the disciples of Jesus, who, like the apostles, believe on Him, and forsake all in order that they may follow Him.

Jesus is the true Vine, but not everyone is a branch in this true vine. There are, besides, other plants, which the Father has not planted, and they also have branches; but there is no benefit in being a branch in such a vine, for—

"Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."—Matt. 15: 13.

Thus spoke our Lord concerning the Pharisees, who were offended because of His teaching. They, as plants, had many branches, and much bitter fruit; men put their faith in them and their teachings, and

brought forth fruit accordingly. (Matt. 13: 1-9.) In the same connection, but under another figure (Matt. 15: 14), the Pharisees were described as "blind leaders of the blind." The same is true now of false religious teachers and those who have absorbed their wrong teaching. The fruit is evil, and the entire plant—teachers and dupes—must be rooted out and burned; all the blind "fall into the ditch."—Mal. 4: 1; Matt. 15: 14.

"Clean through the Word"

Those who would be branches in the true Vine must be separated from other associations, and from evil fruit bearing. They must be "clean." (John 15: 3.) Our Lord said the disciples were clean "through the word which I have spoken unto you." This "word" was not magic, acting upon the disciples instantaneously, without their knowledge or co-operation; it was not that the Lord oracularly called them "clean" while their hearts were still defiled. It was because they had believed the word which He had spoken to them; they believed that He had come out from God: they believed that He was the promised Messiah, the Son of God. (John 10: 27; Matt. 16: 16.) And because they believed, their sins had been forgiven by authority of the Son of man, and in anticipation of the sacrifice which He, as the Lamb of God, was about to offer on their behalf, just as ours are now forgiven when we by faith look back to that sacrifice and accept it as having been offered on our behalf. (Matt. 9: 2-6; Mark 7: 47; 1 Cor. 6: 11; Tit. 3: 5.) They were furthermore clean in that, after having heard the word of Jesus and believed, they separated themselves from the Pharisees and their hypocritical teaching and uncleanness (2 Cor. 6: 17), and permitted the word of truth to operate on their lives; for our Lord had said—

"Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven."—Matt. 5: 20.

The extreme cleanliness which is necessary to all disciples (walking as it were with bare feet through this corrupt world) had just been illustrated by the Master, who had taken a towel, and Himself washed the disciples' feet. (John 13: 2-17.) This was an acted parable, as was the cursing of the barren fig tree; and the lesson that He intended us to draw from it was, that

we should assist in cleansing one another (who have already had the "bath") from the daily defilements.

Our Lord's parables were perfectly constructed; they say neither too much nor too little; they neither misconstrue nor misrepresent nature; they show that even in nature God is true to principles which obtain in morals; or, put it the other way, if you will, that God must be true to Himself, and therefore the universe must be an expression of His own character. As God is honest and consistent, we do not see grapes growing on thistles, nor figs on thorns. When therefore our Lord gives a parable of the Vine, he pictures no such contingency as a branch of the vine bearing alien fruit, such as thorns or thistles, and having for that reason to be removed. No, the whole question is bearing fruit or not bearing fruit. The thorn and thistle were the evil fruit produced while life was drawn from evil sources; but now, the source being good, the Vine being the Lord Jesus Himself, there can be no evil fruit in the branches. Whatever of evil may be manifested in the lives of his professed people indicates that their connection with old sources of evil has not been completely severed.

Fruit Bearing and Pruning

The process of vine-dressing is simplicity itself, yet requires a skilful hand, lest a branch bearing fruit be injured or inadvertently cut off, and lest a non-bearing, useless branch be allowed to remain to draw sustenance away from the fruit-bearers. No sentiments of indulgence or mercy enter into the husbandman's dealings with the absolutely useless branch: "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away." But, thanks be to God! there is boundless love and pity and care in dealing with the tenderest branch showing the least tendency to bud. And here comes in the strange thing—the fruit itself is not flattered and coaxed; nor is the branch, because of its attempts at fruit-growing, allowed to have its own way. Just the contrary! It is *pruned*, a painful process, that the vitality necessary for the development of the fruit may not be wasted in useless efforts of the branch to spread itself and make a great show before men. Think of this, O suffering branches in the Vine, when life seems hard and the best laid plans fail! There is to be no glory save that of healthy branches bearing large and luscious fruit to demonstrate the strength and vitality of the Vine capable of bearing them. No honour to the branch; all honour to the Vine! Think of this when the purging is most painful, that more of the spirit of patience and humility may flow from the Vine into the branch, enabling you to bear fruit with the flavour of patience better developed, for is not the fruit of the Vine, the fruit of the Spirit which came from Christ to the Church, to be in them a mighty living power?—Acts 2: 33; Rom. 8: 11.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."—Gal. 5: 22, 23.

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these put on charity [love], which is the bond of perfectness."—Col. 3: 12-14.

"Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."—2 Pet. 1: 5-7.

Beautiful fruit this! Well worth a little pruning! What is a little pain compared with these blessed results?

"Abide In Me"

Another truism, so simple that a child can understand it, is that—

"The branch cannot bear fruit of itself."—John 15: 4.

While the branch is in the vine it has life; separated from the vine it dies. So Christ is our Life; only those who are in Christ are said to have passed from death unto life. Only the living branch in the living Vine can bear fruit—the fruit of the Spirit; for it is the Holy Spirit flowing from the "Vine" to the "branch" that enables it to bear fruit. Again, were the branch to be cut from the Vine, it could bear no fruit, for the life-giving sap would cease to flow into it. A similar allusion is made by the Apostle Paul in Rom. 11: 18, in connection with the olive tree—"Thou bearest not the root, but the root thee!" This, also, it is well to remember, lest we credit any advance we may make in fruit bearing to our own cleverness or virtue, and so by a spirit of pride vex the husbandman and be cut off. Let us ever remember that all our own righteousness is as filthy rags. The only righteousness that counts is that which is reckoned to us on account of our faith, and that personal integrity and virtue which are developed in us through our relationship to the true Vine.

Our Lord's words intimate two things. First, we do not make ourselves branches of the vine. We become so only on His invitation, and on following His directions—

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."—Verse 16.

Second, we do not cut ourselves out of the vine, but there are two things we may do to secure our removal from the vine. Of these, the failure to bear fruit has already been referred to. This implies an imposition upon the Lord, in wanting to draw benefits from Him and give nothing in return. The other thing we may do is to hinder the communion between the Vine and the branch. If the life-giving sap does not flow freely from the vine into its branches, the result is that the branch withers; it begins to dry up, usually first at the extremities, receiving less and less nourishment from the vine, until finally the sap is entirely withdrawn, and flows past the withered branch as though it were not there. Thus is the withered and dead Christian "cast forth" as a branch, disowned by the Vine which formerly sustained and nourished it. Knowing that no fault lies in the Vine, for the Lord Jesus who gave His life for the Church nourishes and keeps it to the end (Eph. 5: 29), all blame attaches to the discarded Christian; he has allowed something to come between the Lord and himself to interrupt the communion—some sin, or secret fault, some ambition, love of pleasure or ease, so that the heart did not really *abide* in Christ, and Christ's Word and Spirit were not given free course.

There is no wood more useless than that of the grape vine, says the prophet, describing the complete undoing of the children of Israel, on account of their idolatry and corruption. (Ezek. 15: 1-8.) One cannot so much as make a peg or pin of it. Of such like is the Christian who, once having been in the vine, and refusing to abide there, has been cast forth. He is fit only for destruction. (John 15: 6.) But—

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."—John 15: 8.

"... that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."—John 15: 16.

The more of the choice fruit of the Spirit which can be brought forth by the child of God, the more is the Father glorified. And that fruit will remain. It is precious. It can be seen and admired by all. Even the casual passer-by may turn to look again, saying—I wish I could grow grapes like that! If that is what it means to be a Christian, I must look into it, and see if I cannot be one, too!

"Keep My Commandments"

To have the Lord's words abiding in us means that we make ourselves familiar with them in order to see what He requires of us; and then it means *absolute obedience* to His will. There is no other way; there is no royal road to perfection; it is a narrow way of self-abnegation and self-surrender. It means keeping His commandments as single-heartedly and devotedly as He kept the Father's commandments. Then, and thus, shall we abide in His love; only on those conditions can He call us His friends, and can we bring forth fruit.

Dearly beloved, let us abide in Him!

How old is the Human Race?

THE AGE of the Race is a very interesting subject, though not of the greatest importance. Many attempts have been made to ascertain the length of time that has elapsed since man first appeared on the earth. The evolutionists have risked the most fanciful guesses running into any number of millions of years. These, of course, are only guesses, and as there is absolutely no foundation for them in any known fact, these guesses are merely the expressions of the guessers' imaginations. The traditions of heathen nations are also too fantastic to be seriously considered.

The more sober estimates of the age of the human race have been made by those who have investigated, as carefully as they were able, the documentary evidence left behind by the generations past and gone. This evidence has never been completely satisfactory, and though great diligence and learning have been brought to the task of reconciling the chronological records—often fragmentary—of Egypt, Rome, Greece and Babylon, the patient research of the investigators has not been rewarded by a perfectly satisfactory issue of their labours, because the records of the four ancient nations do not profess to take them back to the absolute beginning of the existence of our race.

The student of the Bible has information much more definite than that available to those who rely merely on the records of ancient heathen nations. The Bible gives an account of the creation of man, and presents also a chronology leading from the first man down to a point of time which is in contact with what is generally recognised as reliable secular chronology. But even in this Biblical count of the years there are difficulties to be solved; and these difficulties are so considerable that it may be acknowledged, without prejudice, that as yet one's knowledge of the length of time from Adam to the present is only approximate, and subject to modifications that may be required by further information, whenever such shall be available. The pros and cons of these difficulties in the Scriptural chronology that still require solution are here briefly mentioned. Our confidence is that all of them will one day be beautifully cleared up; at the same time we feel free to admit that the information necessary for the clearing up of these questions is not—as far as we are aware—at this moment available; therefore we must for the present be

content to look at some of these questions as it were through a glass darkly, biding the Lord's pleasure for the clear sight and understanding of them which He will grant in His own time.

Israel in Egypt

A venerable controversy centres about the question as to how long the Israelites were in Egypt. It has been alleged that Gen. 15: 13, 14, requires that the posterity of Abraham should be the afflicted servants of one certain nation (assumed to be Egypt) for four hundred years; yet a careful examination of the passage shows that this is not necessarily the interpretation.

Abraham's seed, beginning with Isaac, was a stranger in Palestine, the land which had been promised them, but which was not theirs at the time. They were afflicted in that land, and afterwards they served the nation of Egypt for a time, subsequently coming out "with great substance." From Paul's reference (Gal. 4: 28-31) to the incident mentioned in Gen. 21: 9, 10, one might well understand that the persecution or affliction of Abraham's seed began while Isaac (the beginning of Abraham's seed) was a very young child, which was many years before Isaac's son Jacob went with his children and grand-children to live in Egypt.

It has also been stated that Ex. 12: 40, 41, requires that the children of Israel should have sojourned in Egypt four hundred and thirty years. But this interpretation would bring Ex. 12: 40, 41 into direct conflict with Gal. 3: 17, where Paul states that the entire time from the covenant with Abraham to the giving of the Law, was no more than four hundred and thirty years. The opinion has been expressed, that Gal. 3: 17 refers not to the making of the covenant with Abraham, but to the subsequent "confirmation" of it with his seed, Jacob. The original does not require or even favour this view.

Since Ex. 12: 40, 41 is the most conspicuous passage of Scripture employed in this ancient controversy, a few comments from the learned Dr. Adam Clarke on the various readings of this passage will be valuable. Dr. Clarke says—

"In Ex. 12: 40, we read from the present Hebrew text: 'Now the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years.' The numerous conjectures of learned men to reconcile this place to history

and fact, are truly astonishing; that the descendants of Israel did not dwell four hundred and thirty years in Egypt may be easily, and has been often demonstrated.

"By the preservation of some words in this passage which are evidently lost out of the Hebrew text, the Septuagint gives a consistent, and we may presume the genuine, reading—'Now the sojourning of the children of Israel which they [and their fathers] sojourned in the land of Egypt [and in the land of Canaan] was four hundred and thirty years.' This solves the question without difficulty, and without forcing any unnatural construction upon the terms in the text. Though the Roman edition of Cardinal Carafa (1587) omits the words, 'they and their fathers,' yet they, as well as the words, 'and in the land of Canaan,' are acknowledged by the Complutensian and Antwerp Polyglots, the Pascal Chronicle, Eusebius, the Catena of Nicephorus, St. Augustine, Julius, Hilario, and Syncellus; by the Coptic, Slavonic, and Armenian versions; by the Codex Ambrosianus and the Codex Coislinianus, and by thirty-four other MSS. in Dr. Holmes's catalogue.

"But what, in our own opinion, completes the evidence in vindicating this addition, is, that these interpolations, as they are termed, are found in all the copies of the Samaritan text and Samaritan version which have been hitherto discovered. In the Hebrew and Samaritan the passage stands thus—'Now the sojourning of the children of Israel [and their fathers] which they sojourned in Egypt [the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan], was four hundred and thirty years.' The additions in the Samaritan text, with the Hebrew, make precisely the same sense as the Septuagint. Here then is a most important addition, ascertaining the genuine reading of an otherwise obscure and self-contradictory text, which the Septuagint has preserved; and which, without doubt, existed in the autograph of the Hebrew original.

"The ancient Jews were struck with the difficulty in this text, and endeavoured to solve it. In a rabbinical treatise, called *Rabboth*, written, according to some, so early as A.D. 195, or according to others, 300, or later, which contains expositions of the Pentateuch and Megilloth, the passage stands thus—'in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, and in the land of Goshen.' Though this is good collateral evidence that at a very early period the passage was suspected to be imperfect, yet, after the readings preserved by the Septuagint and Samaritan, we need be under no obligation to the critical emendation of this ancient rabbin."—*Periodical Criticism*, Vol. I, pp. 138-141.

On the other hand, the student will observe that the question concerning the length of time spent by the Israelites in Egypt is much complicated by the fact that they went down into Egypt numbering seventy souls (Gen. 46: 27), and came out of Egypt an army of 600,000 fighting men, making a total for the nation, of both sexes and all ages, of about 3,000,000 descendants from the original seventy immigrants, besides the "mixed multitude" that accompanied their departure from Egypt, but were not descendants of Jacob. The Rev. Nathan Rouse attached no weight to the Septuagint and Samaritan versions of Ex. 12: 40, cited by Dr. Clarke, but believed that, on account of the increase of the seventy immigrants to three millions of emigrants, this passage should be understood to teach that the Israelites spent full 430 years in Egypt, and not merely the half of that time, as Dr. Clarke and others have thought, the argument for 215 years in Egypt being based partly upon the fact that only four generations are recorded from Levi to Moses. Mr. Rouse, in his "Dissertation on Sacred Chronology," says, on this point—

"The last branch of evidence bearing upon the period in question is the number of the recorded generations from the entrance of the Israelites into Egypt to their exodus. These generations are Levi, Kohath, Amram, and Moses. Levi was about 48 years of age when the Israelites entered Egypt, and Moses was 80 years of age when they left Egypt; and since there were only two generations between them, it is impossible, it is said, that the Israelites could have been 430 years in Egypt. So it is; and, on the same principle of calculation, it is impossible that the Israelites, when they left Egypt,

could have amounted to upwards of three millions of persons, according to the calculation of Dr. Adam Clarke, founded upon the Scripture fact that there were six hundred thousand fighting men; because for seventy-five persons, not more than fifteen couples of whom were married, to have produced such a number in three generations, each married couple, during the whole period, must have given birth to between sixty and seventy children, and every one of these children must have lived to become a parent—a supposition which is perfectly preposterous. Indeed, if the recorded generations be taken as a ground of argument, even 215 years cannot be obtained without a considerable amount of stretching; for Levi must have been 48 when Kohath was born; Kohath must have been 75 when Amram was born, and Amram must have been 60 when Moses was born (according to the reckoning of Abulfaragius)—a mode of reckoning which is altogether inconsistent with the rapid multiplication of the Israelites. . . . It is true that only two [generations between Levi and Moses] are recorded; but it by no means follows that only two existed. The Sacred Writers, it must be observed, did not always deem it necessary to record all the names belonging to a genealogical series. Take, for example, the generations from Levi to Benjamin, who was cotemporary with David; the author of the first book of Chronicles (6: 31-38) records twenty-two generations; and yet the author of the book of Ruth, St. Matthew, and St. Luke, record only eleven generations from Judah to David, thus omitting one-half of the names. And then, take also the generations from Abraham to Christ; St. Luke records fifty-six generations during this period, and yet St. Matthew records only forty-one; thus omitting fifteen names, in addition to the eleven which St. Luke has omitted. From these facts, then, it is evident that the Sacred Writers felt themselves under no necessity whatever to record all the names in a genealogical series. Their object in recording generations was to establish genealogical descent; but to record the names of more or less of the principal persons was deemed quite sufficient by the Jews, otherwise St. Matthew would have been charged with having given an incorrect list, whereas nothing of the kind seems to have occurred. Such being the facts of the case with regard to the recorded generations of the Bible, everyone must see the futility of any attempt to determine the length of the period in question by an appeal to such a dubious kind of evidence; and especially when that attempt, as in the present instance, leads to a conclusion directly at variance with an express statement on the subject. It is allowed by Dr. Hales that not only the author of the book of Ruth, but that St. Matthew, and St. Luke likewise, have omitted four generations between Obed and Jesse; and if these writers have omitted four successive generations immediately prior to the father of David; if, in addition to these, they have likewise omitted other six between Levi and David; and if, in addition to these, St. Matthew has omitted other fifteen between Abraham and Christ, where is the improbability that Moses has omitted some between Levi and himself? So far, indeed, from this being improbable, it is certain that he has omitted some. His own statements prove this. . . . he tells us that when the Israelites left Egypt, the number of fighting men amounted to 600,000, which, on the moderate calculation of Dr. Clarke, already referred to, gives 3,243,000 as the entire number of the Israelites; whereas 75 persons, supposing 20 couples of them married, which was not the case, and supposing each couple to rear 15 children to become fathers and mothers, yet at this high ratio, they would not produce in three generations more than 20,000 or 25,000 at most, which is not a fourteenth* part of the number required. It is clear, therefore, that there must have been more than three generations; although Moses has omitted to record them, because unnecessary to the object he had in view."

Genealogical Records

Further confirmation of Mr. Rouse's statements concerning the dissimilarity of the various Jewish genealogical records covering the same period of time, this dissimilarity showing, as Mr. Rouse thinks, that these genealogical records were not intended to have any chronological significance, is found by comparing 1 Chron. 6: 3-15, with Matt. 1: 17. In Matt. 1: 17 there

* "Fourteenth" is the word that occurs in Mr. Rouse's Dissertation. It is not clear why "fourteenth" should have been used, since 25,000 is contained about 130 times in 3,243,000.—Editor.

are fourteen generations mentioned from Abraham to David; in 1 Chron. 6: 3-10, there are fourteen generations mentioned for a period of time which, at the lowest recognised estimate, was about four hundred years shorter than the period from Abraham to David; namely, from Aaron to Johanan, the contemporary of David. From this it would appear that Matthew undertook to mention only the most important names bearing upon his purpose, in the period from Abraham to David.

On the other hand, Matt. 1: 17 mentions fourteen generations "from David until the carrying away into Babylon," while 1 Chron. 6: 10-15 mentions but ten generations for the same period of time. These facts lend confirmation to Mr. Rouse's statement that the Sacred Writers were not considered under obligation to mention every name in a line of genealogy; it was considered sufficient that accuracy of descent be preserved, without the mention of absolutely every name. It may therefore be very possible that some of the generations from Jacob to Moses are not mentioned, as Mr. Rouse thinks must be the case. It is at least certain that there are seven generations mentioned in Num. 27: 1 as covering the time from Joseph to the daughters of Zelophehad, while in Num. 26: 57-59 there are only the usual four mentioned from Levi to Moses. It may be fairly considered, in view of these things, that the evidence concerning the duration of Israel's sojourn in Egypt is scarcely conclusive enough at present to warrant a fixed determination of mind on the subject. Further evidence will be welcomed.

Hebrew and Septuagint Chronologies

The inaccuracy, in matters of chronology, of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament as now available—the most ancient Hebrew text of the Old Testament now available being only of the tenth century, and incomplete—is commented on by the Rev. President Akers, in his work, "Biblical Chronology," pp. 17, 18. He says—

"From the foregoing, we think it is evident that, from the time of the translation of the Old Testament by the Seventy, under Ptolemy Philadelphus, B.C. 280, till about the close of A.D. 100, there was no material discrepancy between the Greek and Hebrew numbers of the Holy Scriptures. For about 400 years the Septuagint received the sanction of the whole Jewish nation; and, in the meantime, Jesus Christ and His apostles, and all the Jews, made constant use of the same, when the Scriptures were searched diligently; but without a word of complaint of their supposed incorrectness.

"As the Septuagint contains now the same numbers that it did in the times above referred to, and as the Hebrew and Greek copies then agreed,² it follows that the Hebrew must since have been altered. Accordingly the Jews have been gravely charged with this enormous offence by the Christian fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, etc. The object which they seemed to have in view, in offering this violence to the Word of God, was so to shorten the chronology of the Old Testament that it might not appear from the world's age that the time had come in which to expect the promised Messiah. They believed that He would come in the sixth millenary; and that was verified by the chronology of the Bible when He was born at Bethlehem; it being, as we hope to prove, more than midway in the sixth millenary of the world. Hence, the Jews, after they had rejected Him, and

their temple and city were demolished, and they themselves were perpetually confounded by the Christians, subtracted 100 years from each of the antediluvian and postdiluvian patriarchs, before the birth of their respective successors, except Jared, Methuselah, Lamech, and Noah, of the former, and Nahor, of the latter; from which last they only took fifty years. Thus they shortened the chronology of the world, from Adam to Abraham—having left out 130 which had been given to Cainan—1330 years."

It was a strong accusation that the early Christians laid against the Jews, that they had altered the chronological numbers of their Scriptures referring to the period from Adam to Abraham; and it must be admitted that the evidence from Josephus, a Jewish writer of the first century, A.D., who professed to have compiled his information from Hebrew sources alone, seems to favour the accusation, and makes the case look dark for the Jews of the second century, because Josephus' figures for the chronology from Adam to Abraham, which Josephus avers were derived from Hebrew sources only, agree very nearly with the figures of the Septuagint for the same period, the Septuagint having of course been translated from Hebrew documents of the third or fourth century B.C. If the Septuagint figures for the period from Adam to Abraham be accepted as correct, and as showing what the Hebrew chronology actually was when the Septuagint translation was made, and at the time of the Lord and the Apostles, as Mr. Akers argues they should be, the age of the human race would now be about 7500 years. It is to be hoped that divine Providence has preserved some really ancient Hebrew manuscript of the Old Testament, to be brought to light in due time, to give information on this subject and the preceding one. But if not by means of an ancient manuscript, the desired information may come from the ancient prophets themselves, soon, we believe, to be brought back to "stand in their lot."—Dan. 12: 13.

On the other side of the controversy regarding the relative merits of the Hebrew and Septuagint chronologies, another writer (J. F., in "The Journal of Sacred Literature") states a theory that appeals to him, viz., "that the Septuagint version was either originally made, or speedily altered, in conformity with the Egyptian chronology—that its general use, about the time of the advent, accounts satisfactorily for the adoption of the long chronology by the Hellenistic Jews of that age, Philo, for instance, and by the Christian Fathers. But would the general use of the Septuagint Version at the time of the first advent of Christ, including its use by Christ and the apostles in their New Testament quotations from the Old Testament, account satisfactorily for the fact that Christ and His inspired apostles made no comment on the alleged incorrectness of the Septuagint chronology?—Editor]—that Josephus, who was a Palestinian Jew, and of a priestly family, used a Hebrew text which closely corresponded with our present copies; and that his works being chiefly or almost exclusively read by those who used the Septuagint Version, his numbers, where they presented an obvious discrepancy with that version, were altered, when this could be readily done, in conformity with it." This theory is presented for what it is worth. Apparently, nothing short of the discovery of an Old Testament text in the Hebrew language, dating back to the first century A.D., or earlier, or the resurrection of the inspired prophets themselves, will

²This agreement between the ancient Hebrew text, not now available, and the Greek Septuagint is shown, according to President Akers, in the fact that the chronology of Josephus, a Jewish historian, "interpreted out of the Hebrew Scriptures," as Josephus says in the preface to his "Antiquities," agreed almost exactly with the chronology of the Septuagint. Josephus wrote in the first century A.D.—Enron.

satisfactorily solve this difficulty in regard to the relative merits of the Hebrew and Septuagint chronologies.

The Kings of Judah and Israel

Another difficulty is the impossibility of procuring exact agreement between the chronologies, in Kings and Chronicles, of the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah from the time of the revolt to the time when the ten tribes were taken into captivity. The discrepancy not very great, being but a year or so; nevertheless it is there, and, of course, it militates against exact knowledge on the subject. In the meantime, some have sought to cut the knot by entirely ignoring the chronology of the ten-tribe kings, because they, being rebels, were not in God's favour, whereas the two-tribe kingdom was in divine favour for a time, and particularly so because David's line was continued on the throne, and the kingdom of Judah—the two tribes—was recognised as God's kingdom. But this course is not a worthy one. It is merely following the evil way of nominal Christendom, which sets passages of Scripture against each other, one party standing for this group of texts and another for that group, without seeking to harmonise the several texts or passages, by considering the contexts. If it be impossible at present to find the exact agreement between the chronologies of Judah and Israel, would it not be better to wait until, in God's providence, some further information is made available, to make exact knowledge possible? Certainly it is better to do this, than to set aside one portion of Holy Scripture in favour of another.

The Period of the Judges

The other outstanding difficulty—that at present seriously interferes with the acquisition of exact knowledge on the subject of the age of the human race is the period of the Judges. Nothing satisfactory has yet been derived from the Old Testament, the book of Judges being apparently impossible to set out with chronological exactness. The New Testament has been turned to for a solution of this great difficulty, and some have thought that Acts 13: 19, 20 furnishes the desired information. The passage reads, in the Authorised Version—

"And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land to them by lot. And after that He gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet."

The word "about" in this passage would, of itself, prevent the supposition that the inspired Apostle was undertaking to state that the period of the Judges was exactly 450 years. But the reading of this passage, as found in the Sinaitic, Alexandrine, Vatican 1209, and Ephraem MSS., which are followed by the recensions of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort, and by the Revised Version, effectually shows that the Apostle was not on this occasion unravelling the chronological tangle of the period of the Judges. The correct reading of Acts 13: 19, 20, according to the above evidence, is—

"And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land for an inheritance, for about four hundred and fifty years; and after these things he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet."—*American Standard Version*.

In this reading, the word "about" is retained, expressing indefiniteness; it might be more or less than the four hundred and fifty years. This word is a translation of *hos*, which, although used in a considerable variety of ways, is never, according to Strong's Concordance, translated "during," though it is translated

"while" in Luke 24: 32; Acts 1: 10; 10: 17, where it is associated with action. But when translated "about," *hos* seems always to be associated with quantity, measure, or time, as in Mark 5: 13; 8: 9; Luke 2: 37; 8: 42; John 1: 39; 6: 19; 11: 18; Acts 1: 15; 5: 7; 13: 18, 20; 19: 34; Rev. 8: 1; 16: 21. It is also to be noted that in this Revised Version reading, the specification of time is entirely removed from the statement about the Judges.

Consideration of all the foregoing would seem to indicate that as yet there is not sufficient evidence in hand to permit the formulation of an accurate table of chronology from the time of Adam's creation to the present; at the best one can but approximate the age of our race. Some will now ask, Are we therefore to pay no attention to time prophecies? By no means!

Study of Time Prophecy Encouraged

There is a difference between puzzling over incomplete genealogies and historical records, and studying prophetic periods which the Lord has given for the information of His people.

Let us study, with humble and prayerful zeal, the "times and seasons" indicated in the Scriptures—the 70 "weeks," the 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "days." In the divine providence, it has been so ordered that the difficulties in the periods of the Kings and Judges, the length of Israel's stay in Egypt, and the relative merits of the Hebrew and Septuagint chronologies from Adam to Abraham, are neither here nor there, as far as the 70 "weeks," the 1260, 1290, 1335 and 2300 "days" are concerned, because these "times and seasons" are all located well on this side of the above mentioned periods, and could not be affected by anything that one might learn or be unable to learn about these periods. But every computation—such as "Parallel Dispensations," surmises about Jubilees, and venerable traditions about 6000 years of evil plus 1000 years of good—based upon a supposed accurate knowledge of the lengths of the periods of the Kings and Judges, and of Israel's stay in Egypt, is shown to be utterly unreliable. Evidence has also been presented in the "Advocate," Dec., 1909, showing that the "seven times" in Lev. 26 are not chronological "times," but rather signify intensity, and do not warrant the theory that the times of the Gentiles should be 2520 years. In fact, there is no Scripture statement of the length of the Gentile rule over Jerusalem.

The Lord and the apostles did not consider exact knowledge of ancient chronologies an essential part of the Gospel, else these matters would have been enlarged upon in the New Testament. The several time prophecies of the Book of Revelation, concerning the length of time the Church was in the "wilderness," and the duration of Papal supremacy, are most profitable for study. They helped the Church in the past, and they are a help and encouragement to Christians to-day. But, above all, the duty and privilege of the Christian is to "Watch!" To be always ready, actively and faithfully serving the Master, so that at any and all hours He may find him at his post of duty.

The Lord will some day let us know exactly the solution of these chronological difficulties, and He will assure us in regard to the age of our race. But for the present we do not really need information on these interesting points, because the definitely stated time prophecies above mentioned are in no way dependent upon them. These difficulties may therefore be allowed to rest until further evidence is vouchsafed.

An Altar and a Pillar in Egypt

IN THE "ADVOCATE" for Sept., 1910, in exposition of Isa. 19: 19, 20, an endeavour was made to show that the New Testament, rather than a heathen monument, is the proper place to search for the correct interpretation of Old Testament Prophecy. An attempt was also made to show that the Great Pyramid of Egypt, remarkable as it is as a building, is *not* "an altar and pillar to Jehovah," as some Christians suppose. We are glad to say that a number of letters received indicate that many of our readers have felt pleasure and satisfaction in realising that our LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself is the "altar" foretold by the prophet, upon which those who believe in Him may offer sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving acceptable to Jehovah.—1 Pet. 2: 5, 9, 10.

The question is asked, If an "altar" and a "pillar" are two different objects, how comes it that the prophet said, "*It shall be for a sign and for a witness,*" instead of "they"?

In the article attention was called to the fact that no "pillar" was permitted to be erected by the children of Israel, except beside and in connection with an altar upon which an acceptable sacrifice had been offered or was to be offered; and the pillar became thus a memorial of both the sacrifice and of those who had faith in and received a blessing in connection with the sacrifice. In referring therefore to the altar and pillar together, and all they signify, the pronoun "it" seems appropriate.

If, however, it should be found, on closer study, that the "altar" and the "pillar" referred to by Isaiah were one object, and not two, no case is made out for the Great Pyramid of Egypt; that heathen monument becomes even less possible as a fulfilment of a "pillar to Jehovah," for the following reasons—

In that case, the "pillar" must first have been an "altar," as when the patriarchs, after having offered sacrifices, allowed the stones to remain standing, as a memorial of the fact that they had at that place offered a sacrifice to Jehovah. In Gen. 12: 7, 8, we read that Abraham built an altar at Bethel on his way down to Egypt. On his return from Egypt, he visited the same spot, and offered again upon the same altar. When he offered the sacrifice, it served as an altar; and in the interim it was a pillar or public acknowledgment of the worship of God, and a memorial of the blessings and covenants he received in connection with his worship at the altar.—See Exod. 17: 15, 16.

The following incident is significant:—When the Reubenites built an altar "in the borders of Jordan," contrary to the instruction of Moses, that the service of God pertained to the tabernacle and the Levitical priesthood, they were brought to task by "the whole congregation of the children of Israel," who looked upon it as an act of rebellion. However, upon their giving assurance that such was not the case, the "altar" was allowed to stand as a "witness" or pillar.—Josh. 22: 9-34.

In either case, whether the altar itself serve as a pillar, or whether, as in later times, a pillar or several pillars were erected beside the altar, the symbolism is that of the true worship of God at His altar, and the blessing of the true worshipper; and the sincere worshippers become living witnesses to the glory of Jehovah as truly as does the heap of stones.

There being not the slightest evidence that the Great Pyramid of Egypt was ever in the past an "altar" to

Jehovah, or that any sacrifice acceptable to Jehovah was ever offered there, it is impossible that it should be a "pillar." It can not be a "witness" of something which never occurred.

Another reason why the Great Pyramid cannot be the "altar" referred to by the Prophet is found in Exod. 20: 24, 25. The altars which the Lord approved of were made of earth, or of unhewn stone—"for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it." The Jews understood this well, as is seen by the nature of the altar erected by Elijah on Mount Carmel. (1 Kings 18: 31).

The very marvels of construction in the Great Pyramid, to which its admirers call attention, the smooth outer casing stones, the highly polished marble walls and ceilings of interior passages, the polished red granite of the so-called "King's Chamber" and its sarcophagus, therefore disqualify it as an altar acceptable to Jehovah. Jehovah's altar wants not the improving hand of man. Its simplicity, untouched by the gravers' art, is its beauty. It glorifies not the skill of man, but the wisdom, justice and mercy of the great Jehovah, who requires an offering for sin, Himself providing both the altar and the sacrifice.

The altars of the tabernacle and temple, which were not of earth or stone, but of fine workmanship, were the only exceptions to the rule. But all Israel were required to worship at these. There was no liberty to construct similar altars for themselves. Jeroboam's rebellion was immediately marked by setting up an opposition worship in Mount Ephraim. (1 Kings 12: 25-33.) But God does not want his people divided in their worship. In the name of Jesus all may come, and receive a blessing.

Sacrifice and Oblation

A further evidence that the Lord Jesus Christ is the "altar" referred to by Isaiah is found in Isa. 19: 21—
"And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it."

Here the teaching is plain that the "altar" described in vs. 19 is for use! That it is an altar to the Lord upon which acceptable sacrifices were to be offered in "that day"! and that by the Egyptians! Will any supporter of the Great Pyramid theory tell us why such a rivalry should be instituted between our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom alone we are told we may approach God, and the Great Pyramid? If the Jewish altars were thrown down, and the Jewish temple destroyed, because Jesus came as the true means of access to God, would God use another stone building, which has stood for centuries as a monument of a heathen king, and of the ancient worship of the dead, and so divert attention from the blood and sacrifice of His own Son?

The prophecy proceeds to state that in connection with the offering of sacrifice by the Egyptians—

"They shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it."—Isa. 19: 21.

It is asked, What sort of "vows" are these? In reply, it is suggested, that as the "sacrifice and oblation" are fulfilled in the Christian's experience by coming to God through Christ, so also the "vows," which under the Jewish arrangement consisted of voluntary offerings of animals or pigeons. Any voluntary offering to God, of praise or thanksgiving, or of service, is

to the Christian the antitype of the voluntary offerings of the Jews. The book of Isaiah, having been written to Jews familiar with the Jewish ceremonies, the above terms expressed to their minds the true worship by the Egyptians of the one true God—Jehovah. The sending of the Gospel to the Gentiles, that they might worship the God of the Hebrews in sincerity and truth, is also shown in other prophecies—

"For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My name, and a pure offering; for My name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord."—Mal. 1: 11.

"Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon Mine altar; for Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people."—Isa. 56: 7.

It remained for the New Testament to make clear to them, as well as to us from the Gentiles, the manner in which these details of worship should be fulfilled.

Facts versus Theories

In the "Advocate" of Sept., p. 82, quotations were given from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and from Flinders Petrie's *History of Egypt*, describing the Great Pyramid. Special attention was directed by large type to the fact that the name of King Khufu, or Cheops, is "FOUND REPEATEDLY WRITTEN IN RED PAINT, AMONG THE QUARRY MARKS, ON THE BLOCKS OF MASONRY ABOVE THE KING'S CHAMBER." Is it not surprising that notwithstanding this indisputable evidence of the origin of the Great Pyramid, some are found to repeat the statement that there are absolutely no marks or other indications as to who built it, and that therefore God must have authorized its construction by some of His own people? Why should the veracity of Gen. Howard Vyse, who discovered these quarry marks, etc., be questioned? or the faithfulness of Flinders Petrie as an Egyptologist and historian?

The following items, recently appearing in the Press, assist us better to understand the religion of the Egyptians and the causes which led to the embalming of the dead and their deposit in rock tombs; the pyramids being elaborate, artificial tombs for the reception of the bodies of the Kings.

"An important papyrus has been presented to the British Museum; namely, a magnificent copy of the Theban edition of

the Book of the Dead, together with invocations, addresses and hymns to Am en Ra. The Papyrus is the oldest in the world, with the exception of the famous Harris papyrus in the British Museum. This Ritual of the Dead describes the trial of the soul after it leaves the body; i.e., at death, to see whether it is worthy of reward or punishment."

The Oldest Mummy

"Although the embalmer's art was practised in ancient Egypt perhaps as early as 3000 B.C., the earliest known mummy until recently dated only from about 1580 B.C. Now, however, there has been placed in the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, in London, a mummy of the period of Snefra, found by Flinders Petrie in 1891 and dating back as far as 2700 B.C.—a jump backward of 1100 years. In an address before the Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow, Prof. Elliott Smith discusses this find, and gives, incidentally, an interesting sketch of mummification in Egypt. We quote an abstract printed in *The British Medical Journal* (London, June 4). Says this paper:—

"To appreciate the motives which impelled the ancient Egyptians to invent the art of embalming, it is necessary to throw our minds back nearly sixty centuries. . . . Then Egyptians were in the habit of burying their dead in shallow holes scraped in the soil immediately beyond the limits of the narrow strip of cultivated land. As the result of placing the body in hot dry sand, it frequently happened that, instead of undergoing a process of decay, it became desiccated and preserved in an incorrupted form for an indefinite time. The burial of valuable and useful objects with the dead naturally led to grave-robbing, which was already common in the earliest known prehistoric times in Egypt. This plundering of graves must have taught the people at large that the forces of nature were often sufficient to preserve a dead body. In this way it became a part of the religion of the Egyptians to regard the preservation of the body as the condition of the attainment of immortality. . . .

"The early Egyptians learned that the body when placed in a coffin or buried in a rock tomb usually underwent decomposition. It was a wide-spread belief that the stone "ate the flesh"—hence the word *sarcophagus*. Artificial mummification, therefore, had its origin in an attempt to deprive the grave of its victory!"

"If this hypothesis is correct, evidence of embalming would naturally be found soon after the invention of rock tombs. But Professor Smith found in the Cairo Museum no authentic mummy earlier than about 1580 B.C. There was thus a gap of eighteen centuries between the time when, on his hypothesis, the earliest attempts at embalming were made, and the most ancient actual mummy in the Cairo Museum. Mummies at the Sakkara and Lisht Pyramids were much earlier, but were so fragile that it was not possible to move them without reduce them to bones and powder.

"The mummy in the Royal College of Surgeons is therefore more than eleven centuries older than any other actual mummy; that is to say, not mere bones, hitherto found."—*Literary Digest*.

R. B. H.

Adversaries and the Adversary

WHEN an animal is heard prowling about a camp at night, it is not always possible to tell what sort of an animal it is. But the next morning, when the search party goes out, they are soon able to name the beast, because of the nature of the damage done and the tracks left behind. On other occasions a glimpse of the enemy may be obtained, or his unearthly roar as he pounces upon his prey may be heard. But whether the enemy be seen and heard, or not, the campers light the fires and make all secure before retiring, lest one or another of the numerous foes of the night come upon them unawares. It would be foolish to do otherwise, would it not? The campers who pooh pooh the possibility of danger, and say they don't be-

lieve there are any wild beasts, and if there are, they will not attack them, usually suffer for their folly.

The human race has to contend with many adversaries; there are many adverse influences at work to accomplish its undoing. There is to begin with the curse of death under which our race has laboured since the penalty was pronounced in Eden. That is a punishment, God inflicted, to which all must submit as gracefully as may be, until they hear of the deliverance which the Lord Jesus Christ offers to them on certain conditions. Death is called in Scripture an "enemy"—"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (1 Cor. 15: 26.) The sickness, pain, disease, etc., incidental to death, we may defend ourselves against

to a limited extent, for they are all recognised as enemies of our physical bodies; and to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Yet the extent to which many persons still neglect the simplest precautions, and allow themselves to become the prey of scourges of various kinds is most astonishing. Instead of fortifying themselves against disease, they let down the barriers, and make a full surrender. Striking examples of the consequences of this attitude of mind are before us in the epidemic of plague in the far east, and the prevalence for centuries of the great white plague of civilisation.

Human Adversaries

Other adversaries with which mankind have to contend are in human form. "Man's inhumanity to man" has long been remarked on. "The struggle for existence" means wresting a living, not only from nature and from a soulless social order, but from fellow men, as when one hundred unemployed answer an advertisement for twenty-five. To the innocent child making its first acquaintance with the world, society is full of these human adversaries, lying in wait to entrap the unwary feet, crushing out of it, if possible, its love of the pure and good and beautiful, and vitiating the very air it breathes. (Prov. 1: 10-19; 2: 12; 4: 14-17, etc.) Each step of life is in many cases made a weariness by reason of the unkindness and provoking taunts of those who either pose as friends, or outwardly acknowledge their enmity. (Matt. 5: 11; 2 Tim. 3: 11-13.) All who espouse an unpopular cause, or seek to live up to their principles as Christians, have additional afflictions to endure, from those who seek to destroy their reputations and undermine their influence. (2 Tim. 4: 14, 15; 2 Cor. 10: 10.) Of such sufferers were the holy prophets and apostles, and our blessed Lord Himself, their chief earthly adversaries being the professed people of God, of whom He said, "Ye seek to kill me because my word hath no place in you." (John 8: 37.) Friends dull of comprehension, like Peter, also often become adversaries through innocent opposition to the will of God concerning another. (Matt. 16: 21-23.) The members of a Christian's own household may be his (or her) bitterest foes.—Matt. 10: 36.

Combinations of Adversaries

Human adversaries acting singly are difficult to contend with; much more so are individuals combined together; as, in the commercial world, trusts, labour unions, etc., in the religious world, huge organisations controlling large establishments, and having thousands of arms exerting world-wide influence against opposing individuals or systems. It is of one of these huge religious machines that we read—

"In her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."—Rev. 18: 24.

A human adversary, singly or in combination, may oppose or persecute with physical violence, as in the Inquisition; or it may do so by more refined methods, sometimes called "diplomatic," but none the less effective in injuring either the individual or the cause he represents. The methods of the Jesuits are followed by other societies as well as the one bearing that name. More people are led into wrong-doing, and more Christians into error, by sophistry than by any other means. In the list of adversaries to God's people (and to people generally) it is necessary therefore to include all those ideas which are promulgated by individuals

or systems, and which mislead the unwary. Everyone who perpetuates sophistical or evil ideas constitutes himself—whether willingly or unwillingly—an adversary of the truthful and the good. The prophet cried, "Woe unto them," who put light for darkness and darkness for light.—Isa. 5: 20-23.

Another adversary, which all humankind has to battle with, is Self. Every man inherits evil as well as good traits of character, and it is a question as to which will triumph over the other. After becoming a Christian, the warfare is between the flesh and the Spirit, and through the power of the Spirit the flesh is crucified, with its affections and desires. (Gal. 5: 13-26.) Should the flesh (that is, the old, sinful and selfish disposition natural to fallen human nature) triumph over the Spirit, the end is destruction.—Rom. 8: 4-8.

Invisible Foes

Most of these adversaries can be seen, but their operations are often invisible to the subject of attack. Death is not less an enemy, and not less real, because it comes upon a man unawares, and strikes him down suddenly in the midst of an active life; nor is it less an enemy, or less real, when the patient is struck down with a mysterious disease, which consumes his vitals while leaving him outwardly unscathed. Human enemies are none the less real and tangible when they use secret, rather than open, methods of doing injury. Many a reputation has been blasted by a report which it was difficult to trace, but which everyone recognises must have originated with some human being. They see the effects, and know there must be an adequate cause. To admit the effect, and to deny that there is any cause, is to place oneself outside the realm of reason. On the other hand, there are evil effects observable in the world as far beyond human powers as is speech beyond the ability of the domestic animal. To attribute to human beings phenomena which they are constitutionally unable to produce is as reasonable as to accuse the household dog of revealing family secrets. Both Scripture and experience prove that among the adversaries with which men have to contend there are *invisible spiritual powers*, unseen themselves, but manifested by the nature of their works. Moreover, Scripture gives us to understand that there is one chief evil spirit called Satan, or the Satan.

To show from the Scriptures that such beings exist, and that men should be on guard against them, is the present aim. Let us first consider those Scriptures which show the existence of spirit beings of a higher order than men, irrespective of their character as good or evil angels.

Heaven not Empty

God who made the earth and the heaven, and all that in them is, and who made of one blood all the nations that dwell upon the earth, is declared by His works as well as by His Word, to be immeasurably superior to man. (Isa. 42: 5; 40: 12-31; Job. 38 and 39.) The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. (Psa. 19: 1.) Our Lord testifies that the Heavenly Father is a spirit (John 4: 24), and other Scriptures state that His glory is such that no man can see His face, and live. (Exod. 33: 20.) Man is the highest of His creation inhabiting the earth, which is figuratively called his "footstool"; and would God leave heaven, the place of His "throne," empty? (Isa. 66: 1.) Fancy the great Creator in solitary

state; the vast spaces of heaven as silent as death, not a servant or retainer to do His bidding, not a living being to behold His glory, or to rejoice in the light of His countenance? Strange are the limitations put upon Him by those who admit that He has given to man, and even to the lower animals, the power of perpetuating their kind, while they deny to Him the ability or the will to perpetuate His own kind; who admit that flesh may reproduce flesh, and so fill the earth, but deny that God, the great Creator and Source of life, can fill heaven. We say that purely human conceptions of the fitness of things revolt against the thought of an empty heaven; much more so those conceptions based upon the frequent references in the Scriptures to the "thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" of the angelic hosts.—Rev. 5: 11; Luke 2: 13; Matt. 26: 53.)

Let us not exalt man above his rightful condition, by discrediting angels, but let us freely admit that he was made "a little lower than the angels"; consequently that angels do exist, and that they occupy a higher position in the Universe than do men.—Psa. 8: 5; Heb. 2: 7-9.

The Meaning of "Angel"

In the Old Testament the word "angel" is of frequent occurrence. In all but three instances it is from the Hebrew word meaning "messenger," and is applied to either human or spirit beings, and even inanimate objects. In 2 Chron. 35: 21; Isa. 3: 4; 33: 7; Ezek. 17: 15, it is rendered "ambassadors," obviously referring to human messengers. The word is rendered "messenger" in such passages as 1 Ki. 19: 2; 2 Ki. 5: 10, where it is also obvious that human messengers are meant. John the Baptist was the "angel" or messenger sent to prepare the way before the Lord.—Mal. 3: 1; Matt. 11: 10.

But in those numerous passages, where the "angel of the Lord" is spoken of, the context usually shows that a heavenly messenger or angel is referred to. The angel which Balaam could not see, but which the ass saw standing in the path, was undoubtedly a spirit messenger, being invisible to Balaam until his eyes were "opened." (Num. 22: 22-35.) The angel which appeared unto Manoah and his wife could have been none other than a heavenly messenger, for he did "wondrously," as no human being could have done, disappearing finally in the flames of the altar. (Judges 13: 1-23.) It was these very demonstrations that convinced Manoah that the messenger was "an angel of the Lord," and not a man like himself.—Verse 21.

Daniel's description of the "messenger" (the Chaldee word for "angel" being similar to the Hebrew) sent in response to his prayers to God for enlightenment is clear evidence of the existence of heavenly or spirit beings, superior to man, who were used by God in His communications with men. The angel had evidently not appeared to the "prince of the kingdom of Persia" in the same glorious manner in which he appeared to Daniel, else that prince could hardly have withstood him one and twenty days.—Dan. 10: 10-13, 20.

There appear to be at least two grades among the heavenly messengers, as described by Daniel. Of the lower order was Gabriel, who appeared to Daniel (Dan. 8: 16; 9: 21-23), and who subsequently appeared to Zacharias, and who also conveyed to Mary the message

concerning herself as the one from whom the Messiah should be born. (Luke 1: 19.) Gabriel's rank must have been high, to be honoured as the bearer of these important messages; but he acknowledges Michael as superior to himself. He described Michael as "one of the chief princes" (Dan. 10: 13), and as particularly the prince of Daniel and his people (Dan. 10: 21; 12: 1), thus identifying him with "the Angel of His Presence," who guided Israel through the wilderness. (Isa. 63: 9.) Michael is called the "archangel" (that is, chief messenger), and by many Christians is considered to have been our Lord Jesus in His pre-human estate—the Word of God. (Jude 9; John 1: 1-3.) It would be interesting to know the names of the other "chief princes" mentioned by the angel Gabriel.

"Angels," in Psa. 8: 5, is from *elohim*, signifying "gods," a term applied in the Old Testament to Judges, to Moses, etc., as well as to the Supreme Being. (Exod. 22: 8; 7: 1; 2: 23, 24.) Any persons of might or authority were properly called "gods." The sense of the term in Psa. 8: 5 is determined by the context, which represents man in his perfect estate in Eden, made in the image of God, given dominion over all the beasts, fish and fowl. Since therefore Adam was the highest being on the earth, those other beings, with which in comparison he was "lower," must have an estate and powers superior to Adam's, and above the earth; that is, in heaven. The heavenly angels or messengers frequently referred to in the Scriptures were truly "gods" or mighty ones, and they meet all the requirements of this Psalm. That this is so is shown by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who uses the Greek word for angel (*aggelos*) in his quotation from this Psalm. He shows that as man was originally made a little lower than the angels, so our Lord Jesus when he became a man for the suffering of death (Heb. 2: 6-9), was likewise made "a little lower than the angels." The existence of spirit beings higher than men is thus acknowledged in both the Old and the New Testaments; and the appellations, "angels," and "gods," are properly applied to them.

After the manner of Hebrew poetry, the Psalm refers to man's estate by two inter-explanatory clauses—

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

What is man, considered as a race, or man, considered as individuals, that God should interest Himself in their welfare?

There can be no question that many other references to "angels" in the New Testament also refer to spirit beings, even granting that the Greek term *aggelos*, like the Hebrew *mal'ak*, means "messenger," and is applicable to other than heavenly messengers. The fact that "winds" and "flames" (Heb. 1: 7, R.V.) are described as sometimes the messengers of God, because they perform His bidding, does not prevent the recognition of the fact that human beings are sometimes called angels or messengers. Neither should either of these facts blind the student to the third fact, the existence of animate, intelligent, heavenly messengers.

The Duties of Angels

The precise duties of these heavenly angels are not told us; they are referred to in the Scriptures generally as the bearers of messages from God to men. Several instances in the Old Testament have already been cited.

In the New Testament they are referred to in the same capacity. Said Gabriel to Zacharias—

"I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings."—Luke 1: 19.

The sending of the angel Gabriel to Mary, the announcement to the shepherds on the plain, the appearance of the angel to strengthen our Lord in the garden, the presence of the two angels in the tomb where the body of Jesus had lain, the deliverance of "Peter and the Apostles" from prison, and on another occasion of Peter alone, by "an angel of the Lord," are all given as historical facts, no more to be questioned than other statements of the inspired Word. (Luke 1: 26; 2: 8-15; 22: 43; John 20: 12; Acts 5: 19; 12: 4-11.) In the case of Peter, it is distinctly said that he did not at first realise the facts of the case, thinking he was only seeing a vision; but finally, when he found his freedom an undeniable fact, he acknowledged that beyond a doubt he had been set free by an angel sent by the Lord for that purpose. (Acts 12: 11.) In order to make it clear that the deliverance was miraculous, the narrator first makes it plain that no human being could have accomplished it, by stating that Peter was guarded by "four quaternions of soldiers"; i.e., two soldiers attached to the person of the prisoner, and two to keep watch outside the cell door.—Acts 12: 4.

But these heavenly messengers do more than merely carry messages to men; they have authority in negotiation, as when Abraham argued for the preservation of Sodom (Gen. 18: 23-33); they have power as God's representatives to cause blindness and other calamities (Gen. 19: 11), as well as to accomplish practical good, as in the case of the deliverance of Peter. But this is not all their interest in mankind.

We read:—

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."—Psa. 34: 7.

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"—Heb. 1: 14.

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth TO DO SERVICE for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?"—R.V.

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."—Matt. 18: 10.

It is not given to us now to see the angels encamped about us, as they were shown to Elisha's dismayed servant (2 Ki. 6: 13-17), nor can we say with the same assurance as did our Lord, that twelve legions of angels are ready to our call (Matt. 26: 53), but we can say, as did Elisha, referring to the angels—

"Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be against us."—2 Ki. 6: 16.

Whatever service is required on behalf of those who are the Lord's "little ones," who are the "heirs of salvation," the heavenly messengers are ready to perform—whether to save from physical injury, or from moral or spiritual contamination, or from the machinations of evil angels or spirits, or from that great adversary of our souls, Satan himself. Let this knowledge give comfort to all the Lord's suffering people at all times!

And let not any human or other enemy suppose that he can injure with impunity one of the Lord's little ones; because their guardian angels have ready access to the throne of God, and the necessary protection will at once be given, and punishment meted out to the

(To be continued.)

offender. Of whom, or of what, shall they then be afraid?

But are there wicked spirit-angels as well as good ones? And are they intent on doing injury to God's people? Yes, as certain as that there are good angels intent on protecting and helping them. The evidence of their existence is based, as in the case of the good angels, upon Scripture statements and upon the nature of the phenomena attributed to them, which are found to be beyond human powers.

Spirit—Personal and Impersonal

The words "spirit" (Gr. *pneuma*) and spirits" occur more than 250 times, and 32 times, respectively, in the New Testament. The root verb from which *pneuma* is derived means, "to breathe hard; i.e., breeze," and is translated to blow. The term *pneuma* is properly applied to any unseen influence, animate or inanimate. "God is a Spirit," that is, an unseen, mighty power, yet a personal being, Whose works are manifest. The spirit of God and of Christ is impersonal, and should be in believers (Rom. 8: 9); that is, the influence of God and of our Lord Jesus, His life and example, should animate the faithful. But our Lord Jesus personally is now a glorious spirit being, the exact impress of the Father's substance. (Heb. 1: 3; 1 Pet. 3: 18.) The Holy Spirit is unseen, except in its effects, such as at Pentecost, or in the lives of God's people. (Acts 2: 4; Gal. 5: 22.) The Holy Spirit "quickens" the believer (Rom. 8: 11) to active service. "The spirit indeed is willing" (Matt. 26: 41), referred to the mind and heart, or the intention, of the disciples. We also read of the spirit of the world (1 Cor. 2: 12), the "spirit of truth" and the "spirit of error" (1 John 4: 6); and in Jas. 2: 26, "the body without the spirit is dead," the meaning evidently is that a body without breath ceases to exist.

We have therefore to decide, in considering all passages in which an evil spirit or a spirit of evil is referred to, whether a living, personal spirit is meant, or merely an impersonal influence. We readily see that the "spirit of error" is impersonal, the antithesis of the "spirit of truth," also impersonal. But as the impersonality of the "spirit of truth" does not disprove a personal God and Christ, good spirits or spirit-beings, from whom the good influence proceeds; neither should the impersonality of the "spirit of error" be considered as disproving the existence of an evil spirit being or beings, should such be found, on investigation, to be spoken of in God's Word. Rather their existence should be admitted, and their evil influence guarded against. Let us take first a few

Facts from Our Lord's Ministry

There is in Mark's Gospel an account which may be considered representative. Immediately after the calling of Simon and Andrew, and James and John, they went to Capernaum, and Jesus entered into the synagogue and taught. (Mark 1: 14-22.) The people were astonished at His doctrine, but they were more astonished when He commanded an "unclean spirit" to come out of a man. Not only did He preach with authority, but He made even the evil "spirit" to obey Him. Thereupon His fame spread "throughout all the region round about Galilee," and at even they brought unto him "all that were diseased, and them that were possessed of devils." (Verse 32.) In the interval He healed Simon's wife's mother, who lay sick of a fever.

Memorial Supper, 1911

According to the Jewish style, the first day of Nisan will correspond this year with March 30, beginning at sunset, March 29. The fifteenth day of Nisan will, therefore, fall on Thursday, April 13, beginning at sunset of April 12. The anniversary of the "night in which he was betrayed," and therefore the time for the observance of the Memorial Supper, this year, will be Wednesday, April 12, after sunset. It is recommended that the friends everywhere observe the supper at this time. If you can meet with others for the purpose, by all means do so; but if denied the privilege of fellowship with others on this solemn occasion, by no means should you forego the privilege of "doing this"—

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LAMB.

Work while it is called Day

I am quite willing to join in prayer to God that more labourers might be sent into His great harvest field, but I feel that my action should go in the same direction as my prayers. Hence I ask you to send me a small case of "Bible Talks," "Everlasting Punishment," in cloth and paper bindings, and "The Dead." I shall do my best to sell these for the glory of God. Kindly let me have full particulars as to the best method of approaching the people, and ask all friends to pray that God may give me grace to Go Forward.

Your fellow traveller,

—, South Australia.

Crowded out of last issue

In presenting the financial statement for the final quarter of 1910, one feels that a word of gratitude is due to those in this country, and elsewhere, who have stood by us "through good and ill report." The Lord Himself will surely reward all such by showing them more of His favour, and causing them to have a yet clearer appreciation of His plan and purposes.

It is hoped that many more during the present year may see their way clear to co-operate with us in the proclamation of the glad message of the kingdom. This can be done in a number of ways, to suit the ability of all the Lord's people.

(1.) All of us can pray that the Lord will use us in His service, and particularly in telling out the good news of the kingdom.

(2.) Most of us can help forward the Lord's cause by scattering the literature far and wide, according to our opportunities.

(3.) Some of us can assist in the work financially, as the Lord shall prosper us.

Happy indeed are we, if we can co-operate in all these ways, and others that may be suggested to us. Let us never forget that we are not only "working together" with each other, but with God (1 Cor. 3: 9), and with His Son Jesus Christ.—2 Cor. 6: 1.

With much love in the Lord,

Yours in His Grace,

A. C. BULL.

Subscriptions Now Due

THIS issue begins Vol. 3 of the "Advocate" and at the same time nearly all subscriptions are due for new volume. Friends are hereby reminded that the good of the cause we all have at heart requires that subscriptions be sent in promptly to the head office or branches, whichever may be most convenient for you. Our desire is that everyone interested in this paper should have it regularly, and we shall be pleased to hear from you at least once a year, so that we may be assured of your continued interest, and that we have your address correct on our list. Subscriptions being due, now is the best time to attend to this matter, and we shall be greatly obliged by the kindness of friends in responding promptly. The price is 2/6 per year in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) per year elsewhere.

The Cheerful Givers

"The God of Heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build." "Through God we shall do valiantly."—Neh. 2: 20; Psa. 60: 12.

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully; every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9: 6, 7.

"Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."—1 Cor. 16: 2.

Voluntary Donations, as under, have been received since our last report for the spread of the Good Tidings concerning the Grace of God in Jesus, our Mediator and Intercessor under the terms of the New Covenant.

The letter "G" after a donation number indicates that the donation is sent in harmony with the plan mentioned in the "Go Forward" letter enclosed with the November "Advocate." It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way.

No. Previously reported ... £143 15 0 = £1 = \$4.86 = \$698.60

112G	...	£0	5	0
113G	...	0	8	11
114	...	0	1	3
115	...	1	2	6
116	...	0	7	0
117G	...	0	11	0
118G	...	0	5	0
119	...	0	5	0
120G	...	0	5	0
121G	...	0	5	0
122G	...	0	6	6
123G	...	0	5	0
124	...	0	10	0
125G	...	0	5	0
126G	...	0	9	0
127G	...	0	5	0
128G	...	0	5	0
129	...	1	0	0
130	...	0	10	0

Total since last report ... 11 2 = 36.71

Total for 9 months ... £151 6 2 = \$735.31

The "Advocate" 7000 Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report. Let the good work continue! The cost of printing and posting 7000 "Advocates" is about £40 (\$200) per month.

Previously reported ... £100 0 0 = \$515.16

39	...	£0	3	6
40G	...	6	0	0
41	...	0	2	6

Total for 1 month ... 6 6 0 = 30.61

Total for 9 months ... £112 6 0 = \$545.77

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E. C. Henningses, Editor

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No. 2

The Resurrection of Jesus

A CORRESPONDENT mentions John 2: 19 as requiring in his opinion that the fleshly body of Jesus be raised from death. This friend sees that our Saviour did not raise Himself from the grave, but that He was raised by the power of the Father, as expressed in many passages of the New Testament. But he thinks that it may be understood that the Father acted for Jesus, and that the "temple" that was to be raised up again was the body of flesh that was crucified and was laid in Joseph's new tomb.

In the "Advocate" for June, 1910, an explanation of John 2: 19 was suggested, which sought to show that the "temple" was in question, as that which was to be destroyed and raised again the third day. The Pharisees misunderstood the Saviour to mean the temple of stone, that had been forty and six years in building, and in which God had been worshipped by His own appointment. But the Saviour showed them that it was not the worship conducted in the temple of stone that was to be destroyed and raised up again. That form of worship was shortly to be destroyed (Matt. 24: 2), and it would never be raised again.

Jesus had come to proclaim the new and henceforth the only acceptable method of Divine worship. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me," was the new way. If He were dead, this way of approach to God must be valueless, for He must live in order to be our Mediator, High Priest, and Advocate (John 14: 6; Rom. 4: 25; Heb. 7: 16, 25, 28; 8: 6; 1 John 8: 10; 2: 1, 2.) While He was dead, no one could come unto God through Him, nor could He intercede for any. When He was raised from death, the way was open, and He could rear up again the destroyed new "temple" of divine worship through Himself. This He did. The new temple, or mode of divine worship, which was already present when Jesus spoke His wonderful words to the woman at the well (John 4: 21-23), is now permanently established.

It is highly important to note that in John 2: 19 it is not a question of a body being destroyed and raised up again. The statement was, "Destroy this temple."

The Pharisees, of course, thought that the stone temple was meant, it being the only place of divine worship they knew of. The disciples doubtless thought the same at the time the words were spoken. But after Jesus was raised from the dead by the power of the Father (Eph. 2: 20; Acts 5: 31), "for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins," the disciples believed the Scripture, and the word that Jesus had spoken, as they realised that the new method of forgiveness of sins (only temporarily interrupted by Jesus' death, and in reality established upon His death as the sacrifice for sins—Matt. 9: 2-6; Heb. 9: 26) was again raised up by the hand of its High Priest, made such according to the power of the endless life given Him by the Father.

The explanation of John 2: 19 suggested by our correspondent seems very inadequate to meet the requirements of other Scriptures. He suggests that our Saviour was made alive flesh. But the Scriptures clearly state that He was put to death flesh and made alive spirit. (1 Peter 3: 18.) The Scriptures also state that our Saviour is now the exact impress of the Father's substance (Heb. 1: 3, R.V. mar.), which is not flesh at all, but spirit. (John 4: 24.) The two sorts of substance, flesh and spirit, are quite separate and distinct. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3: 6.) Since, therefore, our Lord was made alive spirit, as the Scriptures teach, He was not made alive flesh, as our correspondent proposes.

Moreover, the Scriptures speak of "the days of His flesh," and describe those days as times of strong crying and tears, of trial and testing, and of being made perfect through suffering. (Heb. 5: 7, 8.) Why should the Scriptures thus distinguish "the days of His flesh," if He is still flesh?

The explanation of John 2: 19 presented in the "Advocate," June, 1910, page 41, appeals to us as being the most satisfactory one that has come under our notice. (See also "Advocate," January, 1911, page 149.)

Whoever receives this paper, not having ordered it, is requested to accept and read it, and to consider it an invitation to become a regular reader. Subscriptions may begin with any number.

Christ the Heir of David

Another friend suggests that our Saviour's body of flesh must have been raised from death, or else Jesus could not be the heir of David (Luke 1: 32), it being the flesh that associated Him with the line of David. To this we reply:—

The "throne" which David occupied was not an article of furniture; neither was it David's personal property. It was the "throne of the Lord" that David sat upon. (1 Chron. 29: 23.) Moreover, this throne is not in the gift of David, but "the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David." (Luke 1: 32.) Our Saviour's association with the line of David according to the flesh was accomplished by His birth of Mary, and that association was, of necessity, terminated by His death. Most emphatically was this association terminated at the resurrection of Jesus, because David was not in any sense the ancestor or father of the risen Jesus, and in the very nature of the case he could not have been. GOD raised Jesus from the dead; as it is written, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."—Acts 13: 33.

Moreover, the relation between Jesus and David, His one-time father, is quite reversed, because, when the voice of Jesus shall command life from the dead, Jesus will be David's father, and all they who were the fathers or ancestors of Jesus shall in the resurrection be His children. (John 5: 28; Psalms 45: 16.) David's Son is David's Lord (Psalm 110: 1; Matt. 22: 41-46); and He who is the offspring is also the Root of David.—Isa. 11: 1, 10; Rev. 22: 16.

Another emphatic declaration bearing on this point is:—

"Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more."—2 Cor. 5: 16.

Whether the words "after the flesh" be understood to refer to the fleshly lineage or to the fleshly substance of Christ, or to both, it is clear that although Christ may at one period have been known "after the flesh," He is not now to be known according to the conditions implied by those words. The former conditions have passed away; therefore every one who has come into Christ is said to be a new creature—the workmanship of God.—2 Cor. 5: 17, 18; Eph. 2: 10.

All these considerations show that the prophecies concerning our Lord's fleshly lineage were fulfilled in the circumstances of His birth, and that the events associated therewith, and with "the days of His flesh," mark Him as the descendant of David who was to inherit "the sure mercies of David." But in His resurrection, He is not the Son of David, inasmuch as David did not raise Him from the dead. In "the days of His flesh," He was of the seed of David; but in His resurrection He is "declared to be the Son of God with power." (Rom. 1: 3, 4.) Yet this latter fact does not militate against the other fact that He was of the line of David, and was therefore in the position of being the heir of the Davidic promises. It is also evident that our Saviour does not need to be a fleshly being now in order to be David's heir. Sitting in the promised throne of the Lord (Rev. 3: 21), He is not of David's substance, but is the "exact impress of the Father's substance."—Heb. 1: 3. R.V. margin.

Christ the Fruit of David's Loins

"The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; He will not turn from it: of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne."—Psalm 132: 11.

Another friend asks whether the above promise

would not require the resurrection of Jesus in the flesh, because it must have been flesh that was the fruit of David's loins. To this we should answer, No.

The fulfilment of this promise to David began in the succession of Solomon to the throne of the Lord upon which David had sat. (1 Chron. 29: 23; 1 Kings 8: 25; 2 Chron. 6: 16.) The completion of the fulfilment was in the resurrection of Christ from Hades to the Father's throne. This is shown in the following words—

"Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left in Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption."—Acts 2: 30, 31, R.V.

It has already been seen that death caused the actual association of Christ with David to cease, because David did not give Christ life from the dead. David could not have raised Jesus from the corruption of death, but God did raise him "up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption" (Acts 13: 34), and in so doing God gave to Jesus "the sure mercies of David." It was "in the days of His flesh" (Heb. 5: 7), that Christ was actually and literally the fruit of David's loins, having derived His being as a man in some sense from David through Mary; but in His resurrection, and in giving Him life from the dead, David had no part. Moreover, He who was put to death flesh was made alive spirit, the exact impress of the Father's substance, a spiritual body (1 Peter 3: 18; Heb. 1: 3, R.V. margin), "a life-giving spirit." (1 Cor. 15: 45, R.V.) This being so, it is not possible that Jesus in His resurrection should be actually and literally the fruit of David's loins, for "a life-giving spirit" could not have an earthly being for an ancestor. Nevertheless, throughout the change of substance from flesh to spirit, the PERSONALITY AND IDENTITY of Jesus were the same. It is from this standpoint that He still speaks of Himself as "the offspring of David," and is spoken of as the "fruit of David's loins."

"Nor Did His Flesh see Corruption"

In Acts 2: 34 it is stated that Jesus was raised from the dead "now no more to return to corruption," having been there; while in Acts 2: 37 it is stated that "he whom God raised up saw no corruption." The word translated corruption is the same in both cases. The apparent discrepancy between these two statements is solvable by regarding "corruption" in Acts 2: 34 as the death state generally, whereas the meaning of "corruption" in v. 37 is actual decay, this being evident from the contrast instituted between David, who was "laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption," and Him whom God raised up, who "saw no corruption."

The fact that the body of the Man Christ Jesus "saw no corruption" has been interpreted by nearly all Christians as an intimation that He was made alive flesh, contrary to the Scriptures already above referred to. Some have supposed a transmutation of the fleshly substance into spirit substance, and that the body of Jesus after His resurrection is the flesh body thus transmuted. But if we knew as much as this about the resurrection body of Jesus, should we not be far ahead of the inspired Apostle? He said—

"Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him: for we shall see him even as he is."—1 John 3: 2, R.V.

Will the alchemists claim that what was not made manifest to the beloved John is now made manifest to them? Such would apparently be their thought, if one might judge from the confidence with which they state themselves. As a matter of fact, their ideas are wholly speculative, and they are totally without foundation in the Scripture. The Bible says nothing about alchemy in connection with our Lord's resurrection, therefore we need not.

It has even been intimated—and the accusation seems to fall very readily from the lips of those who make it—that if the bodies shown by Jesus to the disciples (Luke 24: 6-43), and to Thomas (John 20: 26-29), were not the veritable body that hung on the cross and was laid in Joseph's tomb, and if those bodies were not part of His own resurrected being, then our Lord was perpetrating a fraud. It has also been asserted that the intention of our risen Lord in the manifestation recorded in Luke 24: 36-43 was to show that He was not a spirit; and this assertion is made, be it noted, in point blank contradiction of the statement that "the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit!"—1 Cor. 15: 45, 47.

Attentive reading of Luke 24: 36-43, particularly verses 37, 38, shows that the Lord's purpose was to comfort the disciples, who were filled with terror by the supposition that they had seen a spirit being. He desired them to realise that what they had seen was not spirit, but flesh. He asserts that a spirit hath not flesh and bones as they saw Him *having* (R.V.), this agreeing exactly with the statement to Nicodemus that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit" (John 3: 6), and emphasising that flesh and spirit substances are quite separate and distinct. It being clearly stated that our risen Lord is a *spirit*, the exact impress of the *substance* of God the Father, who is a spirit (1 Cor. 15: 45; Heb. 1: 3; John 4: 24), it will be seen that the flesh and bones our risen Lord was having in the presence of the disciples were not His own spiritual body. Agreeable with all the statements of Scripture on this subject, and bearing in mind that the word translated "hath" and "having" in Luke 24: 39 (R.V.) is very variously used, it would seem that a proper paraphrase of the latter part of verse 39 would be—a spirit is not composed of flesh and bones as ye see in my possession. But it must not be forgotten that even if we do not know what a spirit body is, we do know something that it is not; namely, we know that a spirit is not flesh and bones. Whether in these manifestations the risen Lord used the body that was His "in the days of His flesh," or created another one each time, the fact still remains that the body was no part of the last Adam, the "life-giving Spirit," because a spirit is not composed of flesh and bones, such as He had in His possession. In order to bring conviction to the minds of the disciples, He said—"handle me and be convinced." (Luke 24: 39, Diaglott.) By every means He sought to show them that what they were seeing was not spirit substance, but flesh and bones, thus relieving them of their terror. The fact that the risen Lord used the assumed body to eat and talk no more proves the said body to have been His spiritual body than the same actions by angels in past times proved the bodies assumed by them to have been their own proper spiritual bodies.

As for the accusation of fraud which some seem so ready to bring against the risen Lord: let us consider the case of Paul. He claimed to have seen the risen Lord; yet He saw no wounds in hands and feet and side. Was he defrauded? Moreover, it would appear from Paul's further statement, which seems to agree very well with what has been seen in Luke 24: 36-43, that neither Paul nor any man has really seen our risen Lord's proper person, because He dwells in light unapproachable, "whom no man hath seen nor can see." (1 Tim. 6: 16.) Was the Lord perpetrating a fraud every time He showed Himself to the disciples after His resurrection in one form or another? Would it not be better for us to critically examine ourselves rather than the Lord?

The undoubted fact that our Lord's crucified flesh saw no corruption is far from being a proof that that body—either as flesh or by some transmutation—became our Lord's resurrection body. There are other ways by which that sacred body may have been kept from decaying. Since the Scripture does not say that the crucified body became our Lord's resurrection body, but rather the reverse; and since the Scripture does not warrant the idea of transmutation of flesh into spirit, the assertion that the crucified body *must* have become the resurrection body of Jesus is more than a little precipitate.

"My Flesh also Shall Rest in Hope"

The commonly accepted view of Psalm 16: 9 is that our Saviour's flesh rested in the grave in hope of its resurrection. There are two objections to this view, which make it untenable: (1) Our Saviour was "made alive spirit"—"a life-giving spirit"—not flesh. He was not to be in His resurrection a little lower than the angels, as even a perfect man must be, and as He Himself had been for the purpose of suffering death. (Psalm 8: 4-8; Heb. 2: 6-9.) In His resurrection He is made "much better than the angels" (Heb. 1: 3, 4), "far above all principality and power." (Eph. 1: 20-22; Phil. 2: 7-11.) 2. While dead, our Saviour could not exercise the faculty of hope, therefore could not be said to "rest in hope."—Ecc. 9: 4-6.

The true view of Psalm 16: 9 would seem to be that during his life on earth, on account of His devotion to the will of the Father, our Lord had the blessed assurance of the Father's favour, and full confidence in the Father's promises. In the hope which these promises inspired in Him, He was able to rest, notwithstanding the constant opposition and turmoil that attended His ministry. His heart was kept in perfect peace, because His mind was stayed on God. It was during His lifetime, therefore, that our Lord's flesh "rested in hope." That was when the hope could be exercised and the rest appreciated and enjoyed.

"Three Days and Three Nights"

"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."—Matt. 12: 40.

This Scripture is generally understood to refer to our Lord's death and resurrection, and many have been the questions raised concerning it in the endeavour to ascertain how our Saviour could have lain in the tomb seventy-two hours, if He was crucified on Friday and was raised again on Sunday, the first day of the week, or how, in the circumstances, He could have been dead even for parts of three days and three nights that could be named. In order to solve this difficulty, some

believe that Jesus was crucified on Thursday, and others—thinking that seventy-two hours must be accounted for—assert that Jesus must have been crucified on Wednesday.

But this "difficulty" is only apparent; it is not real. It vanishes at once, when it is considered that Jesus was not raised on the fourth day after His crucifixion, nor at the last moment completing seventy-two hours, but, on the *third* day, and, moreover, very early on the third day, before the women came with the spices; and they came before daylight had properly begun. (Luke 24: 1; Matt. 28: 1.) That He was to be raised on the *third* day is shown by many Scriptures, such as Matt. 16: 21; 17: 23; 27: 64; Luke 24: 7, 21, 46; Acts 10: 40; Cor. 15: 4, etc.

A beautiful parallel use of "third day" is found in Ex. 19: 10, 11, 14-16, in reading which it should be remembered that Moses' descent from the mountain (v. 14) to sanctify the people was the second descent in the one day (vss. 3, 7, 8, 10), and that it therefore occurred near the end of daylight hours—let us suppose, not earlier than the middle of the afternoon.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day. . . . And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people: . . . and it came to pass on the *third day in the morning*, that there were thunders and lightnings," etc.

The day on which Moses descended from the mount was day one, though there were but two or three hours of it remaining when he issued the command to the people; the next day, complete, was day two, and the manifestation of God's glory came on day three "in the

morning," while the day was still young. So our Saviour died near the close of day one, remained dead the whole of day two, and was raised by the power of the Father "in the morning" of day three.

The fact is that "three days and three nights" is an idiomatic expression, which neither requires seventy-two hours nor even each of three specific days and three specific nights (in whole or in part) to be accounted for.

That three days was quite usually understood among the Jews to expire at any time on the third day after a statement or an event, the day of the statement or event being the first day of the three, no matter at what hour of the first day the event may have occurred, may be seen from Gen. 42: 17, 18; 1 Kings 12: 5, 12; 2 Chron. 10: 5, 12; Esther 4: 16; 5: 1; Matt. 27: 63, 64. The references in Esther, Matthew and Chronicles are particularly explicit.

Since our Saviour was raised on Sunday, the first day of the week, it follows that Sunday was the "third day" so often referred to in the New Testament. If Sunday was the third day, Saturday was the second day, and Friday was the first of the three days. Thus were the three days and nights fulfilled, quite agreeably to other Scriptural uses of similar expressions, the hour in the first day when our Lord died and the hour in the third day when He was raised not entering into the calculation. Each of the three days was touched by the time during which our Lord lay dead, though that were but thirty-nine hours or less, from three o'clock Friday afternoon until before dawn on Sunday morning.

How Could Jesus Justly Be Raised from Death If He Gave His Life a Ransom for All?

THE IMPORTANCE of this question is seen, in that it penetrates to the very centre of the divine purpose for the redemption and blessing of our race, the foundation of all blessings, the ransom sacrifice of the Redeemer.—1 Cor. 15: 1-3.

That our Redeemer's sacrifice is Scripturally viewed as a Ransom, or price paid, is beyond question. Every occurrence of the words "Redeemer," "redeem" and "ransom" certifies this fact, and establishes also the teaching that Jesus' death was a vicarious or substitutionary one for us; not to prevent us dying but a price wherewith He would purchase to Himself the dead and dying race.—1 Cor. 6: 19, 20; 7: 23; 1 Peter 1: 18, 19; 2 Peter 2: 1.

The fact that our Saviour's sacrificial death on behalf of the whole world is so frequently spoken of in Scripture as a price paid establishes the teaching that He was our SUBSTITUTE; for a price paid is always substituted for the article purchased. Therefore, any professing Christian denying that the death of our Ransomer and Redeemer for us was substitutionary, places himself without doubt in the position of the false teachers who bring in "damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that BOUGHT them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." As a rule, these "damnable heresies" are introduced "privily," as the Apostle says. So much is this the case, that it sometimes seems

that the strength of horses is required to draw from such "false teachers" a proper statement of their heresy. Naturally, they do not like to say, straightforwardly, that they deny that the Lord bought them. If they were to say this in so many words, it would amount to a confession of their heretical position, and a warning to all Christians to beware of them. As this would not suit the purpose of the false teachers, they often, "with feigned words," dissemble.—2 Peter 2: 1-3.

The purchaser of a loaf of bread does not expect to have both the loaf and its price. He pays the price for the loaf, receives the loaf, and goes his way. He has substituted the money for the loaf which he purchased, and the transaction is complete. If the Ransomer of our race paid a price in dying for us, how could He justly be raised again without interfering with the transaction by which He had purchased us?

An answer sometimes given to this question is that our Saviour gave His *flesh* for the life of the world and shed His *blood* for the sealing of the New Covenant and for the remission of sins. (John 6: 51; Matt. 26: 28.) Inasmuch as His resurrection life is not earthly but heavenly, not fleshly but spiritual, it is thought that the Ransom transaction is thus inviolate. But a little further thought and, particularly, attention to those passages of Scrip-

ture in which our Lord's ransom sacrifice is described, show that the above answer, though interesting, is not sufficiently comprehensive, for the ransom is not only a question of flesh and blood, it requires the very life and being of the Ransomer.

"Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give HIS LIFE a ransom for many."—Matt. 10: 28; Mark 10: 45.

"The man Christ Jesus, Who gave HIMSELF a ransom for all."—1 Tim. 2: 6.

Resurrection gives back the life, self, or identity. The "self" or identity thus restored is the same Jesus, and is not a different "self," even though now on a higher plane of life than when here, "a little lower than the angels." It is therefore clear that HIS LIFE, HIMSELF, was not allowed to remain in death, but was restored.

Reverting to the illustration of the purchase of a loaf, it may be noted that when the price has been substituted for the loaf, that transaction is complete; it has passed into history as a piece of finished business. The value received by the shopkeeper for the loaf that he sold is now in his hands. It is his property; he is at liberty to do with it as he wills, and whatever he may elect to do with that particular bit of money will not impair the good faith of the transaction by which he acquired it. Therefore, if after he receives the money for the loaf, the shopkeeper pleases to give it back to the customer, he can do so, because the money is his property, to be disposed of as he may see fit, and he can, if he will, give it to the customer without interfering with the previous purchase with that money of the loaf.

So, when our Ransomer, on the cross, said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," He gave up his life as the price for the redemption of the race. That power to live passed into the possession of the Father, just as truly as the money passes over the counter into the possession of the shopkeeper. And just as the money passed over the counter becomes the property of the shopkeeper, so that he may do with it as he will without interfering with the previous transaction, which was finished as soon as the price came into his possession, so our Saviour's power to live, voluntarily laid down, passed into the hands of the Father, and the Father could do as He would with it, without prejudice to the transaction which purchased the race. Since it pleased God to give back the life, or "self," which had been paid over to Him, who need question this disposition of His own property?

The Understanding Between the Father and the Son

From the foregoing considerations it can be understood that the validity of the Ransom as a purchase price for our race would not have been interfered with by the Lord's resurrection to any plane of being whatsoever. He had to become a man in order to be able to give the Ransom, or corresponding price—a human life for the human life which was under forfeit (Heb. 2: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4-6; Phil. 2: 5-9); but having done this, and finished it on the cross by commending His spirit, or power to live, into the Father's hands, the conditions of His resurrection life would be determined by the pleasure of the Father. The pleasure of the Father was not to give His Son life again as a perfect man, "a little lower than the angels." He gave the Son to be, in His resurrection, "the exact impress of

the Father's substance" (Heb. 1: 3, R.V.); Jesus was put to death flesh (which is not spirit), and was made alive spirit (which is not flesh).—1 Peter 3: 18; John 3: 6.

That the Ransomer should be raised from death was understood beforehand, between the Father and Himself. It was not intended that Jesus should remain forever dead, but that He should "taste" death. This is shown by the following Scriptures, among others.

"Looking unto Jesus, . . . who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."—Heb. 12: 2.

"On account of this the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may receive it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to receive it again. This commandment I received from my Father."—John 10: 17, 18, Diaglott.

"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."—John 17: 4, 5.

The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13: 8) had also been glorified, in the counsel of God, "before the world was."

The Test of the Son's Confidence in the Father

It will be profitable to us to remember that in acceding to the Father's proposition, the Son was laying down His life with no guarantee to back the Father's assurance that He should receive it again. "Before the world was," when all the arrangement was agreed to between the Father and the Son, there had been no death and resurrection to give illustration of the Father's mighty power. And when in later times some illustrations of God's power to quicken the dead were given, these illustrations could not guarantee the resurrection of the Son. Moreover, the Son Himself, while dead, would be perfectly helpless to raise Himself; if the Father did not do this, He must remain dead. In the very nature of the case there could be no guarantee or posting of forfeit on the Father's part. It therefore appears that the Son was committed, in simple and implicit trust in His Father's word, to the extreme course of laying down His life, commending His spirit into the Father's hands, with nothing more than the Father's word of promise that He should receive it again, and without recourse in the event of the Father failing, for any reason, to fulfil His promise. Was ever such an exhibition of trustfulness and confidence? Members of the fallen human race have died in hope of the resurrection, but they, being condemned, could not have avoided death. The Son willingly laid down His uncondemned life, because of love for God and for us, resigning Himself to utter helplessness, with only the Father's word to assure Him concerning the future. "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit!" Let us strive to approach—if possible, to approximate—that implicitness and simplicity of confiding trust in the promises of God which, in Christ Jesus, are Yea and Amen.

"I know I am His and He is mine,
My all to His care I now resign;
No foe can my peaceful spirit harm
While I lean on my Beloved's arm."

Christ's Resurrection Necessary for Our Justification

So far from the resurrection of Jesus interfering with the validity of His Ransom sacrifice, it would seem that if He had not been raised, the purpose of

the Ransom would have failed of accomplishment. The Apostle said:—

"Jesus our Lord . . . was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification."—Rom. 4: 25.

"If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."—1 Cor. 15: 17, 18.

The necessity for Jesus' resurrection in order to our justification was threefold—

1. In order that the reliability of the divine word might thereby be maintained. The Father had promised to raise the Son from death. Had He allowed His promise to go by default, or had he been lacking in ability to perform it, everything else that He might say would be open to question and doubt. If, in such circumstances, He had declared us justified, we could not have believed it implicitly; the whole Universe, whose stability is based upon the inviolability of the divine character, would have been at the mercy of an unjust potentate.

2. In order that the perfection of Jesus' sacrifice and its acceptability as the Ransom for the race might be demonstrated. It is conceivable that the Son might have fallen under one of the severe temptations to which He was exposed. This possibility must be admitted, or the temptations were only make-believe. Had Jesus succumbed to one of the temptations He would have become a sinner; in which event His death

"PRAISE YE THE LORD!"

would have been a penalty for His own sin, and not a sacrifice for ours. Had such a misfortune overtaken Him, it is manifest that He could not have been raised from death in fulfilment of the original understanding between the Father and Himself, because His part of the agreement would not have been fulfilled. The fact that He was raised from the dead shows that His sacrifice had been perfectly accomplished, and that we were thereby ransomed. Hallelujah!

3. In order that He, the Ransomer, might take delivery of the purchased possession, and might act as Mediator between God and men, to bring them together in the relationship of the New Covenant (1 Tim. 2: 4-6), and as Advocate between God and those of the covenanted people who might sin. (1 John 2: 1, 2.) Our Saviour gave Himself for us, that He might purify unto Himself a peculiar people. But if He were dead, He could not receive the purchase, neither could he act as High Priest to save to the uttermost all those who come unto God by Him.—Heb. 7: 25.

For all these reasons it was necessary for our Saviour not only to die, but also to live again, in order that He might save His people from their sins. And so it was that He who was delivered for our offences was raised again for our justification, and is made unto us "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption."

Miracles of the Past

Address delivered at Bible Conference, Melbourne, Good Friday, 1911.

THE SUBJECT of miracles is one which is very prominent in these days of criticism and debate, and is sure to be attacked in any discussion as to the truth of the Christian religion. Hence it will be an advantage to have as clear ideas as possible on the essential character of the miracles recorded in the Bible, to know just what emphasis should be laid on them, and what defence can be made for them. I propose, therefore, to lay down a strict definition of a miracle, and to discuss the instances given us in Scripture with a view of discovering their peculiar characteristics; also to group them together so as to set forth more clearly their relation to the plan of God for our salvation, and to the successive steps of that plan. The number and variety of them is of course very great, so I shall merely illustrate each point by suitable examples.

What is a Miracle?

Bishop Gore has said that "A miracle is an event in physical nature which makes plain God's working for a moral end." In accordance with this I shall confine myself to natural miracles, omitting entirely what may be called "miracles of grace" or "spiritual miracles."

In common usage the word "miracle," derived from the Latin "*miro*," to wonder, stands for anything great or wonderful, anything which is not fully understood. But to get a more precise subject, we must consider it as referring to some occurrence above or beyond the regular operation of the established laws of nature; i.e., something unusual or unexpected, and so we find

it defined in the dictionaries. Thus in Webster we find it first in the common general sense, and then in its more special significance, as:—An event or effect in the physical world beyond or out of the ordinary course of things, deviating from the known laws of nature, or transcending our knowledge of them; an event which cannot be accounted for as produced by any of the known laws of nature, and which is therefore attributed to a supernatural power.

A fuller definition, and one which accords better with the most important Bible miracles, is given by the Oxford New English Dictionary, viz., "A marvellous event occurring within human experience which cannot have been brought about by human power or by the operation of any natural agency, and must therefore be ascribed to the special intervention of the Deity or of some supernatural being; chiefly, an act (e.g., of healing), which exhibits control over the laws of nature, and serves as evidence that the agent is either divine, or is specially favoured by God."

There is a marked difference between these two definitions, for the latter lays stress on the fact that a genuine miracle *must* be due to supernatural power, while Webster's would include many occurrences which are not really miraculous, but only appear so on account of the ignorance of the observer. What I wish to emphasise is that there are miracles recorded in the Bible which are utterly inexplicable from any human or natural standpoint, and which will still retain their miraculous character when man has reached the utmost possible knowledge of the laws and processes of nature.

God's Existence and Activity

It is miracles such as these which, if established as true, form an undeniable proof of God's existence and activity; and it is this class of miracles that I am dealing with. To make the distinction clearer, consider two examples. We often hear the plea put forward by Christian apologists that the possibility, or indeed probability, of miracles should be admitted on the ground that such ordinary phenomena as growth are miraculous and beyond our comprehension. The natural and correct reply would be that growth is after all a process subject to laws and conditions which we can study and even modify to some extent, and that if the miracles of the Bible are only of this type, they may be accepted, but they lose all their force as credentials or signs. Growth is part of the usual working of nature, and essentially different from the true miracle, which is a distinct action, sudden and unusual. In effect, a miracle is one act, done at one time, for one special purpose.

Natural Law and Man's Inventions

The second example is the result of man's ingenuity and increasing knowledge in producing effects which would be miraculous in the eyes of former generations. By analogy it is claimed that recorded miracles are merely the product of laws as yet unsuspected by us, hence no objection should be taken to them. This again is a weak argument, and best omitted, especially as it is untrue. It is just because the Bible so emphatically demands belief in a power greater than nature, which has revealed itself in miracles, that rationalists and others so strongly oppose it. They do not dream of fighting the sacred books of other nations, because God is not in them.

These marvellous works of men are subject to natural laws, and they require much preparation and more or less elaborate apparatus. Wireless telegraphy cannot be carried on haphazard; it requires and will require skilled men working at delicate and expensive instruments. Every new discovery brings in new machinery, and no improvements in machinery can be expected to improve it out of existence. Continued use of the telephone will not bring us to the point where we can dispense with the instrument, and still attain the same result. In other words, all these activities are localised and limited by the necessity of instruments.

But Bible miracles are especially noteworthy for the fact that they involve either no visible preparation at all, or at any rate no visible cause at all comparable with, or competent to produce, the actual result. In a few cases some visible action was performed, such as putting mud on a blind man's eyes, or causing Naaman to bathe seven times in Jordan; but it is at once evident that these had in themselves no healing power, they were only symbols or tests of faith.

The Attitude of Science to Miracles

Science cannot reasonably object to the possibility of miracles, for they fall outside its scope. The proper occupation of a scientist is not to lay down rules for nature to work by, but to find out exactly how nature does work, and he cannot apply his results with absolute certainty outside of the experience which led to them. A "law of nature" is simply the expression of the observed fact that under given circumstances a certain action always occurs, and includes the presumption that in any future case the same will hold true. Science is justified, however, in claiming that miracles

will not occur fortuitously, nor often, and that when, for some special reason, they do occur, they shall not contradict the facts which are the foundation of all natural phenomena. A notable example of this restriction is the "long day" of Joshua. The sudden stoppage of the earth's rotation, which would be necessary to retain sun and moon in their positions relative to the earth, would necessitate a re-arrangement of the whole universe, along with a change of all the laws governing the motion of matter. But examination shows that we need not imagine such a stupendous miracle as this, since the reference is not to the heavenly bodies themselves, but to their light, which was cut off by the dark thunderclouds, whose hail discomfited the Amorites.

Science at any rate emphasises for us the necessity of caution; a miracle may or may not be genuine, and, if it be genuine, it may or may not be worthy of our acceptance. This question will come up later, and we will now go on to examine the Scriptural evidence on the various points of the definition already given.

Examples of Bible Miracles

The very first miracle mentioned in Scripture is a good example of one which is impossible to human or natural agency; viz., Creation. It is obvious that no law of nature could have brought nature itself into existence. This miracle stands in a class by itself, and it will be sufficient to read from Psalm 33: 6-9—"He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast."

Various terms are used in Scripture to describe marvellous occurrences, such as signs, wonders, miracles, mighty or wonderful works, and a similar variety in the original languages. They do not always refer strictly to miracles, often only to astonishing deeds, preaching, etc. Thus the Greek *semeion* is generally a sign, which may or may not be a miracle. The word *dynamis* seems to correspond with our idea of a miracle, its meaning being "a mighty or powerful work." An instance of a miracle referred to as a work is found in John 7: 21, "I have done one work, and ye all marvel," where the reference is to the healing of the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda.

We may broadly classify the recorded miracles under a few heads:—

Acts of healing, including raising of dead.

Supply of necessities—providential dealings.

Signs and testimonies.

Punishments on God's people for disobedience.

Support and help to His people, and punishment of their enemies.

These are all "miracles of power," and one other class, "prophecy," must be included, which may be distinguished as "miracles of knowledge." These are intimately connected with the former, for in many cases the physical occurrence is only miraculous in being the fulfilment of a prophecy, just as others are only miraculous in occurring at the right moment. In either case they indicate foreknowledge and control of nature. Thus it may be true, as is claimed, that the damming back of the waters of the Red Sea by a strong east wind has happened more than once, yet it still remains a miracle because of the special circumstances.

Simplicity of Bible Miracles

Let us first consider some distinguishing characteristics of these miracles, and then endeavour to ascertain their purpose, the reasons why they occurred.

First of all, they are simple, not fantastic; their impressiveness and value consist largely in the simple and natural way they are related, in the dignified and unassuming style of the narrative. In most cases no effort is made to draw special attention to them; they appear as incidents in the history or narrative as if they contained nothing unusual or remarkable; and this is just what we might expect when we remember that the Book claims continually to be from God, and to relate His dealings with men. Rather do these events form an essential part of the Book, and its symmetry would be spoilt without them. Suppose all miracles omitted, and try to imagine what would be left. The contrast with the accounts of heathen and mediaeval miracles is very marked; the striving after effect, the absurd character of the events, and the frequently evil teachings enforced by them sufficiently differentiate them from those of the Bible. They always wear a forced appearance—an appearance of human ingenuity, and often of human ignorance. To take a case which the Higher Critics have attempted to make much of—the Babylonian account of creation; it tells how the gods quarrelled, and how a god cut a goddess in two and used the two halves of her body to make respectively heaven and earth. Compare this with the language of Genesis, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," and think what must be the state of mind of men who profess to believe that Genesis was derived from the Babylonian nonsense. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" seems to meet their case.

Three Miracles and their Lessons

Secondly, none of the recorded miracles can be denounced as foolish or purposeless. The same cannot be said of the apocryphal stories of Christ's childhood, nor of those given in the books rejected from the Canon. The wisdom of the choice that was made, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is fairly evident from a casual perusal; the tone is vastly different. I will mention just one case, which is sometimes referred to as being on a par with the relic-miracles of Roman Catholicism, and that is the revival of the dead man on touching the bones of Elisha, as narrated in 2 Kings 13: 20, 21. But a glance at the circumstances indicates that this was not at all a useless miracle, and the mere fact that it is given at all supplies a probability that it had a definite object. The Israelites were being heavily oppressed by Syria, and the prophet Elisha had died and left them without any special messenger of God. Before his death he had prophesied ultimate victory, but meanwhile the country was overrun and terrified by bands of invaders. This sign came to convince the discouraged people that God could still fight for them, and that the message sent through Elisha would be fulfilled. Thus their reverence for Elisha's teaching, and their faith in God would be revived. It is possible that the same thought might be applied to the extraordinary occurrence recorded in Matthew 27: 51-53. Here the Prince of Life Himself had been slain, but God could still exert His power and raise some, probably only for a short time, as witnesses; the prophecy of the resurrection of Christ Himself would be recalled, and its fulfilment awaited. As so often elsewhere, no indication is given that this miracle had its desired effect, and in many cases we know that the purpose of a miracle was defeated by man's hardness of heart.

Again, as we have already noted, natural laws are not contradicted, nor are natural means ignored in God's working; if a natural phenomenon is suitable, it is used; if not, a special act is performed. But man being subject to law could not produce the required results in either case. As an example, take Isaiah 38: 5-8. The return of the shadow may possibly be accounted for by a phenomenon such as an eclipse, but it would be quite another matter to say that there was nothing miraculous about it. The dial here was not intended, like more modern sun-dials, to show the progress of the day, but to mark the advance of the sun along the meridian, which causes the change of the seasons, and it was used to settle the times of feasts.

Not to Glorify the Agent

The last important characteristic of Bible miracles, which also goes to show their superiority over others, pretended or genuine, is their use for the exhibition of God's power or the confirmation of His appointment of the agent, and not for the purpose of emphasising the personal holiness or righteousness of that agent. Thus in the rebellion of Korah, the complaint was that Moses and Aaron were no better than the rest of the people, so why should they exalt themselves over the congregation? The answer was given in the swallowing up of the rebels, and was intended to show that it was God's choice that was in question, and not the personal merits of Moses or Aaron. They were specially holy in being set apart for their work, and must be so regarded. (Numbers 16: 28-30.) This was further emphasised by the budding of Aaron's rod.—Num. 17: 5.

By way of contrast think again of the mediaeval miracles; St. Francis of Assisi is reputed to have been so saintly that there suddenly appeared branded on his flesh the marks of crucifixion, while he was meditating on our Lord's death. This serves no end but the exalting of St. Francis as an eminently holy man, and is quite foreign to the manner and use of Bible miracles. Our Lord was perfectly holy, yet His miracles did not aim at the establishment of this fact; they were wrought to convince men that it was God's wish that they should believe on Him whom God had sent.

Fulfilled Prophecy a Miracle

We can now pass on to the purposes of miracles, considering them first as evidences for Christianity, and this applies chiefly to the fulfilled prophecies, which are many and varied. The value of such evidence is indicated in Isaiah 41: 21-23. "Show us things to come"; this is just what the Scriptures have done continually. We have detailed prophecies relating to the Messiah, His birth at Bethlehem, His life and miracles, His death for sinners and His resurrection. Isaiah abounds in prophecies of the fate of nations and kingdoms; Daniel describes the progress of world-sovereignty. Almost everything that has happened to the Jews was foretold, the destruction of their city, their wanderings among the nations, and their final return to their own land, which we ourselves see in process of fulfilment.

The other purposes of miracles as given specifically in Scripture are:—

To give authority to God's messengers.

To produce conviction, repentance, and faith.

To exhibit Jesus as the Messiah or Christ.

Miracles as Credentials

It is apparent that these are all concerned closely with the carrying forward of the plan of salvation, which has been maturing slowly through the ages. We do not find miracles performed for the private convenience of individuals, unless that happen to coincide with God's larger purposes, or to serve as a good object-lesson to His people generally. Cases of healing, though so numerous, are not entirely arbitrary. Christ seems to have healed all that came to Him, but it was not so much for their own sakes as to demonstrate His ability, and to fulfil prophecy. In answer to the disciples' question about the man born blind, He said, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God might be made manifest in him." And indeed, if healing were so easy to Him, we might almost ask why did He not heal all of their diseases? Yet we find Him afflicted with sickness Himself, suffering weariness and physical pain. If we remember that even healing is only temporary, and that sickness and suffering must remain till sin is rooted out, we begin to realise that these works were only secondary to the great fundamental work of slaying sin and death itself. So we are told that these miracles were to manifest His glory, to aid the faith of the disciples, and to evince His position and title.—John 2: 11; 7: 31.

The recovery of Hezekiah as an answer to prayer might perhaps be regarded as an instance of a personal favour only, but I do not think that is the right way to view it. We must remember that Hezekiah was a king of God's people, and that he had been a good king in the midst of a succession of evil ones. His follower also was evil, and it would seem as if his life was bound up with that of the nation. (See 2 Kings 20: 1-6.) The serious illness may have been intended to touch his heart and turn him more fully to God, but it does not seem to have had any permanent effect, although he said on his recovery, "I shall go softly (or solemnly) all my years because of the bitterness of my soul."—2 Chronicles 32: 24-26, 31; Isa. 38: 15.

These considerations have some bearing on the question which is coming forward to-day of faith-healing, which is practically a claim that men and women may by prayer get miracles done for them. That may be so, but we do not seem to have any definite promise to that effect, and it is curious that neither Christ Himself nor the apostles ever employed such means for their own benefit, but always as a testimony to the truth. The spirit of it seems different from that of the miracles in the Bible.

If now we run quickly through the records, a striking fact soon becomes prominent; viz., that the miracles occur, so to speak, in epidemics; they are especially numerous at the beginning and end of each dispensation, Jewish and Christian. Before Moses' time only one here and there is recorded, not a great number altogether; with Moses begins a long succession of notable events, following the path of the Israelites out of Egypt through the wilderness into the promised land. The great prophets, especially Elijah and Elisha, are supported by miracles, but they become less and less frequent, ceasing perhaps with Isaiah. After Malachi not only miracles but even prophets cease to appear for centuries, till the time was fulfilled and the Messiah Himself came to announce the closing of the period of favour to the Jews, and the beginning of the

gospel age. Continuing on into this new age, we find miracles prominent in Christ's own life and in the records of the early church. But once the faith was established, they vanish away, ceasing by the end of the second century. According to prophecy, we may expect another great demonstration of power when Christ takes up His reign on earth, now close at hand.

As Incentives to Faith

A brief summary of Moses' period is found in Psalm 105: 26-45. It is probable from what is known of Egyptian systems of worship that these plagues were specially designed to cast scorn on their gods, and to show their utter uselessness and inability to protect even themselves. This idea is supported by references such as Numbers 33: 3, 4, "upon their gods also Jehovah executed judgment." In Exodus 8: 10, 19 is indicated the purpose to produce conviction, to testify to God's almighty power, though it failed in Pharaoh's case (Exodus 7: 23). The thought strikes us here of the graciousness of God in dealing with obstinate man; He pleads with man to believe, meets him in his demand for proofs, and respects that freedom of choice which He has granted, and which man abuses. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork," so that, as Paul says, men who forget God are without excuse (Romans 1: 20, 21); yet miracles, those miracles which absolutely demand a supernatural power, are granted as an undeniable proof. The authority of Moses and Aaron was also demonstrated by miracles. (Exodus 4: 1-9.) The same purposes can be traced in other cases also, e.g., 1 Kings 18: 36, where Elijah proved the superiority of Jehovah over Baal, so that the people cried out, "Jehovah, he is God; Jehovah, he is God."

As God's Witness to the Messiah

Finally, and most important of all, we have the works of Christ testifying to His great mission as Messiah of the Jews and Saviour of the world. Many passages, especially in John, show the importance He himself attached to these works. John 5: 36—"The witness which I have is greater than that of John;" John did no mighty works. When He raised Lazarus from death (John 11: 42), he publicly thanked the Father, "that they may know that thou hast sent me." Some were impressed and convinced by his works, but not all. Thus we find the once blind man confuting the Pharisees (John 9: 28-34), "We know that God heareth not sinners; if this man were not from God, he could do nothing;" the Pharisees finally closing the unsatisfactory argument in their usual way. The same thought seems to have been in the minds of those who saw Him raise the palsied man from His bed, and assure him of forgiveness of sins. They glorified God, saying, "We never saw it in this fashion. He forgives sins and proves His claims by a miracle. If he were a sinner, God would not support his presumptuous claims." So we find the multitude saying, "This is of a truth the prophet that should come into the world;" and again, "When the Christ cometh, will He do more signs than this man hath done." Others before Him had done wonders, as some cavillers insisted, "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; show us a sign;" but the thoughtful ones realised that the profusion and magnitude of His works were incomparably greater than any previous prophet had performed, and worthy to be the fulfilment of the prophecy which our Lord quoted in answer to the query of John the Baptist.

(Matt. 11: 2-6.) Our Lord was indeed proven to be the Christ by His works, and those who still rejected Him showed plainly their hardness of heart. As Jesus also said, "If I had not done among them the works which none other did, they had not had sin." (John 15: 24, 25.) They rejected His works as they did His teaching, and foolishly tried to ascribe them to the power of Beelzebub, ending by delivering Him to death in order to silence His testimony against their hypocrisy. (Acts 2: 22-24.) But His work was carried on by His disciples, God bearing them witness with signs and wonders (Heb. 2: 4), producing conviction and belief in many hearts. When Paul defeated the sorcerer Elymas by striking him blind, "the procousal believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord."—Acts 13: 12.

The Power Behind Miracles

We have now covered roughly most of the ground of the definition we started with. We have seen that such miracles are recorded in the Scripture, that they exhibit control over nature, and that they prove the agent either divine or specially favoured by God. This last has its fullest application in Jesus, "declared to be the Son of God with power." (Rom. 1: 4.) One more point remains to be mentioned. These wonderful works must be ascribed to some supernatural being, God or—someone else. There is plenty of evidence in the Bible that miracles may be performed which are not due to God, hence they must be ascribed to Satan or his agents. And the important and interesting fact appears that both classes of miracles are identical in their purpose. Satan performs miracles by his servants to give them prestige, heathen religions are supported by miracles done by the evil spirits or demons who are the real gods behind the visible idols of wood and clay. Paul assures us of this when he writes to the Corinthians, "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God." (1 Cor. 10: 19-21.) So also in Deut. 32: 16, 17. Men who worship falsely are not, as many claim now, imperfectly worshipping the true God, but they are under the sway of demons, and these by right receive their homage. When we

realise that the forms and even doctrines of Roman Catholicism are derived from heathen abominations, some of them being referred to in Ezekiel 8, we must agree with Tregelles that Roman Catholic countries, no less than the darkest heathen lands, are being led away from the true God by these demons, whether worshipped as Jove, Mercury, etc., or as God and Christ.

Satan's Misleading Signs

A further analogy, or example of the way in which Satan thus blasphemously attempts to imitate or caricature God's plans, is the heralding of Antichrist by signs and wonders. (2 Thess. 2: 9.) Christ was approved by signs and works; so Antichrist; and the very elect would be deceived, if possible. Their safety lies in receiving the truth honestly and earnestly, and being always on guard against the wily devices of the Adversary. No doubt God could overrule Satan to prevent his working thus, and He has shown the power to do so, as in the case of the Egyptian magicians, who were forced to submit to the superior power behind Moses; but He has expressly told us by Paul that these things are allowed to test us, whether we have "received the love of the truth, that we might be saved." "For this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be judged, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. 2: 10-12. R.V.) Our standard must be the true faith.—Deut. 13: 1-5.

God's Omnipotence

Now for the moral: What effect should the study of these miracles have upon ourselves? Surely a better realisation of the transcendence and personality of God, and a freedom from vague pantheistic ideas. It should draw forth our praises as we see His power exerted on behalf of His people in the past, and our gratitude for the promise that it shall be so with us also. "All things shall work together for good to them that love God." Let us not harden our hearts, but rather yield willing and instant obedience. "Whatever He saith unto you, do it."

G.S.



Miracles of the Future

Address delivered at Bible Conference, Melbourne, Good Friday, 1911

THE SUBJECT of "Future Miracles" is one of the most important to all Christian people. We all know something of the degraded state into which mankind has fallen through sin—morally, physically, and spiritually; and all who love their fellow men would desire to see them lifted up to better conditions. No one who has any love for mankind can be satisfied under present conditions abounding with sin and misery, sickness and death. Many earnest Christians, not fully comprehending the purpose of God, have entirely consecrated their lives in seeking to relieve some of the misery and suffering which prevail.

As we look around, we behold a vast amount of suffering, even under the most favourable conditions of human life. In civilised communities provision of some sort is now made for hundreds of thousands of poor,

weak, helpless members of society. Hundreds of societies and organisations exist to ameliorate the condition of those who are physically or mentally incapable of fighting the battle of life, but organised relief finds itself incapable of dealing with all the suffering and misery which abound. We see also a terrible amount of suffering caused through man's greed and selfishness—"Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn," and it causes us to long for that desirable time to come promised in the Scriptures, when the "Restitution of all things" shall have taken place, when the groaning creation shall be delivered from the bondage of sin and corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.—Rom. 8: 21.

The miracles of the past have not brought permanent relief to the sin-cursed world; many were given as a sign or seal to attest the Divine mission of our Lord

Jesus as the Christ. Those whom He raised up from death and from beds of sickness were only temporarily relieved—eventually the grave claimed them, as it has claimed all the members of our race in the past. The tide of Death has swept on, carrying the masses of mankind into oblivion; generation after generation carried away like a flood.

"Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men."—Psa. 90: 3.

The miracles of the future, on the contrary, will bring permanent blessing to mankind, because Christ, having bought the whole world with His precious blood; He, by the grace of God, having tasted death for every man; by virtue of that great sacrifice having paid the ransom price, is now Lord (or owner) of all. The claims of Divine Justice having been met by His death on our behalf, and all power both in Heaven and Earth given unto Him, it is His purpose that all shall be given an opportunity of availing themselves of the benefits of the Ransom, under the gracious provisions of the New Covenant, either in the present Gospel Age or in the future Kingdom Age.

Miracles of Grace

During the present Gospel Age the New Covenant is in operation, but comparatively few have the hearing ear to appreciate the gracious call to be "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" in His Kingdom. We have already heard how the miracles performed at the beginning of the age attested the divine mission of Jesus and the Apostles. Our Lord did not, however, place great value on the physical healings as such, for He alluded to the "greater works than these," which His followers would accomplish, because He was about to go to the Father; namely, the work of raising men out of the death state of trespasses and sins by the power of God, through the preaching of the Gospel, and the healing of those who were spiritually sick, lame and blind. There is also the great work of the Gospel Age, in taking out "a people for His Name"—the Bride of the Lamb, the "little flock" to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom. (Luke 12: 32.) These are the "greater works" mentioned in John 14: 12, accomplished through the preaching of the Word, and the sanctifying power of the Truth.

The Church has been specially called to be associated with her Lord in suffering for righteousness' sake, following in His footsteps, being tempted and tried under evil conditions to prove their faithfulness through good report and evil report, and if faithful unto death a crown of life is promised to them. A Heavenly inheritance is reserved for all the faithful overcomers, as heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. This glorious reward is only held out to the Church during the Gospel Age. It was never given to others of God's people in the past ages, and so far as the Scriptures inform us, will never be held out to any in future ages. The promises to Abraham and all the Ancient Worthies were all of an earthly kind, and the highest title Abraham received in the Scriptures was that he was "a friend of God." We who are followers of Christ are now called Sons of God.—1 John 3: 1, 2.

The First Resurrection a Miracle

The raising of our Lord Jesus from the dead was a stupendous miracle; so also will be the resurrection of the faithful ones of the Gospel Age, who will all have part in the "first resurrection."

The first Resurrection will be from the human nature to the spiritual nature, from mortality to immortality; it will be the greatest manifestation of Divine power since our Lord Jesus was raised from the grave, and made the express image of the Father's person. It will be similar to his resurrection in that they will be raised glorious spirit beings, like their Lord.—1 Cor. 15: 49; John 17: 24; Rev. 3: 21; 2 Pet. 1: 10-11.

The human mind cannot comprehend the glorious provision which God has formed for the Church; as the Apostle suggests, it can only be comprehended by those who have spiritual discernment. (1 Cor. 2: 9, 10, 14.) There are many scriptures describing the grandeur of this heavenly calling we could cite did time permit, but a few will suffice. (See Rom. 8: 29; 1 Pet. 1: 3, 4; Phil. 3: 20, 21; 1 John 3: 2; 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3; Rev. 2: 26, 27; Dan. 7: 18.) One of their chief honours is that they shall be kings and priests, and reign with Christ a thousand years.—Rev. 20, 4-6.

Miracles of the Kingdom Age

We can see what a mighty work will be done in the Kingdom Age by our Lord Jesus Christ in not only ruling, judging and blessing the living nations, but also in bringing forth the dead for the purpose of Judgment. Some have thought that when the dead are brought forth to judgment, it will simply mean to condemnation; that their eternal destiny had been fixed at death, and that they will come forth only to hear their doom pronounced. Were that the case, Christ would be deprived of all but a fraction of His subjects, and Satan would be demonstrated as more powerful than Jehovah.

The object of the Kingdom Age work is not to hear a recital of the good and bad deeds which the resurrected millions of earth have committed in the past, but to rule over them as a beneficent Monarch, extending to them the gracious provisions of the New Covenant, of which the Church has already received the benefit. This will require first their enlightenment, in order that they may then exercise faith and render the required obedience. There will then be many "miracles of grace," as well as natural miracles, testifying to the power and authority of the Kingdom; for all sorrow, crying and tears are to be wiped away.—Rev. 21: 1-8.

The term "judge" is not used in the Scriptures in a modern sense, as the president over a criminal trial, with no other prerogative than to make "rulings" and to pronounce sentence in accordance with the findings of the jury. A "judge" in the Scriptures means a king or ruler, also a deliverer, as when the Lord raised up judges to deliver Israel out of their difficulties. (Judges 2: 16-18.) So Christ and the Church will judge or rule over humanity, lifting up the weak and oppressed, delivering the captives of sin and death, and destroying all who wilfully oppose righteousness in the Second Death.—Rev. 21: 8.

The millions of the human race who have gone down into death in ignorance of God's gracious plan of salvation, shall come forth to be enlightened by the Truth, and be given an opportunity of attaining eternal life through Christ who died for all. As Christ has died for all, and there is none other name given under heaven whereby they may be saved (Acts 4: 12), it is absolutely necessary that all who have gone into death since Father Adam's transgression (and who have not already as, e.g., the Church been enlightened) should be brought forth, in order that they may come to a knowledge of the Truth. The

Scriptures teach that all men incurred condemnation to death through Adam's sin, and so death passed upon all men. (Rom. 5: 12.) We are all born in sin, under the death sentence passed upon our first parents. They also teach that Jesus has died for Adam and the whole human family, and having bought them with His own precious blood, is now in a position to offer the gift of life to all who will accept it on the conditions of faith and obedience.

It may be asked, How can those who died in ignorance thousands of years before Christ came, have any share in the Redemption? The answer is, Christ died for all in Adam, and He has authority from the Father to awaken from death and to give a full opportunity to all of Adam's race to come to an exact knowledge of the Truth, and of accepting salvation on His terms. And so we read in 1 Tim. 2: 4-7, God will have all men to be saved (or preserved), and to come to an exact knowledge of the Truth, etc. Also in John 1: 9, that Jesus is the "True light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

We will call attention to a few texts, showing that every child of Adam is included in God's gracious arrangements. (Acts 3: 19-21.) The promise to Abraham that all the families of the earth would be blessed. (Gen. 12: 1-3.) There are promises concerning other nations besides Israel; Moab, Jer. 48: 47; Elam, Jer. 49: 39; Sodom, Ezek. 16: 53-55; also to the people of Tyre, Sidon and Nineveh. And lest it might be said that only the nations mentioned will be raised from the grave, Rev. 20: 12 specially mentions "all the dead, small and great."

These great miracles of the future in raising the dead, in order to restore mankind to the perfect conditions from which our first parents fell, have been very generally lost sight of by the great majority of Christian people. It is remarkable how the prominent doctrine of the resurrection of the dead has been completely lost sight of through the generally accepted error that death ends all probation—that the eternal destiny of every individual is irrevocably fixed at death. The general teaching that every one at death goes either to Heaven, or to be eternally tormented in "Hell," has been responsible for a vast amount of darkness on this important question of Resurrection and Future Blessing. Wherein would there be any need for a resurrection of the dead, if there were none dead; if all were alive either in Heaven or "Hell"? And what need for a future judgment if all were already judged and their destiny settled at death? These questions require only to be stated to show the absurdity of the general view, which is both unscriptural and unreasonable. If the Scrip-

tures state that "the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth (John 5: 28, 29), it cannot be true that the dead are alive either in a state of blessedness or torment. The Scripture testimony throughout holds out as the only hope for mankind of a future life, a resurrection from the dead by the power of God through Christ.

There are no promises of a heavenly nature to any except the Church, and these receive their reward at the second coming of Christ. All others of the faithful of past and future ages will receive life on the perfect human plane, such as Father Adam had before the fall. This will be the work of Christ during the thousand years' reign, restoring all that was lost, all the original privileges of the perfect man, who will have had also the added knowledge of the evil effects of sin during the long reign of evil. The obedient of mankind will be lifted up from the degraded condition into which they have fallen; those who refuse to render obedience and wilfully prefer sin and evil, "shall have their part in the lake of fire, . . . which is the Second Death.—Rev. 21: 8.

The Thousand Year Judgment will be a period of blessing upon the good, and punishment upon evil-doers. (Psa. 96: 11-13; 97: 1-12.) The Scriptures give no particulars of the physical condition of those who will be brought forth from the grave during the Kingdom Age, but it is a reasonable inference that they will come forth in almost the same condition as they were in when they went into death. The infant who died many years ago will come forth an infant; so with the aged; they will all come forth in much the same condition as that in which they died, for Death brings no changes. (Ecl. 9: 5-10.) As they render obedience to the great Prophet, Priest and King, so they will make corresponding progress on the highway of holiness towards actual perfection and everlasting life, to the condition of perfection from which Father Adam fell. The incorrigible and wilfully wicked will be punished with everlasting destruction.

In Rev. 22: 1, 2, John saw a "tree of life," or, rather, a grove of trees, whose leaves were for the healing of the nations. The nations will be healed not only from spiritual diseases, but also from physical, mental and moral diseases. Thank God for the assurance which He gives that all things will be made new! When the Kingdom has accomplished its work every tear shall have been wiped from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither mourning nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things will have passed away.—Rev. 21: 4.

A.M.A.

Good Prospects

This is the second issue of Vol. 3 of the "Advocate," and the prospects are excellent for a good year. The list of subscribers and friends is increasing; the Lord's blessing being graciously added to the efforts of the friends to spread the truth.

As a means to facilitate the introduction of the Truth to new readers, we make the special offer to send the "Advocate" to four addresses for three months each, for the price of a year's subscription—2s. 6d. in Australia and New Zealand, 3s. (75 cents) elsewhere. Send the four addresses to either of our offices. This is an excellent way to bring the truth to the notice of your friends, as they do not need to know—unless you wish to tell—who is causing the papers to be sent to them.

The Open Door

The attention of Australian friends is particularly directed to the fact that, beginning May 1, 1911, the postage on Australian publications will be so much reduced that we shall be able to post a copy of "Bible Talks" from Melbourne to any place within the Commonwealth for the exceedingly small sum of one penny (1d.), instead of the 5d. hitherto charged. In view of this concession, the wholesale price of "Bible Talks" granted to all "Advocate" readers will be 1s. 7d. per copy post paid, to any address in the Commonwealth. This is a providential opening of the door of opportunity in this great country, and we feel sure that friends will recognise the fact, and will enter in. This notice applies only to Australia; postage in other countries remains as hitherto.

Parables of our Lord

Parable of the Good Shepherd

—John 10: 1-16.—

(To the Pharisees and other Jews.)

THE PARABLE.

1. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice.

5. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

6. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

THE INTERPRETATION.

7. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them.

9. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep.

13. The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14. I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

did not plainly say, He has a devil; or He casts out demons by the prince of the demons, they shrugged their shoulders, and said, We know not whence he is, of God, or of Satan; but we know this at least: he is a sinner, and we will have nothing to do with Him. (Luke 11: 15; Matt. 9: 34; John 8: 48; 9: 24; 10: 20.) Our Lord's opinion of them is expressed in John 8: 12-47 and John 9: 39-41; the latter passage introducing the parable now under consideration.

The appropriateness of the parable to the occasion is manifest. The scribes and Pharisees despised and persecuted the poor blind "sheep," whom the Master had healed; but when they had cast him out, the Good Shepherd sought and found him, and invited him into His fold.

"Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" . . . "It is He that talketh with thee."

"Lord, I believe." And he worshipped Him."

The Sheepfold

The parable pictures all the sheep shut up in the fold under the care of a "porter," waiting for the true shepherd to come and lead them out. In Palestine, the fold was a place of safety in the wilderness, or on the mountain side, and was usually only a space walled in by piling up the stones so numerous in the holy land. Here the sheep were safe from wolves at night, and here they sheltered in time of storm.

The children of Israel were the sheep, and Jehovah was their owner, as described in Psalm 23 and Ezekiel 34. God had separated them from all other nations, and taken them for His own people (Amos 3: 1, 2), tending their wants, and preserving them from evil, the holy prophets and others being their caretakers. But while the "fold" was a place of rest and protection, it was also a bondage, and had many disadvantages which time made increasingly manifest. The "fold" seems to represent the Law Covenant given at Sinai which was in some respects a blessing, giving the people a certain amount of "green pastures" and "still waters," but in other respects a galling yoke of bondage. Zechariah (9: 9-12) describes the children of Zion as prisoners in a pit "wherein is no water"; that is, the Law gave neither refreshment nor life to those bound under it. It was, as the Apostle Paul says (Rom. 7: 7-14), a place of death—

"The commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me."—Rom. 7: 10, 11.

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the law to do them."—Gal. 3: 10.

To make matters worse, both Israel and Judah went into idolatry and other evils, so that the majority failed to benefit even by those features of the Law which, by teaching them the exceeding sinfulness of sin, were designed to prepare them for something better. The apostle shows what that better thing was—

"But before [that] faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up UNTO THE FAITH which should afterward be revealed."—Gal. 3: 23.

"The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise BY FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST might be given to them that believe."—Gal. 3: 22.

Deliverance Promised

In other words, when the right time came, the Good Shepherd and King appeared, with a message of hope

CORRECTLY to understand this parable it is necessary to consider its setting, as shown in the previous chapter and in the remainder of the tenth chapter of John. Our Lord had healed the man born blind, who, because he would not disown the Master who healed him, was presently turned out of the synagogue. The Pharisees could not deny the miracle, but nevertheless they asserted that Jesus was a "sinner." And when the blind man insisted, with some warmth, that one who could perform so wonderful a miracle must certainly have been sent of God, they freshly condemned him upon whom Jesus had had mercy, saying—

"Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?"—John 9: 34.

When the Pharisees said of Jesus, "We know not from whence he is," their reference was not always to His birthplace, or to the place of His residence, for these could easily have been ascertained, but to His position as an accredited representative of God. The Lord's miracles were His credentials; and as they did not wish to acknowledge Him, they were under necessity to "explain away" His miracles; hence, when they

and deliverance, as the prophet had foretold—

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation . . . Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope.—Zech. 9: 9, 12.

There had been many false prophets in Israel who pretended to be true guides to the people. There were also priests and Levites and others in places of authority, who misused their office, and who, instead of instructing the people in the Law of the Lord, and supporting the true prophets in their efforts to keep the people in the right path, became themselves emissaries of evil. Some of these even claimed to be the Messiah, while others claimed that the whole nation was the Messiah, fulfilling the predictions of Isa. 53. (This is still the teaching of many Jews.) They were false shepherds, and were severely denounced by the prophet for their unfaithfulness. (Ezek. 34.) Our Lord also took occasion to reprove the false shepherds of His day (Matt. 23), and to warn the people against being misled by them; for they made void the Law by their traditions, and would "shut up the Kingdom of heaven" against the meek and lowly disciples. (Matt. 5: 20; 15: 6; 23: 13.) They also put upon the people burdens grievous to be borne, which they would not touch with one of their fingers.—Luke 11: 46.

Great was the need for deliverance; for a true Shepherd sincerely interested in the welfare of the sheep, and with power and authority to guide and bless them! And lest all the sheep be deceived by the false shepherds, and there be none to profit by the true Shepherd when He would come, certain tests were given, to be applied by the "sheep" to anyone claiming to be the expected Deliverer.

The True Shepherd

would be recognised by the "porter," would enter by the "door" into the sheepfold, would call the sheep by name, and be recognised by them as their rightful guide and protector.

Who was the "porter" that admitted Jesus to the Jewish sheepfold? The testimony of the law and the prophets, of whom John the Baptist was the last and greatest. Jesus alone, of all the shepherds of Israel, had the credentials required, and was able to show from the Scriptures that He was the Messiah promised. He was the Son of God, born of a virgin, at Bethlehem of Judah (John 7: 42), was publicly acknowledged of God by the descent of the Holy Spirit, was announced by John the Baptist, and performed the wonderful miracles, as foretold. (Matt. 1: 21-25; 2: 1-7; 3: 1-17; 4: 23-25; 8: 16, 17; John 5: 33, 36, 37; 7: 31.) Those Jews therefore who still had respect to the Law and the Prophets, or who were willing to search the Scriptures as to whether or not Jesus was the Messiah, had no difficulty in recognising Him. *They knew His voice*, because He spoke what the Prophets foretold would be His message. Whoever had been taught of God by the law and the prophets would come to Him. (John 6: 45, 65.) He spoke, not His own words, but the words which His Father had given Him (John 7: 16-18; 8: 42, 43; 12: 44), and which therefore were in complete harmony with the words spoken before by the prophets.—Heb. 1: 1, 2.

The "thieves and robbers" disregarded the law and the prophets, and sought control of the sheep by illegitimate means and for selfish purposes; the Good Shepherd fulfilled the predictions of the law and the prophets, and therefore He had a right to the fold, and it

was right for the sheep to hear His voice, and to follow Him. The "door" of John 10: 1 represents this right of entry and authority.

The Door of the Sheep

It is said that in the east a shepherd never drives his sheep; he goes before them; also that even in large flocks the shepherd knows each sheep by name, and that they readily come to him when called. It is also said that when they are safe in the fold at night, he lies across the door or entrance, and that no sheep can go out, and no wolf or other enemy come in, except across his body. Thus he is literally the "door" of the sheep.

Our Lord Jesus, who had the right of entry into the sheepfold, became the "door" through whom the sheep might be liberated from the Law Covenant fold, and enter into His fold. His mission was not to perpetuate the old arrangements under which the Jews had been acceptable to God, called the Old or Law Covenant, but to open up a new way of life, under the New Covenant, based upon better promises, and with a better hope. He came not to put new wine into old bottles, or new cloth upon an old garment, but with new wine in new bottles, and an entirely new garment. And participation in this new arrangement was possible only to those Israelites who were willing to come to God *through Him*, after having (figuratively) died to that wherein they were held. (Rom. 7: 6.) He said—

"No man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—John 14: 6.

The teaching is plain, that while the Jews under the Law sustained a certain relation to Jehovah, our Lord Jesus came to reveal God as a loving Father, so loving the world as to sacrifice His own beloved Son; and before any Jew could be accepted by God as a "son," he must first acknowledge Jesus' sacrifice as the ground of forgiveness and acceptance. The office of Jesus as the "door" is two-fold; to debar those who boast in their own righteousness, as well as to admit the sincere believer. It is manifest that it would be impossible to approach God in the name of Jesus, without first coming to Jesus, and receiving authority from Him to use His name.

Our Lord's invitations were always to the repentant sinners to "come" to *Him*—not to "go" to the Father—

"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son shall reveal Him.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—Matt. 11: 27-30.

"Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." (John 5: 40.) "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." (John 6: 35.) "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." (John 7: 37.) "I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14: 6.) "Come, take up the cross, and follow me."—Mark 10: 21.

The Good Shepherd came first to the sheep shut up in the Law Covenant fold; indeed, His personal ministry was practically confined to them. He said—

"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. 15: 24.

And when He sent out His disciples, he forbade them to go to the Samaritans or to the Gentiles, but rather to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. 10: 5, 6.

In speaking of the Jewish people as "lost" sheep, the similitude is slightly different from that of the sheep shut up in a fold under the care of the porter; the lost sheep being one which has wandered from the fold, and

requiring the Good Shepherd to go out in search of it, as in the parable of the Lost Sheep.*—Luke 15: 3-6.

All the children of Israel were "lost" in that they had wandered from their Covenant, being by nature unable to fulfil its requirements. Some had wandered into deep, outward degradation, while others who were outwardly clean, were inwardly full of corruption; others, again, did their best to keep the Law; they were anxiously awaiting the Messiah to deliver them from the Roman yoke, and to exalt their nation according to the promises. But all did not admit their "lost" condition; the Pharisees and others boasted in themselves that they were righteous. They were whole, and needed not a physician. (Luke 18: 9; Matt. 9: 11-13.)

The Lord sought and blessed only those who acknowledged their needs, and owned Him as the Son of God, having the words of eternal life.—Matt. 16: 16, 17; John 6: 68, 69.

"Other Sheep I Have"

The "other sheep"—not of the Jewish "fold"—to which our Lord referred, were to be gathered from among the Gentiles, as He afterward gave commission to His Apostles—to go into all nations, and make disciples of them. (Matt. 28: 19, 20; Luke 24: 46, 47.) He was not only the "door" for the Jews, that they might pass from the Law Covenant into the New Covenant, but also the "door" for the Gentiles, who had never been under the Law, but were wandering at large, that they also might come into His "fold." The Apostle Peter speaks of these, after quoting a portion of Isa. 53: 5:—

"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."—1 Pet. 2: 25.

These instructions were carefully carried out, even against the natural prejudice of the Jewish mind. The message was—

"Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."—Acts 10: 43; 2: 21; Rom. 10: 13.

Repentance and faith, including acceptance of Christ as Lord and Master, that they might do His will, were the terms upon which both Jew and Gentile received forgiveness of sins. As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, they constituted not two "folds," but one; for the middle wall of partition between them was broken down when Christ hung upon the cross, having given Himself a ransom for all. (Eph. 2: 11-18.) All for whom He died, who will accept it, and follow Him in faith and obedience, are His "sheep." There is one fold, and one Shepherd. There is one way of salvation—through the blood of His cross. The distinction between the "sheep" of the Gospel age and the "sheep" of the Kingdom age is not noticed in this parable. Other Scriptures show that the "little flock" of the Gospel age will reign with Christ, while those who become His sheep under that reign will be blest with everlasting life upon the earth. But the "fold" represents the protection and blessing of the New Covenant; and the Good Shepherd loves all the sheep for whom He died, and who will embrace the terms of that New Covenant when they are brought to the exact knowledge of the truth, either in this life or the next.

When our Lord was upon the earth, the Jews should have had no difficulty in recognising Him as the Mes-

siah foretold by the prophets, for His credentials were beyond dispute. In His death and subsequent exaltation, additional tokens were given; and it was thereafter possible to point to Him as the fulfilment of Isa. 53: 10, "when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin," as did Philip in answer to the inquiring Ethiopian. (Acts 8: 30-37.) We, to-day, looking back, have the benefit of the experience of the early Gentile converts, as well as of the Jews, and of all the evidence which convinced them that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Upon us therefore rests a great responsibility, lest we, like the Scribes and Pharisees, reject the evidence and despise the Covenant into which He would gather the true sheep.—Heb. 13: 20, 21.

Not only does the Good Shepherd care for the sheep, but the Father also is pledged on their behalf. Could we imagine the Good Shepherd's protection as insufficient, we have the assurance that the Heavenly Father Himself stands behind the Good Shepherd, as it were, to defend them—

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."—John 10: 28.

Just a word of warning needs to be uttered here concerning the "sheep." So far as God and Christ are concerned, their preservation is beyond question. They will never fail. But should any "sheep" become disobedient, and despise the care of the Shepherd or the restrictions of the fold, he may wander away again into sin, and bring upon himself a just condemnation. It is necessary to hold fast the confidence and the hope firm to the end, if they would receive the full blessings of the fold and the ultimate "eternal life."

The Lord Jesus bought the race with His Own Blood; He gave His life a ransom for all; but He is Good Shepherd only to the sheep who hear His voice and follow Him. And the Father specially preserves only those whom the Good Shepherd acknowledges as His sheep.—1 Tim. 4: 10.

Under Shepherds

The Good Shepherd has appointed many under shepherds, to assist in caring for the sheep. How many of these have the loving spirit of their Master; how many are laying down their lives for the sheep? On the other hand, how many are misusing their position to bring the sheep into false bondage or false liberty, as different from the safety of the fold and the liberty of green pastures and still waters as day differs from night? "Give heed to yourselves," says the Apostle. The Lord will call you to account for every one of His "little ones." Take heed that ye despise and injure them not. Herein is the difference between a true shepherd and a hireling; the latter abandons them at the first sign of danger, but the true shepherd defends them to the last. The hireling despoils the flock to his own advantage; the true shepherd seeks not his own good, but theirs. (John 10: 12, 13; Acts 20: 28-30; 1 Pet. 5: 1-3.) Many are the tribulations which faithful under shepherds now endure, but it will not be for long. Soon the Chief Shepherd will appear, and then they shall receive "a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 Pet. 5: 4. Cf. Isa. 66: 5.

*For explanation of this Parable, see our issue of September, 1910.

The Field is the World

The Memorial Supper

The solemn observance of this feast in memory of our Redeemer's death was held in Melbourne on Nisan 15, being Wednesday evening, April 12. Besides the 125 or 130 in the room, the bread and wine were supplied to some who were ill, and to some in the country and at sea. In the commemoration we sought to have in mind the vital fact that the death of Jesus is the basis for the New Covenant, formally ratified by His shed blood, although to some extent operative even before the ratifying sacrifice was offered, just as the Law Covenant was operative before the sacrifice ratifying it was formally offered. It was also noted that His death was for the forgiveness of sins, as the Ransom for all, and as our Passover Lamb, whose blood, sprinkled over the doorposts of our hearts, warns the destroyer that he must not enter here, and whose flesh gives strength for the journey. It was not in one of these capacities only that we commemorated the death of Jesus, but in all of them, and we prayed, as we did this, that in ourselves and all others of like precious faith there might be a keener realization than ever of the love of God and Christ for us and for all men, and of our privileges and responsibilities in connection with the blessings with which the Lord has blessed us. May the year just begun be better than any that have gone before in our experience!

Good Friday Conference

The Conference in Melbourne was held as arranged, the attendance at all sessions being greater than on any previous Good Friday. After the opening praise service at 10.45 a.m., the assembled friends were addressed by Bro. H. Shallcross, his subject being "The New Commandment." Bro. T. V. Stevenson followed with an address on "Keeping in Memory" (1 Cor. 15: 2). After the praise service in the afternoon, the subject of "Miracles" was discussed in two addresses, that of Bro. G. Smeal dealing with "Miracles of the Past," and that of Bro. A. M. Anderson with "Miracles of the Future." These two addresses (published elsewhere in this issue) were followed by a question meeting, which, in turn, was followed by tea served in the Hall. At 6.45 there was another short praise service followed by an address by Bro. F. Shanasy on "What is and is to be accomplished by the death of Christ." The concluding address was by the editor on the question—"Will all the Saved go to Heaven? What say the Scriptures?" Friends from the country and from other States gave us the pleasure of their company, and we all felt like praising God forever for His wonderful goodness. There was also a goodly number of visitors, who came to hear what might be said on the various subjects, some of whom seemed favourably impressed.

Six souls were immersed in water in token of their having given up all to follow Christ's footsteps, to die with Him in the hope of being made like Him in the resurrection. The immersions were not, however, done on Good Friday, but on Saturday, April 8, and on Easter Monday.

On Easter Saturday, Easter Monday and Eight Hours Day, special tract distributions were arranged. No. 6, "The Wideness of God's Mercy," was the tract used, and about 10,000 homes were visited on the three days. To date there have been nearly 80,000 copies of this tract placed in the homes in Melbourne and vicinity, besides some thousands in various other parts of Australia, and good results are being manifest in applications for further reading matter. We hope soon to have the pleasure of hearing that this feature of the work is being vigorously prosecuted in other parts of the world.

The Cheerful Givers

"The God of Heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build." "Through God we shall do valiantly."—Neh. 2: 20; Psa. 60: 12.

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully; every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9: 6, 7.

"Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."—1 Cor. 16: 2.

Voluntary Donations, as under, have been received since our last report for the spread of the Good Tidings concerning the Grace of God in Jesus, our Mediator and Intercessor under the terms of the New Covenant.

The letter "G" after a donation number indicates that the donation is sent in harmony with the plan mentioned in the "Go Forward" letter enclosed with the November "Advocate." It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way.

No.	Previously reported ...	£151	6	2	£1 = \$4.86 = \$735.31
131	...	£0	7	6	
132G	...	0	15	9	
133G	...	0	5	0	
134	...	0	1	0	
135	...	0	5	0	
136G	...	0	2	6	
137G	...	0	5	0	
138	...	0	3	2	
139	...	0	17	5	
140	...	0	2	2	
141	...	0	1	4	
142	...	0	15	2	
143G	...	1	1	3	
144	...	0	15	0	
145G	...	0	5	0	
146G	...	1	0	0	
147G	...	0	5	0	
148G	...	0	9	5	
149G	...	0	5	0	
150	...	0	5	0	
151G	...	0	5	5	
152G	...	0	5	0	
153G	...	0	5	0	
154	...	0	1	0	
155	...	0	1	0	
156	...	2	1	8	
157	...	0	4	1	
158	...	0	5	3	
159	...	1	5	0	
160	...	0	6	9	
161	...	0	5	0	
162	...	1	14	1	
163	...	0	2	2	
164	...	2	2	2	
Total since last report					17 10 3 = 85 11
Total for 10 months					£168 16 5 = \$820.42

The "Advocate" 7000 Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report. Let the good work continue! The cost of printing and posting 7000 "Advocates" is about £40 (\$200).

Previously reported ...	...	£112	6	0	= \$545.77
42 ...	£9	8	0		
43 ...	0	10	0		
44 ...	0	2	6		
45G ...	10	13	11		
46 ...	0	7	6		
Total for 1 month ...		21	1	11	= 102.52
Total for 10 months ...		£133	7	11	= \$648.29

The New Covenant Advocate and ... Kingdom Herald

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The New Covenant Advocate

— and —

Kingdom Herald

Vol. 3

MELBOURNE, LONDON, AND BROOKLYN, N.Y., JUNE, 1911

No. 3

BELIEVE

CHRISTIANITY requires its professors to be Believers. The Christian is not an unbeliever; he is not a sceptic; he is not a doubter. The Christian is before all things a Believer. He truly and positively believes; he glories in it, and his heart is filled with joy and peace through believing—not through unbelieving.—Rom. 15: 13.

Being filled with joy and peace in believing, the Believer abounds in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. But the unbeliever, the fearful one, the sceptic, the doubter, the walking interrogation point, ever learning and never coming to the knowledge, believes—nothing; he is void of joy and peace in not believing; he abounds in hopelessness, and is on the road to Despair.

Moreover, there is a certain exclusiveness about Christianity. It is not true that "it makes no difference what one believes as long as he lives right." The facts are that one who believes right will have a hard time to live right in this evil age; yet by the grace of God and the sanctifying power of believed truth (John 17: 17; 2 Peter 1: 4) he will be better than he was before. But he who believes nothing, or believes error, simply cannot have in his life the benefit of the sanctifying power of the truth which he rejects. These statements are abundantly corroborated by the history of the past and by the experience of the present.

The Christian must, therefore, not only be a Believer; he must be a Believer of certain things. Were any one—even an angel—to propose to the Believer to believe anything but what is right, such a messenger of evil must be repulsed.—Gal. 1: 8, 9; 2 John 10, 11.

It is, then, important that one Believe, and that he Believe Right. Not only is this important; it is essential. This is further demonstrated by the benefits that accrue to him who Believes the Right Things.

The Believer of the Right Things is filled with joy and peace in believing, and he abounds in hope.—Rom. 15: 13.

The Believer of the Right Things is protected by the keeping power of God, which operates and can operate on his behalf only through his faith.—1 Peter 1: 5.

The Believer of the Right Things is saved by them, if he keep them in memory. (John 3: 16; 1 Cor. 15: 1, 2.) The only way to keep the Right Things in memory is by giving them out to others in loving service, and by practising them in the life, in adding to the faith the divine virtues. If these virtues be not added by him who begins well by believing the Right Things, the Right Things will presently be forgotten by him.—1 Peter 2: 9, margin; 2 Peter 1: 5-9.

The Believer of the Right Things has within his reach, through his faith, the victory that overcometh the world.—1 John 5: 4, 5.

The Believer of the Right Things is made a partaker of Christ, if he hold his faith firm to the end.—Heb. 3: 6, 14; 1 Peter 1: 9; Matt. 24: 13.

The obligation of the Christian to hold fast certain Right Things firm to the end shows that he must reject the Wrong; that is to say, he must not believe everything he may happen to hear. He must prove all the things he may hear; he must try the doctrines proposed to him; he must hold fast the Good.—1 John 4: 1; 2 Peter 2: 1; 1 Thess. 5: 21.

This shows that true Christian Faith is not fatuous credulity, nor ignorant superstition. The true Christian Faith is based on reasonable evidence, substantiating that which the Christian must believe. But what are some of these Right Things, which the Christian must believe, and must keep in memory, in order to be saved? A few of the most conspicuous of them are here mentioned.

1. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."—Heb. 11: 6.

Precisely! How could one expect to find God, while denying or doubting His existence? Or why should one seek after God, if He questioned His willingness or ability to reward the seeker? It is self-evident that belief in the existence, the sovereignty and the benevolence of God is essential; it is the very first thing. We, being finite, cannot hope to search out everything about the Infinite God; but we may know what it has pleased Him to reveal concerning Himself, (a) by the testimony of His works (Psa. 10: 1; Rom. 1: 18-20, margin; Ezek. 37: 12-14); (b) by the testimony of His Word (Psa. 119: 78, 79); (c) by the revelation of His Son, (John 10: 15; Luke 10: 22; John 14: 7-9). Another way of knowing God, and learning more about Him, is by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, granted to God's people. This is essential if one would gain eternal life.—1 John 2: 13; 3: 24; 4: 7, 8, 13; 5: 20; John 17: 13.

2. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."—John 14: 6.

He who hopes to find God must not only "diligently seek Him"; he must seek in the right manner, if success is to reward him. The etiquette at the courts of earthly potentates is arranged with great precision, and must be punctiliously observed. In approaching the Emperor of the Universe, the suppliant must honour Jesus Christ as the one Mediator between God and men, Who obtained this unique distinction by giving Himself a Ransom for all. (1 Tim. 2: 4-7.) It is true that no man can come to God except through Jesus. It is also true that Jesus is able to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by Him. The Lord Jesus can thus save, because He ever lives to intercede for those who in the first place come unto God by Him, and who, when they subsequently transgress without willfulness against the divine will, humbly confess their sin. (Heb. 5: 9; 7: 25; 10: 26; 1 John 1: 9; 2: 1, 2.) But if any one seek God and His favours in some other way,

Whoever receives this paper, not having ordered it, is requested to accept and read it, and to consider it an invitation to become a regular reader. Subscriptions may begin with any number.

he will find that Jesus Christ, the appointed Way, will be to him Jesus Christ, the Wall.

3. "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death."—Col. 1: 21, 22.

This is the work of Jesus as Mediator or Reconciler between God and men, and this is the fundamental need of men; they need Jesus, the Mediator, to reconcile them to God. These words exhibit the position of the human race every one of us born out of harmony with God, inside and outside, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. It was the mission of the Apostles, and has been the duty of all Christians since to proclaim the truth, and to beseech men to be reconciled to God and to BELIEVE the Word of Truth. If they would believe, God would impute their faith to them for righteousness, and so they would be justified or declared right. Many are the words of Scripture setting forth these things. (2 Cor. 5: 18-21; Rom. 4: 23-25; 5: 1, 11, 12, 18, 19.) And, sad to say, many are the false prophets who have arisen to deny these fundamentals.—2 Peter 2: 1-3; 2 John 10: 11.

4. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."—Acts 16: 31.

Few and simple are these words, but vast their import. Salvation is the promise, belief the condition. To believe on Jesus as Lord means that one acknowledges Jesus Christ as the Lord of all (Rom. 14: 9; Phil. 2: 9-11), and as his Lord in particular (John 20: 28, 29), to the glory of God, so that the believer submits himself to do the will of his Lord, saying, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" To believe on the Lord as Jesus means that one acknowledges himself as a sinner, and Jesus as his Saviour, Who "gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity" (Titus 2: 14), and Who shall "save His people from their sins." (Matt. 1: 21.) To believe on the Lord Jesus as Christ means that one acknowledges Jesus as the anointed Son of God, the Messiah foretold by the prophets; it means also to acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God, with power by the resurrection from the dead.—Rom. 1: 4; Acts 10: 38; 5: 30, 31; 2: 36.

5. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."—1 John 5: 1.

A son of God! Such is he who confesses that Jesus is the Messiah. He is received as a member of the divine family. After believing, he receives the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1: 13), and then he is enabled to recognise God as his Father and himself as God's son. (Rom. 8: 14-16.) Starting as a "babe," nourished by "the sincere milk of the Word," he is expected to make spiritual growth in grace and to be able to take the "strong meat" of the same Word. (1 Peter 2: 2; Heb. 5: 13, 14.) It is a love altogether extraordinary that the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. (1 John 3: 1-3.) It is more than marvellous that we, originally God's enemies, needing Jesus to act as Mediator between God and us, should be permitted to suffer with Jesus in the hope of becoming joint heirs with Him.—Rom. 8: 17; 2 Tim. 2: 12; 1 Peter 1: 3-5.

Now, how is one to Believe the Right Things without knowing them? Manifestly, one cannot believe what he has never heard. And if one cannot believe, through not having heard the Right Things, he has not yet had his opportunity for salvation. Perhaps he has died without having enjoyed such opportunity. But even so, the bereaved ones need not despair over such a case; because it is God's will that all shall be brought to an accurate knowledge of the Truth—the Right Things—to the end that they may Believe them, and so be saved unto everlasting life.—Rom. 10: 13-15; 1 Tim. 2: 4; 4: 10.

Finally, what does it really mean to Believe? Has one believed, when he has given mental assent to a proposition? No! The faith which justifies issues from the centre of one's being, propelled by the motive power of love and affection. This love is drawn forth by the realisation that God first loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4: 10.) And so we are told, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Rom. 10: 9, 10.

Was the creation of man finished when the body was formed of the dust of the ground? No; the creation of man was not finished until that body had had the breath of life breathed into its nostrils. When that was done the man became a living soul. Even so, mere mental assent is no more to be considered Faith than the breathless body was to be considered a living man. The body without the breath is dead; faith without works is dead. (James 2: 26.) Not everything is profitable to him who professes to believe in Christ, but only "Faith which worketh by Love." (Gal. 5: 6.) Thus we are again assured that the Faith on account of which God is pleased to justify issues from the heart, and is energized by love for God and Christ. (1 John 4: 20, 21; 3: 23, 24; 5: 1.) It "works," and so demonstrates its vitality. If one's Faith do not work, first in obedience to God and Christ, and second, in activity in the ministry of reconciliation which was committed to all believers (Heb. 5: 9; Phil. 2: 12; 2 Cor. 5: 19-21; 6: 1-3), it is as dead as a breathless corpse. It can avail nothing because only that "Faith which Worketh by Love" avails. "With the heart man believeth unto Righteousness," because it pleases God to impute such an one's faith to Him for righteousness. (Rom. 4: 23-25.) Therefore let us

BELIEVE.

Correspondence School

For the benefit of new inquirers the Editor of *The New Covenant Advocate*, a monthly expositor of Bible truth, will answer questions on Bible topics through the post. No fee will be charged, but the inquirer may if convenient enclose stamp for reply.

*Some of the most conspicuous of the Right Things have been very briefly mentioned in the preceding sentences. But there are many other most beautiful and cheering teachings of the Holy Word which cannot be even mentioned in this space. You are therefore invited to send for free pamphlets on "The Wideness of God's Mercy" and "Making the World Better."

Observations on the Ten Plagues of Egypt

THESE ten plagues were inflicted upon Egypt in a manner remarkably adapted to punish the stupid idolatries of that people, their monstrous wickedness, and their wanton cruelties. This will appear from a few observations.

1. The waters turned to blood. The priests of Egypt held blood in abhorrence, yet they cruelly sported with the blood of the captive Israelites, whose children they had caused to be cast into the river. The Egyptians worshipped the river Nile as a god; partly on account of its delicious waters; but chiefly as the great means of the extraordinary fertility of their lands by its annual overflow. They called it The Ocean; but its waters being turned into blood, must have ex-

cited their loathing and detestation, while the calamity would cover them with confusion and shame, their fish having died, and their deity being degraded.

2. The plague of frogs. Frogs were consecrated to the Egyptian deity Osiris; and their swelling was regarded by the priests, as an emblem of divine inspiration. Their gross superstition, therefore, was suitably punished, when their sacred river was polluted with miraculous swarms of these creatures, so as to fill the land, and to enter even their houses, their beds, and the vessels of their food, making the whole country offensive.

3. The plague of lice. The idolatries of Egypt were accompanied with rites, the most unclean, foul, and

abominable; but these were performed under the appearance of scrupulous external cleanliness, especially in respect to the priests. They were excessively cautious lest any lice should be found upon their garments, particularly when they officiated in the religious services of their idol temples: so that by this plague, their superstitious prejudices must have been distressingly shocked, and the people with the priests overwhelmed with a common disgrace; the magicians acknowledged, therefore, that this was "the finger of God."

4. The plague of flies. The Egyptians worshipped several deities, whose province it was to drive away flies, which swarmed in their country during the summer season. In many places they even offered an ox in sacrifice to these despicable insects. Beelzebub, or Baalzebub, the god of Ekron (2 Kings 1: 2), was a fly-deity of this people. The plague of flies, therefore, was the more grievous to them, as it so utterly degraded this revered divinity of Egypt.

5. The murrain of the cattle. The Egyptians held many beasts in idolatrous veneration. The lion, wolf, dog, cat, ape, and goat, among the wild animals, were held sacred by them; but especially the ox, heifer, and ram. The soul of their god Osiris was believed to reside in the body of the bull Apis: yet neither Osiris nor all the rest could save the beasts of Egypt from the fatal disease which fell upon them at the command of Moses the messenger of Jehovah. This must have been the more grievous to the Egyptians, as they found no injury befall the cattle of Israel.

6. The plague of boils. The Egyptians had several medical divinities, to whom, on particular occasions, they sacrificed living men. These were taken, it is supposed, in those times, from among the Israelites. They were burnt alive upon a high altar, and their ashes were cast into the air; that, with every scattered atom, a blessing might descend. Moses, therefore, took ashes from the furnace, perhaps where human bodies had been offered as sacrifices, and cast them into the air; atoms of which were scattered by the wind, and overspread the land, and these descended upon both priests and people in curses, with tormenting boils, which shamed their honoured deities.

7. The plague of hail, rain, and fire. In Egypt it neither hails nor rains; and the Egyptians worshipped

their fabulous deities, Isis and Osiris, as their protectors from fire: consequently this plague must have been very terrible. By the destruction of the barley, their supply of food must have been grievously diminished; and by the loss of the flax the trade in fine linen, which in Egypt was very great and important, must have been extensively spoiled, to the dishonour of their false divinities.

8. The plague of locusts. In Africa these destructive creatures so dreadfully abound, that their swarms sometimes cover an extent of land a hundred miles square; and, devouring in a single night every green herb, they produce a fearful famine, as described by the prophet Joel. Such havoc followed them in Egypt; nor could Isis, Serapis, and all the divinities of the land, avail to deliver them from under the rod of Moses, the appointed badge of his divine mission.

9. The plague of darkness. The Egyptians worshipped darkness as the origin of their gods. Orpheus, the most ancient pagan writer, who borrowed his notions from Egypt, in one of his hymns says, "I will sing of night, the parent of the gods and men: night, the origin of all things." They were therefore plagued with a horrible darkness—the blackness of darkness, with darkness which might be felt. . . . These evils their gods had no power either to prevent or alleviate, while the Israelites enjoyed light in all their dwellings.

10. The death of the first-born in every family. The howlings of the Egyptians at their funerals, and at the decease of their friends, were dreadful beyond those of every other people; but now they had cause for their lamentation. The principal reason of this last and heaviest calamity, was to avenge their unlamented cruelties upon the people of Israel. They had been preserved as a nation by one of that family, and yet they had enslaved the people, and murdered numbers of their male children; but now the awful vengeance of God overtook them, in righteous retribution visiting every house with the death of the eldest child in every family, "from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on the throne, even unto the first-born of the maid-servant that was behind the mill, and all the first-born of beasts." This last judgment humbled the proud spirit of Pharaoh, and he in haste released the people of God.

—Companion to the Bible.

Adversaries and the Adversary

(Continued from April issue.)

There are several points to notice here. First, the distinction carefully made between those who were "diseased" and those who were "possessed of devils." The woman who was confined to bed with a fever is not said to have been possessed with a devil, although *delirium* is a general symptom of that disease; on the other hand, the man with the unclean spirit was not so incapacitated but that he could attend the synagogue, and his delirium (if such it could be called) is ascribed to an outside influence—

"What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God."—Mark 1: 24.

The second point to notice is that in the healing of the fever patient no injury was caused by the departure of the complaint; neither did the departing fever offer a protest. At the word of the Master, the patient was quite well, so that she was able to wait upon him, as

was befitting. But how was it with the man from whom the unclean "spirit" was cast out? He was "torn" (i.e., convulsed) with one last paroxysm, in token of the anger of the evil spirit at being driven out. Surely this was no ordinary sickness! See also Mark 9: 26.

The third point to notice is that our Lord from the very beginning of His ministry rebuked the spirits as persons of reason and intelligence. Not only did Jesus rebuke the spirit which was cast out at the synagogue (Verse 25), but all those subsequently cast out—

"He suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him."—Mark 1: 34. R.V. margin.

Matthew (4: 23, 24) makes a distinction between "divers diseases and torments," "palsy," "lunatics" (R.V. epileptics), and "those which were possessed with devils" (Gr. *demoniacs*); yet

according to Matt. 9: 32; 12: 22; 17: 15, dumbness, blindness and epilepsy may be accompaniments of demoniacal possession. (Verse 18.)

The leper was instantly cleansed (Mark 1: 40-42); the sick of the palsy rose up immediately (2: 12); the withered hand was at once restored whole as the other (3: 5); the woman was straightway made whole when she touched the hem of His garment (5: 25-34); the deaf and dumb at once spoke plainly (7: 35—a most wonderful cure); the blind “saw every man clearly” (8: 25); the dead were raised without commotion. (Mark 5: 42; John 11: 44.) The healing of the sickness was all that was required.

But in the matter of casting out demons or evil spirits the relief of the afflicted was not the only requirement; the evil spirit responsible for the obsession had to be rebuked, and commanded to silence.—Mark 3: 11, 12; 9: 17-26.

Another point to notice is that frequently the demons or evil spirits cried out, before they were addressed by the Lord, by way of showing acquaintance with Him. This is not said of those afflicted with disease; only of the obsessed. The Lord did not wish their testimony as to His identity. Their patronage would have done His cause no good; it would have confused the issue. A clear cut line of separation needed to be made between them and the Son of God. (Mark 1: 24, 25, 34; 2: 11, 12; etc.) The same was true of the Apostles, who refused their testimony.—Acts 16: 16.

Evil Spirits or Demons

It will be observed that in the above remarks the evil “spirits” have been identified with the “devils” or “demons” (R.V.). The reason of this is that the Scripture accounts use the words interchangeably. (Compare Matt. 8: 28, 31; Mark 5: 2, 12, 13, 16; Luke 10: 17, 20.) The phrase “possessed with a devil” is a translation of the Greek *demonizomai*, which means, according to Strong, to be “exercised by a demon.”

The word “devil” as used in the Authorized Version is from two different Greek words, *daimon* or *daimonion*, and *diabolus*. The former is rendered “demon” in the R.V., and occurs in its various forms about 77 times. As above shown it is used interchangeably with “spirit,” to denote evil angels who sometimes take possession of men.

The meaning of *diabolus* will be considered further along. The Revised Version, either in the text or in the margin, gives “demon” when required by the original.

No other explanation but that of spirit possession or control seems adequate to the facts. Nor is it right to say, as some do, that our Lord and the Apostles, in rebuking the “demons,” were making a concession to the superstition of those times. That was not their custom on other subjects, and to make such an assertion in regard to this one is pure assumption. It is common among heathen peoples to regard all disease as produced by the gods, which, they say, need to be propitiated, sometimes by the sacrifice of living children. The Lord and the Apostles discountenanced all error and superstition. As already shown, they carefully distinguished between ordinary sickness and demoniacal possession; and far from encouraging the people to propitiate the evil spirits, they boldly showed their authority over those spirits by the voice of command—“in the name of the Lord Jesus.”—Matt. 10: 8; Luke 9: 1, 2; 10: 1; Acts 16: 18.

There are at least two things which those who deny demoniacal possession are unable to account for, besides the conversations between the demons and those who had power over them. The first is the circumstance of the man in the tombs. He had “many devils” (they claimed to be a “legion”), who, on realising that they were to be cast out from the man, pleaded that He “would not command them to go out into the deep”—R.V., “the abyss.” (Luke 8: 31.) Whether the ideas and fears of the demons concerning “the abyss” were correct or not, the fact remains that they, as intelligent beings, were able to express a choice of residence, and to offer an objection to the will of the Lord, whom they acknowledged to be the Son of God. They were bound to go wherever the Lord commanded them, and at their request He permitted them to enter into the swine. The result was that the entire herd “ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.” Those who deny demoniacal possession must not only explain how a disease, such as insanity, could engage in conversation, and suggest an adequate motive for the Lord to transfer disease from one man to a herd of animals, but they must also explain why three evangelists (Matthew, Mark and Luke), writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, give these details as a true historical record for the benefit of God’s people throughout the age; for it is to be remembered that the New Testament was not written solely (if at all) for the Gadarenes who witnessed this miracle, but for believers of subsequent times.

The second thing which those who deny demoniacal possession are unable to account for is how a disease, even such an one as insanity or epilepsy, could be a means of gain, so that a young girl should support several “masters,” who should be enraged when the “spirit of divination” had been cast out of her, and they found “that the hope of their gains was gone.” (Acts 16: 19.) “Divination” and “soothsaying” are not symptoms of insanity or epilepsy to-day, and there is no reason to suppose that they ever were. Just what they consisted in, we shall endeavour to show further on.

Further assistance to the understanding of the ancient use of the word *demon* is found in Acts 17: 18. The Athenians said that Paul “seemeth to be a setter forth of strange demons;” or, as the American R.V. has it, “foreign divinities.” From this it appears that the ancients called their gods (both good and bad), “demons,” the idol or statue being merely a representation of the god, and not the god itself. The attributes which the heathen gave to their gods, such as Jupiter or Zeus, Mercury or Hermes, Diana, Baal, etc., were undoubtedly fictitious, but from what the Scriptures say of evil spirits, it would appear that these spirits took advantage of heathen credulity to drag them down to greater depths of sin and degradation. This use of the word “demon,” to refer to heathen divinities or gods, is also shown in Matt. 9: 34; Mark 3: 22, 23; Luke 11: 15-20.

The word “demon” is always used by the Lord and the apostles in a bad—never in a good—sense; and the worship of the heathen is ascribed as rendered, not to the idol itself, nor in an innocent and ignorant way to God (as some modern apologists for idolatry would have us believe), but to evil spirits—

“What say I then? that a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? But I say, that the things

which the Gentiles sacrifice, *they sacrifice to demons*, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have communion with demons. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons; ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of demons. Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?—1 Cor. 10: 19-22.

These words lose all their force if it is not recognised that the Apostle was warning the Church of the real power behind heathen idolatry. This warning is as much needed to-day as then. But it was not the first warning which the Lord had given His people on the subject. The Jews had for ages been instructed to avoid all heathen abominations, and they had been, on different occasions, severely punished for disobedience. (Micah 5: 12-14.) Words similar to Paul's were spoken by Moses in the wilderness. (Deut. 32: 16-19.) The Psalmist also showed the connection between demons and idolatry. (Psa. 106: 36-39.) In both these instances the word "devils" should be "demons."

Divination, Necromancy, etc., Forbidden

The warnings and commands to the children of Israel through Moses were very explicit:—

"When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of these nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord; and because of these abominations the Lord doth drive them out before thee."—Deut. 18: 9-12; Lev. 19: 26, 31; 20: 6.

"A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death."—Lev. 20: 27; Exod. 22: 18.

We read that Moses was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7: 22), which probably included a knowledge of the methods of those who practised magical arts. The Israelites in general, although they lived in the land of Goshen, separate from the Egyptians, were doubtless more or less contaminated by their intercourse with an idolatrous people, else they would not so readily in the wilderness have made the golden calf to worship. (Exod. 32.) A "mixed multitude" who followed them were probably largely responsible for this readiness to carry along the heathen abominations. (Num. 11: 4.) It was necessary, therefore, in order to have this people for a holy people of God, to separate them from these evil practices and influences, human and Satanic. Well would it have been for Israel, had they obeyed God in these matters; and well would it be for men of later days, who see these warnings in the Scriptures, if they would avoid as the plague all and sundry modern manifestations of evil spirits.

In Israel there was no need to consult heathen diviners and magicians, for God had given to Moses and Aaron, in addition to the elaborately detailed Law, the "Urim and Thummim." (Exod. 28: 30; Lev. 8: 8.) The movements of the children of Israel were directed by the judgment of the Urim and Thummim, when the High Priest bore it upon his breast into the Most Holy; as were all other matters of importance (not detailed in the written Law) during their subsequent history. (Num. 27: 21; Judges 1: 1; 20: 18, 26-28.) The Lord also sent them prophets through whom further warnings and instruction were given. Failure to consult the Lord before entering upon various leagues and enterprises was an affront to God. (Joshua 9: 14, 15; 1 Chron. 10: 14.) Saul's complete rejection by the Lord was shown by his failure to

receive answer by the Urim and Thummim or by the Prophet Samuel. (1 Sam. 28: 6.) And his wilful apostasy was shown by his consultation with one of the forbidden "witches," and specifically asking her to consult her "familiar spirit," and "divine" what he wished to know. (1 Sam. 28: 7, 8.) Ahaziah, King of Israel, preferred to "inquire" of Baal-zebub, rather than of God. (1 Ki. 1: 2, 3.) But David's position as successor of Saul to be King of Israel was shown by the fact that he received answers from the Lord, by the Urim and Thummim, when he went to enquire according to the prescribed manner.—1 Sam. 23: 2-12; 30: 7, 8.

The forbidding of the children of Israel to make graven images, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth (Exod. 20: 4, 23), did away with more than the idols of Egypt and Canaan, which were confessedly made to represent heathen deities, and which were associated with many corrupt practices. This command also forbade those "household gods" (the Teraphim) which seem to have been in use in the days of Laban, if not from the earliest times, and which may have been originally associated with the worship of Jehovah (Gen. 31: 19, 33; 25: 22; 1 Sam. 19: 13-16, R.V.), but which were afterwards perverted to idolatrous purposes. (Judges 17: 5; 18: 18-20.) The Teraphim were dispensed with at the same time that the erection of individual altars for sacrifice was discontinued, and for the same reason, namely, that God might be recognised as dwelling in the Tabernacle (subsequently the Temple), and that approach to Him should be through the prescribed sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood. Thus all the people were united in the worship of the One True God, that they might be instructed by Him in truth and holiness, and prepared to receive still richer blessing through the promised Messiah.

The "lot" was another means whereby the will of the Lord was ascertained. (Prov. 16: 33.) The land of Canaan was divided by lot. (Num. 26: 55, 56; Josh. 17: 6.) Saul was chosen King by this means. (1 Sam. 10: 17-21.) The same custom prevailed among other nations. (Jonah 1: 7; Matt. 27: 35.) But when Israel ran after other gods, the Lord no longer honoured them in the casting of lots; which custom passed away with other legal forms, when Christ nailed them to the cross.

Divination

These inquiries of the Lord by the Urim and Thummim were never called "divination," that term being always used in an evil sense. To "divine" was to read the future by various "signs," "omens," etc. Eight kinds of divination are spoken of in Scripture—by the cup (Gen. 44: 2, 15), by arrows, by the teraphim (images), by the liver (Ezek. 21: 21, 22), by the staff (Hosea 4: 12), by astrology (Isa. 47: 13), by dreams (Deut. 13: 1-3), and by familiar spirits (1 Sam. 28: 8; Acts 16: 16), most of these being mixed with various enchantments and magical arts. It is not likely that Joseph used his cup for that purpose, but his remark shows that divining by the cup was customary in Egypt in his day.

On the methods employed, Horne's "Introduction" says:—

"Julius Serenus tells us, that the method of *divining by the cup* among the Abyssinians, Chaldees, and Egyptians, was to fill it first with water, then to throw into it their plates of

gold and silver, together with some precious stones, whereon were engraved certain characters; and, after that, the persons who came to consult the oracle used certain forms of incantation, and so calling upon the devil, received their answers several ways; sometimes by articulate sounds, sometimes by the characters, which were in the cup, arising upon the surface of the water, and by this arrangement forming the answer; and many times by the visible appearing of the persons themselves about whom the oracle was consulted. Cornelius Agrippa tells us likewise, that the manner of some was to pour melted wax into a cup containing water, which wax would range itself into order, and so form answers, according to the questions proposed.

Jerome . . . says that the manner of *divining by arrows* was this: They wrote on several arrows the names of the cities against which they intended to make war, and then putting them promiscuously all together into a quiver, they caused them to be drawn out in the manner of lots, and that city, whose name was on the arrow first drawn out, was the first they assaulted. This method of divination was practised by the idolatrous Arabs, and prohibited by Mohammed, and was likewise used by the ancient Greeks and other nations.

Divination by inspecting the liver of slaughtered animals was another mode of ascertaining future events, much practised by the Greeks and Romans. The liver was the first and principal part of the entrails observed for this purpose.

Divination by the staff . . . is supposed to have been thus performed: The person consulting measured his staff by spans, or by the length of his finger, saying, as he measured, "I will go, or, I will not go; I will do such a thing, or, I will not do it," and as the last span fell out so he determined. [Another method] was performed by erecting two sticks, after which they murmured forth a certain charm, and then, according as the sticks fell, backwards or forwards, towards the right or left, they gave advice in any affair."

An unhealthy state of mind is, to say the least, the result of such practices of divination. Such a mind sees "signs" and "omens" in everything (see 1 Kings 20:33, R.V., margin); instead of acting from principle, or on grounds of reason and equity, it is the constant prey of conflicting emotions of fear, desperation, cupidity, and expediency. All down the ages, the nations have been under bondage to these or similar superstitions. Even in our day, to see a black cat, or to get sight of the moon over the shoulder, or to spill salt, are considered "bad omens." In the latter case, the "spell" is broken by tossing some of the salt over the shoulder. To foretell the future by the forms assumed by the tea leaves (the modern divination by the cup), or by interpreting dreams, are favourite (and injurious) "amusements" in many households to-day.

(To be Continued.)

The comparatively innocent "loves me, loves me not," while plucking the petals of a flower, is likewise a survival of the ancient "divination" by measurements on the staff.

What shall we say, then, of those who (for a consideration) still cast a "horoscope"—to judge, from the positions of the heavenly bodies at a person's birth, what his future will be (Isa. 47: 11-13), of the "sorcerers," or "enchanters" (Acts 8: 9-11; 13: 6-12; Mal. 3: 5), and of the Pythonesses (Acts 16: 16), whose successors are all too numerous and prosperous to-day, under the names of "astrologers," "mental healers," "fortune tellers," spiritualistic "mediums," "mind readers," and "hypnotists"; not to mention the "fakirs" of India and the "medicine-men" of savage tribes?

Professing Christians who "dabble" in divination, in even its simplest and most apparently innocent form, place themselves in a most peculiar position. In the practice of the ancient pagan rites, the worship of demons was openly acknowledged; their intervention and aid were expected, and openly asked. But whose aid is sought under modern divination?

No person who considers the matter seriously can conceive that bits of wax or tea leaves could of themselves foretell the future; to be of worth there must be in control some power possessing foreknowledge; or, at least, the will to bring about the desired ends. A Christian who knows the true God, and that the Scriptures are a revelation from Him, cannot consistently expect Him to have a part now in those practices which He formerly so strongly condemned; nor can he expect the good angels, the obedient messengers of the true God, to assist in such devices. There remain then only the evil spirits, to encourage men in divination and magic, and to fulfil in so far as they may be permitted to do so, the indications or omens they themselves produce. We say, in so far as they may be permitted; for in olden times God often exposed the "lying divinations" by preventing their fulfilment; and, when it suited Him, even the heathen idolators were caused to carry out certain of His purposes. (1 Kings 22: 1-40.) Knowing that God is more powerful than all the evil spirits combined, why not keep on the Lord's side?

What is and is to be accomplished by the Death of Christ

Address delivered at Bible Conference, Melbourne, Good Friday, 1911

A CONSIDERATION of the teachings abroad relative to the punishment for sin reveals some very strange ideas; still more strange are some of the ideas that are held relative to the nature of sin itself. Yet if we are willing to take the Bible statements on these matters of sin and death, and are careful not to introduce any ideas of our own into them, their clearness and simplicity are little less than astonishing.

By inference the first man was promised that if he would obey he would live; he was directly told that if he disobeyed he would die. (Gen. 2: 17). Disobedience is the opposite of obedience; and in this case it indicates

that all that the man had of privilege, blessing and favour under obedience was to be removed under disobedience; that conditions directly opposite to these were to obtain.

Under obedience, for example, the man possessed the breath of life; under disobedience he was not to have it. Under obedience the beautiful garden was to be his home, where

Sweetness mingled with the morning dew
Floods all his senses through and through.

He was to exercise dominion over all the creatures of the earth; the friendship of a beautiful companion was his, and he enjoyed the splendours of a perfect

life. (Deut. 32: 4; Psalms 8: 5-8; Heb. 2: 6-8.) Under disobedience all these were to cease; he would be put out of the garden, he would lose dominion over the creatures of the earth, he would be separated from his wife, and his life would be taken away from him. These were truly opposite conditions. The penalty for sin (or disobedience), then, was death, or the cessation of life. The creature was not to be allowed to live; he had to cease to exist, and thus to fulfil the condition for disobedience.

Death not Life

That the death of the first transgressor was really death, and not life in any sense whatsoever, is plain from what we have just considered as well as from a multitude of scriptures. (Psalms 88: 10-12; Ecclesiastes 9: 5, 10; Gen. 3: 19, etc.) Paul the Apostle declared that "By man came death" (1 Cor. 15: 21), and Ezekiel the Prophet likewise, in words that admit of no challenge, "the soul that sinneth it shall die." (Ezek. 18: 4, 20.) Then hear the further words of Paul (Rom. 5: 12) assuring us that "all are sinners," and therefore all die. Nowhere in all the Scripture is the thought of life associated with sin, but always death, the opposite of life.

We thus come to realise that the penalty for sin is a reality, a terrible reality—the cutting off of all life in death—and is not (as is so commonly supposed) a releasing of the spirit from this tenement of clay so that it soars away into some spirit world, awaiting a judgment, or entering into pleasures ineffable and unending, or woe unspeakable and eternal. Nothing of the kind is said or suggested in connection with the descriptions of the penalty for sin.

Were we to accept this common view, we should have to say that the penalty for sin was *life*, and thus we should come into conflict with both the apostle and the prophet above quoted. Moreover, we should be opposing ourselves to the Lord God who passed the sentence of *death* upon the sinner; and yet more, we should be associating ourselves with the Great Liar who in the incident in the garden practically asks, "hath God said ye shall surely die"? I say, "Ye shall not surely die."—Gen. 3: 1-4.

The life which the first transgressor forfeited, and in this appears the strange thing about the punishment, he forfeited not only for himself but for all who were in him—all his descendants, as the Apostle assures us in his letter to the Romans—

"Wherefore, . . . by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men."—Rom. 5: 12.

Constituted Sinners

So this curse of death has passed from Adam through all the centuries of time and along all the generations which have succeeded him—this curse upon *all*—the fruit of the one transgression. But this curse of death coming to us all through the first man by heritage does not measure the entire distance to which we have been removed from God and Eden through sin. Bad enough indeed to be cursed to death through the transgression of another; but when in addition we are told by the same apostle in the same letter that in consequence of the curse we are **CONSTITUTED SINNERS** or **ENEMIES** of God, our true condition is thus revealed as one of hopelessness and despair. For no matter how strong the desire to be righteous; no matter what efforts are put forth to attain to righteousness, or how far we succeed in acquiring it, our sinful constitution

is a barrier of separation from God and perfection which we cannot break down.

Constituted a sinner! and therefore by virtue of being so constituted bound to suffer the penalty for sin. The curse of death hangs over us as a sword! No army was ever more securely ambushed and taken by the stealth of the enemy than the *whole race* taken in the death-trap of sin by the stealth of the Great Adversary!

Do we fully realise the truth on this matter; are we fully aware of what it means? Think of it! Twenty-seven thousand millions of human beings swept into the abyss of death as by a masterstroke wholly unable to help themselves or to escape that stern and unrelenting denouncement of sin—"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." No wonder the transgressors "hid themselves."

A Way of Escape

But is there really no way of escape? Are we to remain forever under the dominion of death and at the mercy of the tyrant sin or until we are exterminated from the earth through his ravages?—Rom. 6: 6-12, 21, 23.

Exact and stern is the Justice of God and unerring is His Wisdom; hence His decrees cannot in any wise be changed. (Mal. 3: 6; Isa. 55: 11.) When He says the sinner must die, it is not for us to suppose that he will be kept alive; and since the apostle assures us that all have sinned (Rom. 5: 12), we are bound to conclude that all must suffer the penalty and must forever remain under the sentence—in death—unless the Wisdom and Mercy of God can provide a way out of it, so that the sinner might justly and graciously be released—wherein God could be just, and yet justify unto life.—Rom. 3: 26.

Let us then suppose for the present that every member of our race has died, and been called by our Lord Jesus from the grave; the bare fact of being raised again would really be of no permanent benefit to them, because they would still be sinners; and as sin was the occasion of their destruction in the first instance, it would also destroy them again. They would still be sinners after they were raised because nothing happened them while they were dead; they were neither made better nor worse during that period, for "the dead know not anything" the Preacher says, and "There is no device nor knowledge nor wisdom in the grave."—Eccles. 9: 5, 10.

Something additional to the mere fact of being raised from the grave must be provided so that *sin* might be effectually purged from them—so effectually that the least tendency thereto would be removed. This appears necessary, for death is the punishment for sin, and if sin be removed death must go; likewise all those premonitors of death—sickness, suffering and pain.

The elimination of sin from the individual would necessarily require time—it may be a long time—and under these circumstances occasional slips and lapses into sin again may occur in those not fully freed from its power. Any arrangement therefore providing for the eradication of sin from the race manifestly must include the means whereby such offences can be overlooked or forgiven and not counted against the individual, subject to his sincere repentance. Such a provision would enable the weak one to continue his upward journey, and when subjected to trial again he may, by the Grace of God and profiting by his for-

mer experience, prove himself conqueror. Anyone submitting to this process would in time reach an end in which all sin and every tendency to sin would be removed and a character for righteousness established and every tendency directed towards it. The words, the deeds and the thoughts of the heart would be holy and therefore acceptable to God. This would be a state of perfection, surely! It would be a returning to the condition in which the first man lived before he sinned—a state of holiness and harmony with God, of which (if preserved) everlasting life was to be the reward.

Could a ransom be provided so that the race could be raised from the dead and some gracious and beneficent arrangement be made whereby sin could be effectually and completely eradicated, then, on the completion of this process, they all could be presented to God without spot and blameless and on the basis of God's own arrangement with the first man, viz., that if obedient he should live—everlasting life would be theirs. Being raised, and having their characters established in righteousness by the post-resurrection processes if submitted to, there would be nothing in them worthy of death.

God's Gracious Provision

Would it come as a surprise to any of us to know that God the Father long ago set apart a period of time for the carrying out of this very purpose of delivering sinners from sin and death? It is even so!

Long before man was created out of the dust, even when the sons of God shouted for joy at the creation, (Job. 38: 7), His own well beloved Son was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13: 8.) HE was to be the Ransom; He was to be the "Propitiation for the sins of the whole world." (1 Tim. 2: 5; 1 John 2: 2.) Thus while Divine Omniscience foresaw the fall of the man into sin, and all the terrible train of consequences, it had also foreseen and arranged the remedy! God had graciously and with a faultless wisdom allowed all the race to be plunged into death by the transgression of the one man, so that by the obedience of the *One* a way might be provided out of sin and death unto life again!

Listen to the apostle in those passages just lately quoted from the Romans—

"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were constituted sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be constituted righteous."—Rom. 5: 18, 19.—See Strong's Concordance for definition of *kathistemi*, A.V. "made."

"O the Depth of the Riches"

A thoughtful consideration of these facts reveals one of the many instances of the wonderful economy of God; for on the principle enunciated to the Jews in their Covenant, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth; a hand for a hand, and a man's life for a man's life (Exod. 21: 24; Deut. 19: 21; Lev. 24: 17-21), it is obvious that the one transgressor whose sin involved the race in death needed but the one Deliverer, (1 Cor. 15: 21, 22; 1 Tim. 2: 4-6.) From another viewpoint these facts show forth the surpassing love of the Father in making a sacrifice which involved Himself to the extent at least of "giving" His own well beloved Son on behalf of His *enemies*, while no words that could be said would sufficiently honour the Son for becoming the sacrifice.—John 3: 16; 1 John 4: 10; Rom. 5: 8-11.

Here the Apostle Paul raising a paean of exultation in this grand arrangement, as he reviews it both for his own people and the Gentiles—

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? . . . for of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever."—Rom. 11: 33-35.

The Lord of All

Is it conceivable to the minds of any of us that God would allow so great a sacrifice as this to go without special reward? There is but one answer to the question. Hear what the scriptures say—

"Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2: 9-11.

"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living."—Rom. 14: 9.

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."—Matt. 28: 18.

"And He is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell."—Col. 1: 18, 19.

A Great Deliverer

When our Lord Jesus Christ laid down His life He laid it down as one who was sinless, and therefore not under the condemnation of death. But it is said of Him that He came for the express purpose of giving His life "a ransom for many" (Matt. 20: 28)—a ransom for many, because the many are held prisoners under the condemnation of God and cannot release themselves. Hear the voice of prophecy through Isaiah—

"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."—Isa. 61: 1.

"To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."—Isa. 42: 7.

"That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves!"—Isa. 49: 9.

This is the Great Deliverer—he who can call out the dead—the "dead in trespasses and sins," as well as the dead in the graves—for He is the Ransomer (Isa. 59: 16; Matt. 1: 21; 20: 28; 1 Tim. 2: 4-7; Jno. 3: 16; 5: 22-29; Heb. 5: 9); He paid the requisite price with His own blood; He bought the race; He purchased it by the sacrifice of His own life.—John 6: 51; 10: 15. This was the glad message of hope proclaimed by the heavenly messengers—

"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day . . . a Saviour"—a Deliverer.—Luke 2: 10, 11; 1: 31-33.

"Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6: 19, 20), and now all the children of Adam, sinners, enemies of God, can say each one for himself individually, He "loved me and gave Himself for me." (Gal. 2: 20; 1 Tim. 1: 15.) Not only was the ransom price found in the blood of Jesus, but it was also a satisfactory offering for sin. "He is the propitiation . . . for the sins of the whole world."—1 John 2: 2.

But His blood did more than ransom the race; it did more than make an acceptable offering for sin; it also ratified a covenant (Luke 22: 20; Heb. 9: 15—

18), in which are stated the terms and conditions under which the race might approach God and eventually be made an acceptable people unto Him.

Reasons Why a Mediator is Required

One of the items in the terms of the New Covenant, indeed one of its necessary provisions, is that it should have a Mediator; for God cannot look upon sin nor suffer the sinner in his presence. (Heb. 1: 13; Psa. 66: 18; 50: 16; Eph. 2: 12.) Jesus is the Mediator between God and men, by virtue of the fact that He was the covenant victim; He died that the covenant might be valid and firm (Heb. 9: 17). As the scripture saith, "I am the way; . . . no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."—John 14: 6.

Anyone therefore coming unto the Father must do so by Jesus, the Mediator who is officiating for the purpose, and must do so under the terms of the New Covenant, of which He is the Mediator. This is the divinely appointed way; it is therefore useless to seek any other. It is the means whereby we may become "friends" and be no longer "enemies" of God. To come to the Father is to acknowledge both the Mediator and the New Covenant, for this is the sin-forgiving covenant, the covenant of grace, of loving kindness, of mercy; under it a loving God says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. 8: 10-13; 10: 16-18.

This New Covenant takes cognisance of the degraded state into which the race has fallen, mentally, morally and physically, through sin—and it is the only covenant in which provision is made to meet the circumstances and requirements of the race, thus making it an effective covenant. For in its provision of grace, mercy and loving kindness is found an effective instrument for the removal of sin from the willing and obedient and the establishment of a character for righteousness in its place.

The Great Machinery of God

What have we then before us? briefly—

1. Sin entering into the world, and death by sin.
2. Man in his pristine glory an outcast returning to the dust from whence he was taken.
3. His Creator, foreseeing all, with pitying love having arranged for his recovery.
4. The Son becoming the Deliverer; becoming the willing sacrifice whose blood was—
 - a. The price sufficient to buy the sinner and all his children;
 - b. The propitiation for sin; and which
 - c. Sealed the sin-forgiving covenant.

So that, the ownership of the race having passed to Jesus by right of purchase; in whose blood is the ransom, and the atonement for sin, and by whose blood the sin-forgiving covenant was sealed and ratified, we may discern that in Him God has provided the means for our deliverance from death and sin, leaving for us the exercise of faith and obedience in and to our "Owner."

In other words, we become aware of the momentous fact that sin and death have met their victor in Christ Jesus. By His obedience even unto death, He triumphed over them!

Since Pentecost this great machinery of God has accomplished and is still doing its designed work. Many having heard the glad message of forgiveness

through Christ have exercised faith and obedience, and are putting on Christ and the character for righteousness.—Acts 2: 38, 39; 3: 19; Gal. 3: 27; 5: 24.

What is to be accomplished?

Search for it in the Pentateuch; you will find it there. Ask the Prophets; the Psalmist. See it in the straight words of our Lord and the brilliant arguments of the Apostle Paul. Hear it in the burning words of Peter and the graceful speech of John; for a blessing was promised for "all the families of the earth" (Gen. 12: 1-3; Isa. 25: 6-8; Psa. 2: 8-10; 110: 1-7; Matt. 11: 28-30; Acts 3: 26; Rom. 1: 16; Gal. 3: 14, 26-29; 1 Pet. 1: 2-5; John 3: 2; 5: 1; Rev. 21: 1-8), and He must reign till He hath put down *all enemies* under His feet.—1 Cor. 15: 20-27.

If then Eden, harmony with God, and life itself were lost by the race through the one transgressor, and arrangements are made in Christ whereby it may get life, peace with God and Eden (a heavenly inheritance being reserved for the church), subject to the conditions of faith and obedience, what more should it require? It required a real lasting experience of the exceeding bitterness of sin, so that they might be ready to welcome the righteous kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, which Kingdom we ourselves who have already received the benefits of the New Covenant gladly acknowledge and submit to; and if faithful the promise is that we shall be kings and priests in glory.

What is to be accomplished?

The delivering up of a kingdom of countless millions of human beings raised from the dead, cleansed of sin, enjoying the splendours of a perfect life; the earth yielding her increase, the desert blossoming as the rose, in the wilderness waters breaking out and streams in the desert (Isa. 35)—a happy people reconciled to God by the death of His Son, and God Himself dwelling among them (Rev. 21: 1-3), while the ages of the ages and countless ages roll over them in vain, for "death is swallowed up of victory."

Then shall be fulfilled the saying that is written, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."—Isa. 53: 11.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow! All honour to his beloved Son!

May it be our portion to be found somewhere amongst the mighty host whom the Revelator saw:—

"And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, . . . and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea and all that are in them heard I saying, Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever.—Rev. 5: 11-13. F.S.

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E. C. HENNINGES, EDITOR

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The Field is the World

The Anglican Archbishop

According to the "Argus" report, Dr. Clarke, the Archbishop of Melbourne, said in his Easter sermon—"Christ came to proclaim the glorious truth that man does not die." So said the Archbishop. But one wonders, when reading such an assertion, Where is the alleged teaching of Christ recorded? Will His Grace do us the kindness to point out the chapter and verse in which such teaching on a most important subject is found?

The fact is that Christ did not come to proclaim that "man does not die." What He did come for was—

"I am come THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE LIFE."—John 10: 10.

Did our Lord make a mistake in thus stating the purpose of His coming? Did He come unnecessarily? Did He come to give life, and find that men already had it, and that "man does not die?" Or has the Archbishop made a mistake? Undoubtedly the latter. Men do die. When they die, they sleep, and there is no activity whatsoever in the grave whither they go. But there is to be a resurrection of all in the graves, and then there will be a resumption of activity, and a time of great blessing. This is the testimony of both the Old and New Testaments,* concerning both saint and sinner, and the Archbishop's Easter sermon serves but to show how far he has departed from the scientific simplicity of God's Truth into the complications of man's inventions.

*For complete exposition of this subject, which is too large for this issue, please see the 48-page pamphlet—"The Dead. Where are They?" Order from any of our offices for 3d. (5 cent) post paid.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop

According to the same paper's report, Dr. Carr said—

"Preaching on the Resurrection, Archbishop Carr said that the essential miracle here did not rest on the fact that the dead had been raised, for the soul had been brought back to the body on several occasions by holy men, who had been commissioned by God. It lay in the fact that Christ, having surrendered His own life, had resumed it again not by the power of another, but by that of His divinity alone. This was what constituted in the resurrection the mystery of mysteries, and made Easter the festival of festivals."

In the books of Acts, Romans, Ephesians, etc., there are twenty-five or thirty statements to the effect that God, the Father, raised Jesus, His Son, from death. But this Archbishop declares that Christ resumed His life "not by the power of another, but by that of His divinity alone." It would have been a very simple matter for the inspired apostles to have said what Dr. Carr asserted, had that been true. But the apostles never said it, nor anything like it; what they did say was the other way, as already noted.* According to the Archbishop's manner, such a prophecy as Psalm 16: 10, 11, should be "interpreted" to mean—

I shall not leave my soul in hell; neither shall I suffer myself to see corruption. By the power of my divinity alone, and without the assistance of another, I shall discover for myself the path of life.

How contrary to Truth this heresy is! Christ did die for our sins according to the Scriptures, and the Father Himself raised Him from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures. Is it not sad to see men in such high positions misleading the people—deceiving and being deceived?

*For Scripture references on this subject, please see "Advocate," January 1911, page 148.

A Group of Similitudes

THE POWER of our Lord's parables lay in their ability to place vivid pictures before the mind, enlisting the sympathy, hopes and fears of the hearers, and leaving an ineffaceable impression upon the memory. Who has not wandered with the prodigal son into the far country, mourned with him over the ruins of his career, and returned fearful and yet expectant to the father's house? And who has not said, Oh, if God's love for repentant sinners is so great, surely there is hope for me. I, too, will forsake evil and throw myself upon His mercy. That was the encouragement given to the publicans and sinners who heard the parable; they were glad to apply the lesson, and to be received back into the favour of God from which they had wandered.

Equally striking were some of the briefer parables or similitudes. In the Great Teacher's mouth, the common objects of daily life, with which all were familiar, became apt illustrations of spiritual things. Truth so presented was beyond the ability of even the keen-witted scribes and Pharisees to gainsay; even the "officers" sent by the Pharisees to take Jesus said, "Never man spake like this man," and they would not

lay hands upon him. (John 7: 32, 45, 46.) As for the "common people," among whom we are glad to count ourselves, they continually marvelled and wondered at his "gracious words," and followed Him about that they might hear the more.—Luke 4: 22; Matt. 13: 54; Mark 6: 2.

The Children of the Bridchamber

—Matt. 9: 14, 15.—

(To the Disciples of John.)

14. Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?

15. And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

IT WAS THE CUSTOM among the Jews and other ancient peoples for a man about to be married to have certain "companions" or groomsmen in attendance, sometimes as many as thirty. (Judg. 14: 10, 11.) These are called in the parable, "the children [or sons—R.V.] of the bridechamber." Of these, one was considered the special

"friend," and was most intimately associated with the bridegroom and with the marriage arrangements. (Judg. 14: 20.) John the Baptist used a similar parabolic similitude when he represented himself as "the friend of the bridegroom," who rejoiced greatly in the presence of Christ, the "bridegroom," whom he had announced to the children of Israel. John's work was not only to introduce the bridegroom, but also to prepare the bride for the bridegroom's coming, which he did by preaching repentance and baptising in the Jordan. His mission was fulfilled when the Lord's ministry was well established.—John 3: 29, 30.

Seeing that John the Baptist had so honourable and important a mission as the messenger of the Messiah, it is not surprising that John's disciples expected the Lord's work to be a continuation of that begun by John. In this, however, they were mistaken. Fasting and mourning were appropriate to a people awakened to a consciousness of their sins, and to a realisation that self-indulgence and self-satisfaction were not consistent with national bondage and humiliation such as had been their lot more or less since the Babylonian captivity; they were appropriate to a people waiting and longing for their Deliverer. But they were not appropriate after the Deliverer had come. Fasting and mourning form no part of the wedding feast. When the bridegroom arrives, all is merrymaking, joy and feasting. (Gen. 29: 22; Matt. 22: 1-14; Luke 14: 8; John 2: 1-10.) Thus was it the privilege of the disciples of Jesus to joy before Him in love.

Time enough was it to mourn and fast when He should be taken from them, when the dark days of Gethsemane and the Crucifixion should arrive, and they should be scattered in doubt and perplexity, and when they should have reason to mourn for the evil times coming upon their race, as our Lord subsequently said—
"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but for yourselves, and for your children; for behold the days are coming, in the which," etc.—Luke 23: 28, 29.

But for the true disciples those days of mourning and fasting were only temporary; for on the third day their Lord was raised from the dead, and appeared again in their midst with a message of peace and joy—

"And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. . . . Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures."—Luke 24: 41-45.

"And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God."—Luke 24: 51-53.

Thus it will be seen that the period of mourning was of short duration. The risen Lord brought to the disciples a joy which was never afterward taken away. He had said—

"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age."—Matt. 28: 20.

They could therefore always rejoice as in His presence, and they did do so, notwithstanding the persecutions and perils into which their faithful ministry of the Word led them.—Rom. 5: 1, 11; 15: 13; Phil. 4: 4; 2 Cor. 6: 4-10; 4: 15-18.

The Lord referred to this joy of the disciples following His resurrection, under the figure of a woman whose sorrow is turned into joy (John 16: 4-6, 20-22), adding many words of encouragement and hope—

"Your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." . . . "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." . . . "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—John 16: 23-33.

Old and New Cloth Old and New Bottles

—Matt. 9: 16, 17.—

16. No man putteth a piece of old cloth into a new garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.

17. Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

EXCEEDINGLY important are these words, in further explanation of why the disciples of Jesus did not fast. Disregard of them was responsible for the perpetuation in the Christian Church of Judaistic customs and arrangements. A failure to understand them lay at the root of the Apostles' reluctance to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles, and of their vacillation in regard to the observance of Jewish ceremonies, even after they were convinced and taught others that the Law was nailed to the Cross.—Col. 2: 10-16; Acts 21: 20-27; Gal. 2: 2-14; 1 Tim. 1: 7.

As in Luke 15: 3-9, our Lord here gives two illustrations of the same truth—one readily appreciated by the women among his hearers, and the other more suited to the men. There were few women but had had experience in mending garments, and been dismayed at seeing hours of labour rendered useless by a larger rent alongside the new "patch;" and there were but few men not familiar with the fact that a new wine-skin would stretch to accommodate itself to the expansion of the gases within, while an old one, having been already stretched to its utmost limit, would be unfit for the purpose: to attempt to put new wine into old bottles would be exceedingly improvident, as well as foolish, for the result would only be the irreparable loss of both.

Our Lord, being neither foolish nor improvident, and acting under instruction from the great Fountain of Wisdom, refrained from patching with new cloth the old garment of the Law Covenant, which was old and decayed and ready to vanish away; He would not imprison His new doctrines of life and hope in a dead wine-skin incapable of bearing the pressure. (Heb. 8: 13; Rom. 8: 1-4.) The preaching of John the Baptist was according to the Old Covenant, to correct the backslidden condition of the Jews—to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers, and to warn them to flee from the wrath to come upon them if they failed to reform. (Mal. 4: 3, 6; Matt. 3: 7-12; 11: 14.) The teaching of Jesus was according to the New Covenant, for the ratification of which He was about to shed His precious blood, and by which mercy might be extended to all who would believe in Him; a covenant of mercy and grace which should be open, not only to the Jews, who alone were under the Law Covenant, but to the Gentiles also, even unto as many as the Lord our God should call; for His dominion is from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. (Acts 2: 21, 39; Zech. 9: 9, 10; Dan. 7: 14.) Praise God for the refreshing and consoling "new wine" of the Gospel!

The Children in the Market Place

(To the Multitude.)

Matt. 11: 16-19; Luke 7: 31-35.—

THE PARABLE.

16. But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17. And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.

THE INTERPRETATION.

18. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil (i.e., demon).

19. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

THUS FORCIBLY did our Lord express the fact, which intrudes itself upon every one's experience, that it is impossible to please those who always want their own way and are bent on finding fault with all who do not comply with their wishes.

Just to enlarge a little upon our Lord's parable, let us imagine ourselves in the eastern market place, the busy throng coming and going, the idlers gathering in groups here and there. Now and then some Pharisee stops at a prominent corner to pray—that he may be seen of men; or a disciple of John or of Jesus lifts up his voice with the message, a crowd collects, and presently there is much disputation and vociferation, perhaps bitter words and jeers. The half-grown lads, whether employed at the stalls, or hangers-on of the crowd, amuse themselves as best they may, often with music and dancing.

On this occasion the pipers are gay, and their music is a general invitation to begin the dance; but the cheerful strains bring no response. Their mates gather, indeed, but it is to discuss their grievances, which they proceed to do with loud weeping and wailing. To these complaints, however, the pipers give no heed, but pipe away in the endeavour to jolly the crowd into the dancing mood. But soon they grow weary of playing to no purpose, and laying aside their instruments begin to lament that there is no one to make merry with them. By this time, however, the other lads, having relieved themselves, are ready for a frolic. But it is the musicians now who have a grievance: we are too tired; why did you not dance while the music was on? Now when we are weary, and ready to wail, you want to make merry; you are an unreasonable lot! To which they receive the reply: It is you who are unreasonable; who can dance when his heart is sad? And why should we now lament when our hearts are joyful?

Even so: the people of Judea were like the pipers; they piped a merry tune when John the Baptist and his disciples came lamenting, and they were mute and cross when Jesus and His disciples came rejoicing. Whichever it was, they always wanted the opposite. They wanted to regulate the missions of John and of our Lord according to their own changeable moods and fancies; whereas they should have considered if there were not some reason for fasting on the one hand and cheerful living on the other.

Children in the market places are very apt to quarrel, each selfishly wanting to impose his preferences on the others. Instead of the free spirit of comradeship, with its generous "give and take," there is bickering, and perhaps blows.

When the pipers start up a lively air, Ikey will not dance because he does not like the tune. They change the tune, but Jakey sulks because Johnny, one of the pipers, fell out with him the day before, and he will not dance as long as Johnny is recognised by the "band." For the sake of peace Johnny steps down, and the remaining pipers resume their theme; but there is trouble again, because Sammy won't dance until Johnny is reinstated. In the meantime the pipers pipe away, and a few dancers skip about, trying to make the best of the situation, while Johnny and Jakey and Sammy and their respective backers settle their differences a dozen paces away. But this does not suit the disputants. What right has anybody to be happy with music and dancing while their companions are quarrelling or sulking? So, with moral suasion or subtlety or threats, they instil the same fault-finding spirit into the few dancers till they also drop out one by one; and, finally, the pipers, discouraged by the lack of sociability and good nature which music usually generates, presently lay down their pipes and sit dolefully wondering what to do next.

And as they sit, they lament. With the hyperboles of the East they draw pictures of the bad times for boys; they cannot do as they please, their parents are too strict; the chum they liked best has moved away; they used to have merry times in the slack hours, but now everything is at sixes and sevens. Soon the lads who would not dance draw near to see what is going on now. They listen long enough to catch the drift; but do they then also lift up their voices and weep? No, indeed. The faultfinding spirit is still there. What are you crying about, you silly? You can beat your breast, but you can't beat me! The music you make now is only a little worse than your piping! Why don't you get up and dance, and shake off the blues? Here, give me your pipes, and I'll give you a tune such as you never heard before!

Now what are the poor pipers to do? Nay, more to the point is the question. What do even small boys have the wisdom to do, after they have for a time humoured the faultfinders and still cannot satisfy them? Some boy dries his tears, picks up his pipe, whistles a few notes, speaks his mind freely to the disturbers, and walks off calling out (in effect), Come along, you, and you, and you, and anybody else that wants to have a little quiet enjoyment, and we'll go over to the other corner of the market, where we can pipe and dance, or mourn and lament, without any of these fellows to find fault with us.

And that is exactly what the Lord did when the Scribes and Pharisees persisted in their unreasoning attitude. He rebuked the disturbers and ultra-critics, and gathering His disciples about Him, retired to a quiet place, where the people could again gather around Him and listen in peace to the wonderful words that proceeded out of his mouth. And these did not find fault. They only said, "Never man spake as this man." How can a man do these miracles except God be with Him? Truly this is the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

The Secret of Opposition

Some among the critics of John and of Jesus may have been well meaning people, erring only through ignorance, who would later on have their eyes opened, and be very sorry for the attitude they had even temporarily taken up; but this was not the case with all

of them. The Lord made much allowance in the case of the "common people" who had been misled by tradition and the false example of their religious teachers. But in the present instance He made no excuses for His revilers; He pointed out the root of bitterness which lay hidden beneath their faultfinding disposition—

"And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptised with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptised of him."—Luke 7: 29, 30. Comp. R.V.—"rejected for themselves the counsel of God."

The Scribes and Pharisees and others found fault with John the Baptist because he was abstemious; but the real secret of their criticism was that he preached repentance, and they did not wish to reform. Likewise, the true reason of their opposition to the Lord was not because He was less abstemious than John, but because He exposed their hypocrisy and deceit, preaching the Kingdom of Heaven, humility and cross bearing, and other unwelcome truths. *Personal criticism* was only an *excuse* which deceived none but themselves and their dupes.

God was justified, His requirements were vindicated, by those publicans and sinners who openly confessed their errors and their reformation of life by public immersion at the hands of His representative, John the Baptist. But God's counsel was rejected or despised by the Pharisees when they gave the lie to John's teaching, refusing to acknowledge their need of repentance, and to be baptised in token thereof. Yes, it would be difficult for a Pharisee, accustomed to stand in the temple or in the market place congratulating himself that he is not as other men, to acknowledge openly that after all he was a sinner like the "common herd" whom he despised; to acknowledge that he was in need of the same public confession and immersion as was appropriate to a publican or a woman of the city.

And seeing that they found excuses for rejecting John's testimony and baptism, what wonder that they showed equal facility in rejecting the testimony of Jesus? If John the preacher of righteousness had a "demon," it was easy to call Jesus a glutton, a winebibber, an agent of Beelzebub, or any other discreditable name. Calling names is one of the easiest substitutes for argument.

Our Lord's concluding comment is that "Wisdom is justified of all her children." (Luke 7: 35, R.V.) What appeared to the critics as a contradiction, John fasting in the wilderness, and Jesus feasting at the houses of rich Pharisees and publicans, while both claimed to be servants of one God and heralds of the Kingdom of Heaven, was not really so. Neither was it a mere personal matter, the one denying fleshly instincts and the other gratifying them. There was a deeper meaning in it all, which would have been explained to the faultfinders had they been willing to listen. The Jewish nation had come to a turning point in its history, when the complicated system of Judaism, with its numerous outward forms and periodical fasts, was to be superseded by the simplicity of the Gospel, with its writing of the law upon the heart and its liberty to do all things, even eating and drinking, to the glory of God. So then it was according to wisdom and to the glory of God for John and his disciples, as the last representatives of the Law Covenant and of reformed Judaism, to fast, while it was according to wisdom and to the glory of God for

Jesus and His disciples, as the first representatives or ministers of the New Covenant, to demonstrate the passing away of the old system and to rejoice in the privileges of the new order.

Lessons for To-Day

Although the direct application of our Lord's parables was almost invariably to the people and the conditions of His time, and intended to assist the sincere truth seekers among the Jews to understand His doctrines, the necessity for separation from the worn out or evil institutions of the Scribes and Pharisees and even from the inadequacy of the Law under which they had lived for centuries, and the inevitableness of cross bearing and self-denial, yet there is in the above similitudes a general principle applicable down the age even to the present day. Old and corrupt institutions cannot be patched without making worse rents; the vital doctrines of Christ cannot be confined in organisations and systems which long ago have lost their elasticity.

Furthermore, those who have come into the New Covenant, who preach its gracious provisions of love and mercy for the forgiveness of sins, and who are loyal to Christ as the Son of God and the Mediator between God and men, can expect no kinder reception than that accorded their Lord and Master, or his forerunner, John the Baptist. The reason: because having been given a definite message to deliver they are not at liberty to alter it according to the moods and demands of opponents. They cannot laugh and sing and dance according to their piping, because their rejoicing is over unprofitable if not evil conditions; neither can they weep and lament at their behest, because what grieves them is often a source of pleasure to those who know the ways of the Lord. In other words, a Christian is out of touch with the world, its ideals and its principles; he is also out of touch with the Pharisaical and hypocritical practices of mere professors. Consequently he must be content to be misunderstood, to have his name cast out as evil, and to be shunned by those who find their methods condemned by his holiness.

It is necessary, however, to have a care that one's sufferings be truly for righteousness' sake, and not on account of personal wrongdoing. Jesus being perfect, there was absolutely no ground of fault in Him; but this did not prevent the critics from tearing Him to pieces. John the Baptist, on the other hand, was imperfect, but their failure to receive him was not due to any repellant effect of these imperfections, but to hardness of heart on the part of those who rejected his testimony.

A religious teacher must be prepared to have his private life as well as his public teaching carefully scrutinised, and it should be his aim to set an example of holiness as well as of sound doctrine, so that he may have the approval of all honest and truthful persons, whether they be of the same religion as himself or not, as the Apostle says. (1 Tim. 3: 7.) But captious critics no man can satisfy; it is impossible to dance every time someone chooses to pipe; or, as the modern version has it, to jump every time somebody pulls the string. According to the parable, those who cultivate the hypercritical disposition are like children having nothing better to do than to while away time, while their elders are engaged in profitable business or listening to serious preaching. The faultfinding disposition makes unhappiness not only for the faultfinder, but for all his family and friends; even if it be only a bad

habit, and no harm intended, mischief will follow and seeds of bitterness be sown. Let us not, therefore, be like idle, wilful and selfish children, but like men and women of understanding, who can overlook the personal peculiarities of the brethren and make allowance for their mistakes; and if they fast when we think they should feast (as John the Baptist), or feast when we think they should fast (as our blessed Lord), let us *inquire the reason* before condemning them, and before requiring them to alter their methods to suit our conceptions of things.

The standard by which all doctrines and actions are to be judged is the Word of God; and before condemning anyone it is wise first to learn how he squares his conduct or teaching with that Word. What the Word condemns we may condemn; but what the Word approves, we must approve, as the lesson was given to Peter—"What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."—Acts 10: 15.

Again, it is the duty of each to please his neighbour for his good to edification (Rom 15: 2), each submitting to the other so far as right principles permit; but this does not justify any "brother" in insisting that others shall and must please him.

To deny oneself daily, and take up the cross, and follow in the footsteps of Jesus may involve deprivation of food, as befel the Apostles on their missionary journeys and the Protestants during the Reformation; and there are other good things of this life which the Christian voluntarily abstains from, in order that he may serve God more faithfully. But the New Testament commands no periodical fasts, such as the Jews observed. Any fasting, such as recorded in Acts 13: 2, was voluntary.

Occasional or even regular abstention from food may be good from the health standpoint in the case of full-blooded individuals; others of a more delicate constitution may do themselves irreparable injury, bringing upon themselves consumption and other diseases due to lack of nourishment. Those who keep their bodies in good tone by regularly partaking of nourishing food, to be useful in God's service, should not be condemned as lacking in spirituality by those who practice fasting, when our Lord Jesus Himself did not lay the latter as a duty upon His disciples; and those who do not fast may well allow liberty to others to do so should they consider it either a spiritual or a physical benefit. But all need to remember the words of the Apostle—

"The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."—Rom. 14: 17.

The same principle applies here as in the case of eating meat offered to idols, or not eating it—a question which roused some difference of opinion among the early converts from heathenism, concerning which the Apostle Paul gave the following good advice—

"One believeth that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth; for God hath received him. . . . He that eateth eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks."—Rom. 14: 2-6.

What a gracious Heavenly Father is ours, that He permits even the imperfect efforts of His children (so long as there is the pure heart and the sincere desire) to glorify Him, because He is great enough and loving enough to receive all His children who come unto Him in the name of Jesus!

Meats Defiling Not

—Matt. 15: 1-20.

(To the Multitude and to the Disciples.)
THE PARABLE.

10. And he called the multitude and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

11. Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

15. Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Declare unto us this parable.

THE INTERPRETATION.

17. Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

18. But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

19. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

20. These are the things which defile a man; but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

A TELLING similitude indeed was this, as brief and as puzzling to the disciples as was Samson's riddle to his companions. (Judges 14: 14.)

The explanation seems simple enough to us now (every riddle is easy after the solution is known), after eighteen centuries of Bible-reading and gospel liberty, but it was a difficult subject for the disciples and other Jews accustomed for generations to the Law and endless Pharisaical additions. Nevertheless, one would expect the disciples (Matt. 15: 16) by this time to have seen the appropriateness of the Lord's answer to the as usual critical scribes and Pharisees. (Verse 2.) The question pertained only to that ceremonial defilement which, according to the tradition of the elders, followed the touching with unwashen hands of food otherwise suitable and "clean." There was no such restriction in the Mosaic law. A few words only were required to show the absurdity of the tradition, and to convince any reasonable person that the defilement most to be feared is that of the heart.

The danger of laying too much stress on outward things is as great in our own day, when the possession of wealth, a prosperous appearance and general respectability are often mistaken for Christianity, while the heart is defiled with envious and other sinful thoughts which sooner or later defile the whole man by making his physical body fulfil its sinful designs—the tongue is made to bear false witness or to blaspheme, the hands to steal, etc. Whereas, keep the heart pure, fill the mind with kind, noble thoughts, and all the powers of mind and body combine to "do good unto all men," especially to the household of faith.—Gal. 5: 13-26; 6: 7-10.

"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."—Jas. 3: 17.

"Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."—John 3: 3.

"Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, . . . honest, . . . just, . . . pure, . . . lovely, . . . of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."—Phil. 4: 8.

The Tree and its Fruit

THE PARABLE.

43. For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

44. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs; nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

THE INTERPRETATION.

45. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil; for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

HERE THE SAME lesson is found as in "Meats Defiling Not," namely, that the heart is the centre from which proceed all the issues of life. (Prov. 4: 23.) A hypocrite may for a time with fair words and smooth speeches deceive the simple, who are perhaps all too willing to be deceived, but a Christian of any experience and knowledge of human nature as well as of the Scriptures should be able to distinguish between good and evil fruit as brought forth by professors of religion and others. It should be as easy to distinguish between the fruit of the spirit and the fruit of the flesh as between a fig and a thorn; the one is good to eat, and brings comfort and refreshment, the other injures whoever comes in contact with it. So when we see the fruit of the Spirit, we desire to partake of it; but when we see the fruit of the flesh, we want none of it.

In Matt. 12: 31-37 these words are used in denunciation of the Pharisees and others who attributed our Lord's good works to the power of Beelzebub. They might have been excusable for doubting his claims to be the promised Messiah, but there was no excuse for their persistent misrepresentation of His good works. They hated Him because He was good, and because the contrast showed their own works to be evil, and out of the abundance of the hatred and envy in their hearts their mouths brought forth corruption. He said of them—

"O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?"—Matt. 12: 34.

It is impossible to have good fruit on such a tree. First the tree must be made good, the heart must be purified, and then the good fruit will follow as a natural outgrowth and evidence.—Matt. 12: 33.

Purity of heart is what the Lord looks for (Matt. 5: 8), and as none are absolutely pure in heart by nature, He has arranged a plan by which the purity may be obtained; namely, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God are freely given. (Col. 1: 13, 14; Rom. 5: 8-10.) Thus the Christian begins a new life; his heart is cleansed (Heb. 11: 22), he is a "new creature" (2 Cor. 5: 17), and his friends will not be long in noticing the difference: they will see figs and grapes developing instead of the former sharp and spiteful thorns and brambles.

We must not, however, hastily conclude from this that a Christian never makes mistakes; but we do understand that his failure is not because of a corrupt heart, but from inexperience or ignorance or being temporarily overcome by the weakness of the flesh which he has always with him. His repentance and making of restitution as far as he is able will demonstrate the purity of his heart as soon as the matter is brought to his attention. But the continuous bringing forth of evil fruit, without being amenable to correction, will prove that the heart itself is evil.

That this is so is shown by the steps to be taken with an offending brother. (Matt. 18: 15-18; Gal. 6: 1, 2; 1 John 5: 16, 17; Jude 22, 23.) If he has erred through ignorance or weakness, he will be glad to be helped to better ideas and conduct; but if he refuses

to correct his ways, whether he be a teacher of error or corrupt in his manner of life, more drastic measures need to be taken, even to considering him unworthy the name of Christian and deserving to be treated as an "heathen man and a publican;" that is, as an unbeliever.—Matt. 18: 17; 2 Thess. 3: 6-12; Tit. 3: 9-11.

Our Lord Jesus was manifested to take away our sins, not to indulge us in them; and every sincere follower in His footsteps will seek to practise righteousness in thought, word and deed. Whosoever is born of God does not knowingly practise sin (1 John 3: 3-10), but is glad of all aids, however painful, which will assist him to holiness and consistency; he realises that only the loving heart and the holy life are pleasing in the sight of God, for God is holy, and God is love.—1 John 4: 6-8; Heb. 12: 14; 1 Pet. 1: 14-16.

Let us therefore love one another, and help one another in the race for the glorious prize of our high calling, which is of God in Christ Jesus.—Phil. 3: 13, 14.

The Beam and the Mote

—Luke 6: 41, 42.—

41. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

42. Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam that is in thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

AMOTE is an exceedingly small particle; a speck; the Greek word meaning a dry twig or straw. A beam is a long heavy piece of timber, such as is used to support a floor. By the use of such an hyperbole, the Lord showed the absurdity of one brother trying to help another less afflicted than himself without first ridding himself of his own obstruction. There is no reproof for seeing the mote in the brother's eye, nor yet for having a desire to assist the brother. The reproof is directed against hypocrites; that is, those whose lives are not in accord with their professions, who do not correct their own conduct, but are ever on the alert to find fault with others. The Lord's advice, or rather command, to such is—first pull the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly.

Those of us who have tried to take a speck of dust from the eye of a friend in distress realise not only the difficulties of removing the speck, but also the difficulty of first locating it. For this we need a good light as well as clear vision. But if the speck in our own eye is as large as a "beam," it might be more sensible to ask the friend with the mote to pull out our beam, before we attempt to relieve him. In other words, a friendly talk with the persons whom we are criticising might show us that we are in more need of criticism and help than they, and the result might be the development of mutual sympathy and love, instead of the former criticism and mistrust.

So might it have been with the Pharisees, the hypocrites of the publicans and sinners, and both might then have entered into the Kingdom of Heaven together.

The Cheerful Givers

"The God of Heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build." "Through God we shall do valiantly."—Neh. 2: 20; Psa. 60: 12.

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully; every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9: 6, 7.

"Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."—1 Cor. 16: 2.

Voluntary Donations, as under, have been received since our last report for the spread of the Good Tidings concerning the Grace of God in Jesus, our Mediator and Intercessor under the terms of the New Covenant.

The letter "G" after a donation number indicates that the donation is sent in harmony with the plan mentioned in the "Go Forward" letter enclosed with the November "Advocate." It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way.

No. Previously reported ... £168 16 5 = £1 = \$4.86 = \$820.42

165G	...	£0 7 4
166G	...	0 5 0
167G	...	0 5 9
168G	...	0 5 0
169G	...	0 5 0
170	...	0 3 6
171G	...	0 4 0
172G	...	0 5 0
173G	...	1 2 0
174G	...	0 9 0
175G	...	0 5 0
176G	...	0 4 0
177G	...	0 7 11
178G	...	0 5 0
179G	...	0 5 3
180G	...	0 5 0
181	...	0 7 6

At London—		
42	...	0 1 0
43	...	0 2 6
44	...	0 7 0
45	...	0 11 0
46	...	0 2 6
47	...	0 3 1
48	...	0 6 8
49	...	0 1 0
50	...	0 11 0
51	...	3 0 0
Sundries	...	0 1 3

At Brooklyn—		
46	...	\$0.25
47	...	.40
48	...	.25
49	...	.25
50	...	2.25
51	...	.25
52	...	.25
53	...	.25
54	...	6.55
55	...	.80
56	...	.25
57	...	1.00
58	...	.50
59	...	2.30
60	...	3.35
61	...	5.00
62	...	.25
63	...	.45
Sundries	...	.30

24.90 = 5 2 6

Total since last report 16 0 9 = 77.94

Total for 11 months £184 17 2 = \$898.36

Besides the above, a brother in America has sent to our Brooklyn office an order for \$50 worth of "Bible Talks" to be sent to Public Libraries in U.S.A. All this is much appreciated. May the divine blessing attend the Cheerful Givers and their gifts!

The "Advocate" 7000 Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report. Let the good work continue! The cost of printing and posting 7000 "Advocates" is about £40 (\$200)

Previously reported ... £133 7 11 = \$648.29

47	...	£5 0 0
48	...	0 1 0
49	...	0 17 6

At Brooklyn—
\$3.69 = 0 15 2

Total for 1 month ... 6 13 8 = 32.48

Total for 11 months £140 1 7 = \$680.77

London Memorial, 1911

Quite a goodly number of friends came together in London to remember our dear Lord's death. Truly it was a joyous, yet solemn time as we meditated upon the finished sacrifice of Him Who loved us, even unto death. We were comforted by the fact that we were following the original institution as closely as possible, not overlooking the significance of the correct date.

Brother —, late of Leicester, led us in our devotions, and in a few words brought vividly before our minds the beauty of the realities of which the emblems of bread and wine were the symbols. We remembered the absent ones, the solitary ones, and those of "like precious faith" in other lands. We were comforted by the thought that "tho' sundered far, by faith we meet, around one common mercy seat." As we sang our closing hymn "Twill not be long, our journey here," our thoughts were carried forward to the time when, if faithful, we shall drink with our Lord the new wine of the Kingdom.

I enclose a letter recently received from Ireland,

A.C.B.

Out of Darkness into Light

I shall be very pleased now to continue being a subscriber for "The New Covenant Advocate." I read with great interest the booklets you sent, and am glad to be able to tell you that they have helped to make clear to my mind what is really the true teaching about many things I have for some time been puzzled about, such as the error that the church is part of the sin offering for the world, also the error that the church has no need of a Mediator and is not under the New Covenant.

I rejoice that under God's guidance I have been led to see what is the truth concerning these things, and my desire now is to follow the voice of my Shepherd, even though it means separation from those I have loved and had fellowship with in the past. I could indeed wish that I could see you, and have some fellowship; but I must just trust in Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, to still lead me on as He most surely has been doing. "He leadeth me, oh, blessed thought!"

—IRELAND.

Kind Words

I enclose herewith £1, my yearly subscription to the "Advocate," the balance to be applied to the "Cheerful Givers," as usual. I very much appreciate the "Advocate," which is improving. I congratulate you accordingly, and wish you every success, indeed. With kind regards, and best wishes for your health and happiness, as well as for the further advancement of the good work you have in hand, I am,

Yours faithfully and fraternally,

Western Australia.

Believe

The leading article in this issue will, D.V., be published as a tract for free distribution. Ready at once at all our offices.

The New Covenant Advocate

— and —

Kingdom Herald

Vol. 3

MELBOURNE, LONDON, AND BROOKLYN, N.Y., JULY, 1911

No. 4

The Gospel of which Paul was a Minister

—1 TIMOTHY 2: 1-7.—

"... The glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry."—1 Tim. 1: 11, 12.

ALTHOUGH greatly honored and used of the Lord as the Apostle to the Gentiles, and permitted to suffer great things for His name's sake, the Apostle Paul never forgot the mercy shown him in the forgiveness of his sins—"who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious." (Rom. 1: 1; 11: 13; Acts 9: 15, 16.) He could give it as a personal experience, as well as a faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation, that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." And he rejoiced that even his previous contrariness, which he so greatly deplored, could be a means of bringing glory to God, because in him first Jesus Christ might show forth all long suffering and the abundance of divine grace to penitent believers.—1 Tim. 1: 13-16.

To his beloved Timothy he committed the same Gospel of mercy and forgiveness, exhorting him that, while holding faith and a good conscience, he should "war a good warfare," particularly in view of the fact that some who once professed the true faith had departed from it, while others who desired to be teachers understood neither what they said nor whereof they affirmed, but brought confusion into the Church.—1 Tim. 1: 18-20, 3-10; 1 Tim. 4: 1-3.

Therefore, in view of all these things, the Apostle thought it advisable to address to Timothy two letters of warning, exhortation and instruction concerning both the doctrines which were to be believed, and the practices which should be conducive to the well being of the believers with whom Timothy's labours as an evangelist brought him in contact.

Prayer for All Men

1. I exhort therefore that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; 2. for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.—1 Tim. 2: 1, 2.

After personal acceptance of Christ, and after receiving forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit as a

token of that forgiveness and of the new standing as a son of God, one of the first essentials in the life of the Christian is *prayer*. Prayer enables the Christian to express to God his gratitude for His mercies; both those which he personally experiences and those which he sees bestowed upon others, and those which are in prospect for himself and others. As he supplicates and pleads for fellow-believers in distress or worldly friends still in bondage to sin, his heart enlarges beyond the narrow circle of personal concerns, and he is constrained to take interest in all men, that they also might enjoy the good things of the Lord's favour.

The Christian realises also how much depends upon kings and others in authority; for they are God-ordained for the preservation of order and civilisation in the world. (1 Tim. 1: 8-10; Rom. 13: 1-6.) All readers of history agree that, "Any sort of a government is better than no government;" such touches of anarchy as the world has experienced, e.g., in Italy before the Empire and in France during the Revolution, end only in reactions toward autocracy. If the individuals holding high office cannot be admired and loved for their personal worth, their office at least should be respected, and prayers should be made to God that their acts, whether of themselves good or evil, may redound to the furtherance of the Gospel and the blessing of the true saints. (Phil. 1: 12-18; Acts 8: 1-6.) But no blessing can be expected by God's people, in their private or public relations, or in the spread of the truth, if they neglect frequent communion with their God and with His Son, their Lord.

Christian men and women are not only exhorted but commanded to pray, "lifting up holy hands"—hands free from the blood of others and unstained by personal indulgence; the men laying aside those weaknesses to which they are most subject; namely, wrath and doubting (or disputations); the women manifesting their conversion by exchanging their former extravagant attire for modest apparel and substituting good works for frivolous amusements (vs. 8-10). Vain is it to pray while the heart is filled with wrath and doubt, and the

Whoever receives this paper, not having ordered it, is requested to accept and read it, and to consider it an invitation to become a regular reader. Subscriptions may begin with any number.

body indulged in worldly vanity. (James 4: 1-10.) But God hears and answers the prayers of the poor and contrite heart; therefore, says the Apostle, pray without ceasing, and in everything let your requests be made known.—1 Thes. 5: 17; Phil. 4: 6, 7.

"A Quiet and Peaceable Life"

The ideal life for believers is here expressed—"A quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." Some translators give "godliness and gravity," others, "piety and seriousness;" but the thought of goodness and sincerity is in all these expressions. Exhortations are numerous to live peaceably with all men (as far as possible, and so far as lieth in you), to be quiet and to do your own business, to be godlike, holy as God is holy, and to be honest and upright in all one's dealings. (Rom. 12: 18; 1 Thes. 4: 11; 1 Pet. 1: 14-16; 3: 10-17; 1 John 3: 3-10; etc.) There is nothing of worldly ambition, pride or boasting in any of this; neither is there an excuse for dabbling in political or other movements outside the scope of the Gospel work recommended by apostolic precept and example.

Praying for the occupants of high positions is recommended rather than strife with them for place and power. How woefully has the Church departed from this principle of Gospel simplicity! Yet the prayers of God's people have been and still are more potent than sword or argument; for while God stands ready to answer the prayers offered according to His directions, there is no assurance of His hand behind the sword; rather, they that take the sword shall perish by the sword. (Matt. 26: 52, 53.) It is not beyond God's power to raise up rulers favourable to His people when necessary, as He raised up Esther for the deliverance of the Jews, and as He gave peace to Rome and Jerusalem just prior to and during the early Gospel era.

Stable conditions of society are most conducive to propaganda of any sort. In the confusion of war or conquest, when men's evil passions are given free play, and when fear and anxiety eat out the hearts of those who wait at home, peaceful preaching has little opportunity of reaching the ear, much less the heart. The prolonged period of rest which followed the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, and the Civil war in the U.S.A. in '61 to '65, has been most favourable to the spread of the Gospel in all lands, and is also being largely taken advantage of by others, such as labour organisations and socialists, to advance their international peace proposals and other schemes for world improvement. Never was there such a time for circulating theories of all sorts, social, political, economical, scientific and religious.

Stable conditions of society are also more favourable to the cultivation of the quieter Christian graces, love, joy, benevolence, etc.; though they also, by multiplying luxury and pleasure, tend to sap spirituality. Hence the Apostle well puts it that prayers for those in authority and for a quiet and peaceable life should be offered, not for the sake of self-indulgence, but for the exercise of Christian virtue—in all godlikeness and honesty.

God Our Saviour

3. For this is acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.

What is good and acceptable in the sight of God? Doubtless all that is mentioned in verses 1 and 2—a quiet and peaceable and prayerful life in all godliness and honesty, and also that those in authority be re-

It would be absurd to pray to God for these conditions were there no assurance that such prayers and such a manner of life have His approval. And always it must be remembered that while God's people are more or less subject to the caprice of earthly rulers, the Supreme Ruler who holds all human potentates at His mercy is God Himself. He is the Saviour or Preserver of all men, as the Apostle states in another part of the same Epistle, but *specially* of those that believe.—1 Tim. 4: 10; 1: 1.

But some reader may exclaim, I thought Jesus was our Saviour; He is frequently called our Lord and Saviour, as in 1 Pet. 1: 11. Is there a contradiction here?

There is no contradiction; both statements are true. A comparison of various Scriptures is helpful as showing how God and Christ are both interested in the salvation of men, and are co-operating together to that end. The wide meaning of the word "save" must also be borne in mind; it may mean *deliverance* from a calamity already befallen, as in Luke 19: 10, "to seek and to save that which was lost;" it may mean *preservation* from an impending calamity, as in Matt. 8: 25, when the disciples cried, "Lord, save us, we perish;" or it may mean *continued preservation* in a state of security, as in Heb. 7: 25, "He is able to save them to the uttermost (margin—"evermore") that come unto God by Him."

God is a "living God," not susceptible to change or death, as are earthly rulers. He it is who—

both measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance" (Isa. 40: 12)—and before whom all nations are as nothing, and less than nothing. (Isa. 40: 15-17.) Nevertheless, He has preserved man upon the earth by providing rain and fruitful seasons and other necessities; He has also arranged the boundaries of the nations, and exercised a measure of supervision over them, even while "winking" at their ignorance and excesses. (Acts 14: 15-17; 17: 23-30.) God has not preserved all individuals alive, as some think, in a place of happiness or misery, because a penalty of death was passed upon one man and the whole race is doomed to die. But as individuals pass away, other individuals are born, and so mankind has been preserved upon the earth. This thought is embodied in the saying—"The king is dead; long live the king."

God is also the Saviour or Preserver of all men in that He arranged a plan of redemption, looking to the deliverance of mankind from sin and death through the instrumentality of His beloved Son. He is *specially* the Saviour of believers because they appreciate and love Him for His glorious purposes, and in that He has accepted them as His children, and exercises a special care over them, even the very hairs of their heads being numbered.—Gal. 3: 26; Heb. 12: 5-11.

"Our Saviour Jesus Christ"

Jesus Christ is our Saviour in a particular sense, as God's agent in the great plan of redemption; as the One who came into the world, being made flesh for the express purpose of tasting death for every man. (John 1: 14; Heb. 2: 9.) He was called "Jesus" because He should save His people from their sins. (Matt. 1: 21.) We also remind ourselves again of the passage quoted at the beginning of this article, that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

He came to save by the sacrifice of Himself and

He is the Saviour or Deliverer of all who come unto God by Him. He is also the Saviour in the sense of Preserver, in that God has committed all judgment to the Son and given Him all authority in heaven and in earth. (John 5: 22; Matt. 28: 18.) Of His exalted position as the preserver of all things we read —

"Who being the effulgence of His glory, and the impress of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become by so much better than the angels, as He hath inherited a more excellent name than they."—Heb. 1: 3, 4, R.V., margin.

God's Will for All Men

4. Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

This passage has been greatly misused by Universalists and others, who profess to find in it justification for the claim that it is God's will that absolutely all men shall be everlastingly saved; and they say further that if God wills or decrees that all men shall be eternally saved not an individual will be lost, regardless of the life he leads. Such a treatment of this text takes no account of the context preceding and following; as for such passages as declare that *faith and obedience* are essential to salvation, and that the Second Death awaits wilful sinners, they are carelessly brushed aside or wrongly interpreted to fit in with the erroneous theory.

As an example of how this text is perverted in still a different way, we may refer to the practice of some teachers of re-arranging the two clauses of the text, as follows:—"Who will have all men to come unto the knowledge of the truth, and to be saved." They seem to think that the Apostle made a mistake when he declared that they should first be "saved" and afterward come to the knowledge, for they refer to other passages which rightly lay stress on knowledge as a pre-requisite to eternal salvation, as Rom. 10: 14, 15; John 3: 16, etc., thus failing to observe the Biblical distinction between eternal salvation and temporary preservation.

Men Preserved on the Earth

A more reasonable method of interpreting verse 4 is to take it as it stands, and to consider its relation to the context. The Apostle has just been saying that a quiet and peaceable life on the part of believers is "good and acceptable" in God's sight, and that believers should pray for the continuance of such conditions, both for their own spiritual good and for the sake of the Gospel which it was their duty to promulgate. He gives then a reason why "this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." It is because God has been saving or preserving mankind upon the earth and is not in favour of anarchy, war and carnage, the tendency of which is to depopulate the earth and to degrade the survivors. When God chose Israel to be His own people, He for very good reasons punished the Egyptians and subsequently instructed Israel to destroy the Canaanites. But in order that Israel might be trained according to the Mosaic Law and become a holy and prosperous people, He commanded them to a life of agriculture and trade, with regular moral instruction and religious exercises. They were not to entangle themselves with their neighbours nor to engage in war except for the extermination of the heathen occupants of Palestine. (Exod. 23: 27-33; Lev. 26: 3-13.) It was Israel's persistent idolatry and disobedience that subsequently involved them in wars, which under God's providence became

scourges to them (Lev. 26: 14-20); but God's will or purpose for the Jews, as for the Christian, was peace and holiness.

How would our Lord's commission to the Apostles—to go and make disciples among all nations—have been carried out had it not been God's will to preserve the nations upon the earth? Simeon was preserved until his eyes saw the infant Jesus, and then he was ready to depart in peace. (Luke 2: 25-35.) Cornelius, a devout Gentile, was preserved until Peter could bring him the message—the "words, whereby thou and thy house shall be saved." (Acts 10: 1, 2, 36-42; 11: 14.) In his second Epistle, Peter refers to how God preserves mankind and social order on the earth, saying—

"The heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire."—2 Pet. 3: 7.

He then goes on to show that the delay in bringing the present evil conditions to a termination is not because of slackness concerning His promises, but is an evidence of His patience and long-suffering toward men, in permitting them to continue upon the earth, and because to these identical sinful men He wished to give the opportunity for repentance. God's preference was not that men should "perish," but that they should repent and believe the Gospel. The "long-suffering of our Lord is salvation," because there is a possibility that the man who rejects Christ in his youth (through failure to realize the responsibilities of life) may receive Him in later years when some of the glitter has departed from his treasure; there is also the possibility that one reared in an idolatrous or sceptical environment may in old age travel to places where the Gospel is known, or may have the message brought to his door by a Gospel evangelist. (2 Pet. 3: 9, 14.) Peter also urges the believers to a life of peace and blamelessness.—2 Pet. 3: 11, 14.

We who are living to-day have to thank God for having preserved our ancestors to maturity, else we would not be here to enjoy the Gospel truth and to accept the gracious invitation to the High Calling.

Not to Perish but to Repent

Peter says that God is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." And Paul, speaking on Mars Hill, warned the Athenians, saying, that God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17: 30.) When, therefore, Paul writes to Timothy that God "will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," it is manifest that he refers to their preservation until such time as that knowledge may reach them; that knowledge which He designs them to have before their eternal destiny is fixed.

The question here arises, Do we mean to confine this preservation wholly to the present life, and exclusively to the maintenance of succeeding generations upon the earth? And we reply, No: we do not. We do, however, see the necessity of elaborating upon this portion of the Apostle's meaning, because among many Bible students it is wholly ignored, the Apostle's argument disregarded and the entire statement misused as a promise of deliverance from the grave, and too much responsibility shifted to post-resurrection times.

Other Scriptures show that God's long suffering toward men in general does not end when they go into the tomb: neither does His ability or willingness to "preserve" them end there. It is nowhere recorded that their souls or spirits are preserved alive elsewhere,

but we are informed that our blessed Lord Jesus is "the Judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10: 42; note that the words "to be" are not in the original; compare modern versions), that He has authority from God to grant the forgiveness of sins, and that even the dead are to be called out of their graves by Him, that they may hear the good news. (Acts 10: 43; John 5: 22-30; Rev. 20: 11, 12.) We understand, therefore, that while the dead are undoubtedly "asleep," as death is called, their individualities are preserved, and our Lord Jesus, their Judge, will at the right time call them forth.

The Preservation of the Dead

The original sentence of death pronounced in Eden involved our entire race in absolute extinction. It was only the love and mercy of God in providing a ransom and a Covenant suited to the recovery of men from sin and death that authorised the giving of hope to an undone race. Death, then, while undoubtedly a curse, an enemy whose approach is seen with dread, and which mankind uses a multitude of remedies to ward off as long as possible, is not a finality, except in the case of certain wilful sinners.

Death is really but an episode, which may be regarded with comparative composure by those who understand the purposes of God. Death presents no obstacles to the carrying out of His will, to bring all men to an exact knowledge of the truth. The dead are like children asleep in the nursery until the hour comes to awaken them and give them the instruction received by a few others while they were resting. True, the dead are unconscious, they have no power in themselves to rise up and live again; they have returned to the dust out of which they were taken, and their elements have in the majority of cases been absorbed by growing plants. But this is nothing to the Almighty, who by a word made the worlds, for he can equally well by a word call forth the dead. So we read—

"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."—Acts 24: 15.

The word resurrection here used means, according to *Strong*, "a standing up again." It is the individuals themselves who died, it is the same individuals who are to stand up again, both the just and the unjust. But the conditions to which they will arise will be different. The good shall come forth to life, but the evil shall come forth to judgment. While not preserved physically, their identities are preserved, and they can be called into being again at the Lord's pleasure. In the case of the joint heirs with Jesus they are to be like Him, and be forever with Him. (1 John 3: 1-3.) They had received the exact knowledge of the truth in the present life, had been sanctified by it, and had made their calling and election sure.

In the case of the billions of mankind who had not received an exact knowledge of the truth in this life, they will be called forth and receive that knowledge under the Kingdom Age Judgment, and have the opportunity of believing and obeying the Gospel, with the reward of everlasting life on the earth.

Preservation does not involve giving them perfection, nor bringing them forth with a higher degree of physical or mental vigour than they possessed in their days on earth. There is no knowledge nor device in the grave; while they are dead they know not anything; they will awake as they went to sleep, and then they may by faith and obedience go up to perfection.

The Knowledge of the Truth

The purpose of the preservation of all men is that they may "come into an exact knowledge of the truth"—literal rendering. Whether they come to this accurate knowledge in the present life, or whether it will be given them in the future life, the fact remains that the knowledge will be given; no individual will be able to excuse himself for unbelief and sin on the plea of ignorance. Nor must it be thought that when anyone in this life hears the call to repent and believe the Gospel he may lightly ignore it. The Lord did not excuse the Pharisees for rejecting Him. He said, rather, "How can ye escape the damnation of Gehenna?" We read also in Heb. 6: 4-8; 10: 26-31; 2 Pet. 2: 1-3; Jude 10-13, and other passages of the responsibility resting upon those who have been brought to the knowledge in the Christian era. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and that men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."—John 3: 19, Comp. Rom. 2: 6-10.

It may be asked, Can anyone come to an *exact* or *accurate* knowledge of the truth in this age of skepticism on the one hand and multitudinous sects and fads on the other? Can one be certain of anything? See how many great and good men have been mistaken in their beliefs; can I expect to do any better?

The answer to this query may be divided into two parts; how much truth, and how accurate. To learn that one and one make two is to acquire knowledge, but it is not to understand the multiplication table or the rule of three; yet little as the knowledge is, it is exact or accurate; there is no flaw in it; there is no need to alter it to-morrow in favour of one and one making three. It is an accurate and unalterable truth, and anyone who has once believed it and turned from it may well be considered as having lost his mental balance. This illustrates how one who has only a small quantity of Scripture truth, may have an exact truth, and not an error, a delusion or a lie. On the other hand, there have been thousands who have had elaborate creeds and theories, backed up by much argument (?), and even Scripture references, but whose knowledge of truth was exceedingly small, perhaps no single item being *exact* truth.

When it is stated that it is God's will that all men shall come to an *exact knowledge of the truth*, it is not necessary to suppose that He means absolutely all kinds of truth, mathematical, scientific, historical, economical, etc., nor even absolutely every doctrinal, practical, and prophetic truth between the lids of the Bible. The early Christians were warned—

"If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth," etc.—

thus showing that it has been possible during this Gospel age to receive what the Holy Spirit calls "*the knowledge of the truth*," meaning exact knowledge; for the Holy Spirit would not designate as knowledge of the truth, with severe penalties for unfaithfulness, that which was not exact.—Heb. 10: 26-31.

Exact Knowledge in the Early Church

That the knowledge of the truth possessed by the early Church was exact is shown by the inspired Record. Our Lord Himself while on earth gave out infallible teaching. The Apostles were inspired not only with miraculous gifts, but in their writings, so that their teaching is to be received as the teaching of Christ Himself. Their varied testimonies are in harmony, and they likewise exhorted all the believers to

mind the same things, to hold fast the true faith they had received, to consider themselves custodians of the "whole counsel of God," wherewith they were "to feed the church of God."—Jude 3; Phil. 3: 15, 16; Acts 20: 24-32.

The fundamentals upon which they possessed exact knowledge are stated in verses 5 and 6—

"For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, the testimony in due time."

How simple and yet all comprehensive is this statement of the Gospel! In full agreement with it is that other brief statement in 1 Cor. 15: 1-4. Jesus died for our sins, He gave Himself a ransom for all; He was raised the third day according to the Scriptures. He is now Lord and Christ, inheritor of all things, and Mediator of the New Covenant, which was established upon better promises than was the Law Covenant under Moses as mediator.—Heb. 8: 6-12; 12: 18-25.

Another condensed statement of the Gospel is given in 2 Tim. 1: 8-10, concerning which Paul uses almost the same language as in 1 Tim. 2: 7—

"Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.—2 Tim. 2: 11.

Exact knowledge on these fundamentals has been possible all down the age, and it is possible to-day. There is no necessity for doubt or skepticism. The Lord's Word is sufficient that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished. If, then, we have been brought to a knowledge of these inspired and exact truths, let us realise our responsibility and give a good account of our stewardship! See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh from heaven!

One God and One Mediator

5. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

This verse comes as an assurance that the will of God our Saviour, as expressed in verses 1-4, will be carried out. Our God is not one among many who in opposing His plans might at any time overturn them, and so circumvent the preservation of the race and the preaching to them of the truth. No! God alone is Jehovah, the ever living covenant keeping God, He alone is supreme. (1 Cor. 8: 6; 15: 28.) His purposes shall be accomplished; His word shall prosper in all whereto it is sent.

And there is one Mediator between God and men. No complicated red tape; no man-made altars and oppressive fees; no system of angelic intervention between God and Christ or between Christ and men; no multiple orders of saints who have done works of supererogation; simply the Saviour Himself, Christ Jesus, the same who died for us, stretching out His arms and saying, "Come unto Me"; come unto the Father by Me.—Matt. 11: 28; John 14: 6.

The position of Jesus as Mediator* of the New Covenant is most important to be recognised; for the New Covenant is the exclusive arrangement or establishment under which God has guaranteed to forgive sin. It is not sufficient to give mental assent to certain historical facts concerning Jesus of Nazareth in order to have the favour and blessing of God. Sin must be put away, and the conscience cleansed in the manner prescribed in God's Word.

One Mediator between God and men; observe, not between God and "man." Why is it that scores (if not hundreds) of writers and speakers misquote this

passage, making it say—"between God and man"? The mischief of inaccurate quotations of Scripture is that an interpretation is based on the misquotation rather than on the inspired words of the text. Thus some interpret this passage to the effect that Jesus is Mediator between God and man as a race, whereas the use of the word "men" by the Apostle gives the thought that Jesus is Mediator between God and men considered individually. That this is so is shown by the method of individual conversion pursued by the Gospel evangelists acting under instruction from the Master, as was the practice of the Lord during His ministry. Jesus had and has the power to forgive sin; but that power is exercised only toward those individuals who repent and believe the Gospel, and accept the Lord Jesus as their Mediator in the presence of God. No human being has a right to enter by prayer or otherwise into the presence of the Heavenly Father save in the name of Jesus. There is one Mediator, and the next verse states why Jesus alone in His own person is that Mediator.

Who Gave Himself a Ransom

6. Who gave himself a ransom for all, a testimony in due time.

The one Mediator is thus identified as the One who gave Himself a ransom. It was not our Lord as "the Word" in His pre-human existence who gave the ransom; neither does He as the exalted Lord give Himself as the ransom for sinners; it was the man Christ Jesus, the Son of God yet born of a virgin, who gave His flesh, His human life, the body which God prepared for sacrifice (John 6: 51; Matt. 26: 28; Heb. 10: 5, 12), as the ransom for all, that is, for all men, without distinction of nationality or creed. He died not for the Jews only, but for all men. He died for Adam and all his race—for as by one man came death, so by one Man comes life to all who will obey Him.—Rom. 5: 12, 15-18; Heb. 5: 9; 1 John 5: 11, 12.

Conversely, no one who is not the ransom can be the Mediator; no one who is not part of the ransom can be part of the Mediator. Those friends who presumptuously claim that the Church will be part of the Mediator between God and some men in a future age must logically claim also to have been part of the ransom price. But the absurdity of either claim is manifest when we remember that it was the man Christ Jesus who gave His perfect human self when He died on the cross, and that it was the same personality, Jesus, who was raised by the Father to the office of Lord of all who was constituted Mediator of the New Covenant.

Another absurd claim is that the term "men" in verse 5 does not include such men as during this age form part of the Church; if that be so, then the Church cannot be part of the "all" for whom Jesus gave the ransom, and they are thus not redeemed and can have no hope of salvation. But why multiply absurdities? If such persons think that the individuals composing the Church are not included in the "men" of verse 5, are they willing to be consistent and say the Church is not included among the "all men" of verse 1 who are to be prayed for, or among the "all men" of verse 4 whom God desires to preserve and bring to a knowledge of the truth, or among the "all" of verse 6 for whom the ransom was given, or among the "men" of verse 8 who are to lift up holy hands in prayer? Even the Apostles claimed to be no more than men, saying, "We also are men of like passions with you"—the worshippers of the temple of Jupiter. (Acts 14: 11-18.) What presumption is manifest by those who deny what the Apostles readily admitted!

*For further literature showing how and why Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and how to receive the benefits of His Mediation and advocacy, send postpaid request

A Corresponding Price

The word "ransom" occurs but three times in the New Testament—Matt. 20: 28; Mark 10: 45; 1 Tim. 2: 6. It is in each case a translation of the Greek *lutron*, meaning a redemption price, joined with *anti*; the latter being a primitive particle meaning, according to *Strong*, "opposite" or "instead" of, and translated in the Authorised Version "for" (Matt. 20: 28; Mark 10: 45; 1 Tim. 2: 6), or "in the room of." (Matt. 2: 22.) It is often used as a combining form to denote *contrast*, *requital*, *substitution*, *correspondence*, etc.

Thus when a rich magnate is captured by brigands, a price is set upon his head, and by the payment of the ransom-price his friends may secure his liberation. This price *corresponds* to the magnate *in value*, according to the judgment of the brigands; it is also a price *set over against* the life of the captive. But the brigands may demand, instead of money, some other personage, upon the delivery of whom the magnate may go free. Thus the ransom may be either a money payment, or another man whom they consider of at least equal value with their prisoner, or they may require the release of one of their own band held captive by the government. The exchange of prisoners of war is on the same principle of value for value.

When Moses numbered the children of Israel, he enjoined upon every male of twenty years old and upward the giving of a half-shekel as "a ransom for his soul." This was not an intimation that each man was worth only half a shekel (about 1s. 3d. or 30 cents), but it showed God's right to place a value upon them and to demand a satisfactory offering. It also formed a good type of our Lord Jesus as the ransom-price for men; the rich were not valued more highly nor the poor less; the rich gave no more, the poor no less. So Jesus is the ransom equally of rich and poor, high and low; and each must personally accept Jesus as his ransom before he can go free. It is significant that this ransom money collected by Moses was devoted "for the service of the tabernacle." So each believer who accepts Jesus as his Ransom should devote his ransomed soul to the service of God and the gospel.

Our Lord Jesus gave Himself as the ransom-price for all men. According to the wisdom and the decree of God He corresponded *in value* to Adam and all his race. His life was *set over against* the lives of all men as a purchase price. Our Lord was also a corresponding price in a unique way. By comparing Psalm 8: 4-8 and Heb. 2: 6-8, which describe the perfect estate of Adam in the Garden of Eden, with Heb. 2: 9, which describes the perfect estate of our Lord Jesus as a man, it is seen that they correspond; and it is distinctly stated that He took this human estate for a definite purpose; namely, "that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

In two particulars only did Adam and Jesus differ; Adam was made of the dust of the earth, and when he drew his first breath he was ignorant as a babe. His organism—reasoning faculties and all—was perfect, but he had had no experience; he had everything to learn. It was because of this ignorance that his partner, equally inexperienced, was so easily misled by the serpent. But our Lord was born of a virgin, he grew up to manhood, developing daily in grace and knowledge, yet never sinning, and when he reached manhood's perfect estate, and corresponded physically to Adam (including Eve) in his Edenic estate, he had this advantage over Adam, of an established character, a character still further

established during His ministry by the things He suffered. (Heb. 5: 8; 2 Cor. 5: 21.) He had also another distinct advantage in the recollection of His experience with God during His previous heavenly existence. (John 17: 5; Isa. 53: 11; Phil. 2: 6-10.) Another difference is stated in Rom. 5: 12-19; whereas Adam under temptation sinned, our Lord Jesus under temptation did not sin. Adam involved the race which was in him in death; our Lord Jesus has the authority to give life to all who come into Him by faith and obey Him.

Before the foundation of the world it was arranged that God should send His beloved Son into the world to "give His life a ransom for many," and He ordained to accept that life as a full and satisfactory price for Adam and his race—"all men."

A Testimony In Due Time

It is rather strange that the Revised Version follows the Authorised in the rendering of the last clause of verse 6, because there is no verb in the original. The Greek (Griesbach's text)* does not say "to be testified," but "the testimony."

A testimony is "a statement or affirmation of a fact;" "the act of testifying or putting in evidence." Of what fact, then, was the ransom for all an affirmation or evidence?

To answer this question we must realise that the Apostle Paul was a close reasoner; he did not make loose, disjointed statements of uncertainties, but elaborated throughout his epistles the clear logic of facts. His argument beginning at verse one is continued through verse 7. It is right to pray for *all men*, it is right to live quietly and peaceably among *all men*; God will have *all men* to be preserved; He will have *all men* to come unto the knowledge of the truth; there is one God over *all men*; there is one Mediator between God and *all men*; the man Christ Jesus gave Himself a ransom for *all men*. The ransom for *all men* was a testimony to or affirmation of the fact (just previously expressed) that God's interest was in *all men*, for their preservation and coming to a knowledge of the truth.

How often do we hear the plaintive cry, Has God any interest in the heathen, or in the children of the slums, or in the sufferers in the hospitals, or in the millions in the tomb; *has He any interest in ME?* Does He care if I live or die; if I am good or if I just drift along anyhow? If I should cry out to Him to-night, and turn over a new leaf, and become a believer in His Son Jesus; would He hear me, and would He give me a chance to show Him that I am tired of sin and selfishness and want to live right?

Why, yes: that is what the Apostle is telling you! God is interested in all men, and that *includes you*. He may not be showing His interest in you in just the way you or Mr. Skeptic or Mr. Wiseacre thinks He ought to do, but He has shown His interest in a very practical way, and the Apostles and others have been at pains to explain that way for the benefit of just such inquirers as you and me, who want to know all we can about the God the Christians say is so loving and kind. His manner of showing His interest, and not only His interest

*The Vatican 1209 MS. does not contain the books of I. and II. Timothy.

The Alexandrine MS. contains both books, but omits the words "a testimony" in verse 6; the reading being, "a ransom for all in due time."

The Sinaitic MS., however, contains the words "a ransom for all and a testimony."

Different versions variously render the phrase "in due time"—"in its own times," "in its own seasons," etc.

but His love, is far more practical and to the point than if He gave you a mansion to live in and put a thousand pounds a year in your hand on which to enjoy yourself—which is the only kind of interest some people think worth having.

God's sending His Son to be the Ransom for all men, and establishing Him in His throne as the one Mediator between God and men, is the grandest possible testimony to the fact of his interest in all men, and also of His intention to preserve all men until they come to the exact knowledge of the truth. This grand testimony or affirmation is referred to in many other Scriptures, only one or two of which can be quoted here—

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever . . ."—John 3: 16.

"God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Rom. 5: 8.

"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. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."—1 John 4: 9, 10.

The last quotation gives us the additional thought that God is so interested in the human race, His love is so deep and sincere, that He desires them not only to be preserved and to come to the knowledge of the truth concerning His dear Son, but that He has also arranged a way to put away our sins and to preserve us unto eternal life; for, as we have already seen, while He is the preserver for a time of all men, He preserves specially and everlastingly only those who believe. (1 Tim. 4: 8-10; 1 John 5: 11-13.) The wilful rejectors of the truth, the despisers of His Son and His Mediatorial office, He will not preserve forever. They shall indeed perish as they deserve.

"In Its Own Seasons"

The sending of Jesus Christ as the sacrifice for sins was in due season—at the right time, as we read—

"In due time [margin—"according to the time"] Christ died for the ungodly."—Rom. 5: 6.

When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, . . . to redeem them that were under the law."—Gal. 4: 4, 5.

The time was full so far as the Jews and the Law were concerned, in that the Law Covenant was proved inadequate to their needs, and a New Covenant was required more suited to the needs of fallen men. The time was also full so far as the Gentiles were concerned, for it was not God's intention to allow them to go unchecked forever in their idolatry and sin.

The Gospel a Testimony

The entire Gospel ministry, organised and sent out by the risen Lord and Mediator, in the persons of the apostles and the disciples since, was also a testimony in its due season of God's will that men be preserved and come to the knowledge of the truth. It is true that owing to the sinfulness and superstition of men the Gospel often raised a commotion in which the testimony or witness was lost to the majority of their hearers, but nevertheless the Apostles gave out the message without fear, and disciples were daily added to the company of believers. Everywhere the Apostles went they showed the superiority of God over the heathen deities as well as the superiority of the New Covenant over the Law Covenant of the Jews. This testimony was given "in due time" to both Jew and Gentile, and will be given in due time to all men who have not previously heard it. "In due time Christ died for the ungodly," in due time every man coming into the world receives the knowledge of that great truth.

A Teacher In Faith and Verity

7. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

This verse also begins with a connective—"whereunto"—directing us to the preceding verses to learn the specific and important truth which Paul was ordained to preach—the gospel in a nutshell. We find it in verses 5 and 6. There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, the testimony in its own times of the great fact of God's love for mankind and of His desire that men should not perish, but should be preserved and come into an exact knowledge of the truth, in order that by accepting the Lord Jesus and acknowledging Him as their Mediator and Lord, they might receive the forgiveness of sins and might ultimately attain eternal life. This is "the truth in Christ" which Paul spoke, and which he earnestly protests is no lie. This is the grand truth which all men must come to a knowledge of; this is the simple foundation on which all the gracious and interesting details of God's purpose are built up; this is the exact truth which, whether one learn it now or in the age to come, is unchangeable and incorruptible.

Neither is it a lie that he was ordained of God to preach this truth. God set him apart from birth to his service, and when he was converted commissioned him as envoy extraordinary to the Gentiles.

Moreover, he was not a teacher of the Gentiles in a hypocritical fashion from selfish motives; he himself possessed the faith he sought to impress upon others; he gave them the truth, pure and unadulterated, as he received it from heaven. As he protested on other occasions when falsely accused by his enemies he had all the credentials of apostleship—like the other accredited apostles, he was an eye witness of the resurrected Jesus, he had received his commission from the Lord direct, he was given the Holy Spirit and all the spiritual gifts, together with the exclusively apostolic power of bestowing the gifts, and of publicly condemning and punishing wicked opponents of the truth, and he had autocratic power in the Church.—Gal. 1: 1; 1 Cor. 15: 8; Acts 9: 15-17; 1 Cor. 14: 18; Acts 14: 9, 10; 19: 6; 5: 1-11; 13: 8-11; 14: 23; 2 Tim. 2: 2.

All down the age the true disciples of Christ have received light and instruction from the preaching and writings of the great apostle to the Gentiles; but by no one thing has he more impressed and one might almost say inspired them than by his life. His unimpeachable character, his pure and tender conscience, his absolute sincerity and truthfulness, his unselfish devotion to the cause through evil and good report, his one thought to glorify God, to honour His Son and to comfort and instruct His people, and finally to receive the crown of righteousness and life at the hands of His Lord: who can contemplate such a life without longing to emulate it! and in doing so to become a copy of Him who is our, as he was Paul's, High Priest and Exemplar!

The Gospel for Our Day

The creeds and theories of our day may need revision or destruction in proportion as they contain much or little or no truth; not so the Gospel of Jesus Christ which Paul preached. They may not and do not satisfy the needs of either mind or heart; the Gospel of the New Testament abundantly satisfies both. Many present-day teachers are drifting on the sea of doubt and unbelief, or vainly ransacking heathen religions in search of hidden treasure to find only dead men's bones;

but the sincere and honest believer need be in no such predicament. No new gospel is required to meet the needs of our day; no fresh (so-called) "revelations" to presumptuous imposters can supplant, take from or add to, the gospel which Paul and the other Apostles of the Lamb proclaimed 1800 years ago. Human nature is still the same; sin and death yet work the same old havoc among men; vain philosophies still make void the divine Word; sinners still need to be pointed to Calvary's Cross; believers still need to fight the good fight against the powers of darkness. Those,

therefore, who love the Gospel of which Paul was a minister in faith and verity, because it is the exact truth concerning God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the enlightenment and blessing of all for whom He died, can do no better than devote themselves wholeheartedly and unreservedly to the spreading abroad into all nations of the same glorious Gospel.

"For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, the testimony in due season, whereunto I am ordained a preacher and an apostle."

CALVARY

Through many a lovely landscape
My pilgrim staff I've brought;
From many a rocky eminence
My gaze the valley sought.
But far above all mountains
I've ever seen, give me
The quiet, lonely hillock,
The Mount of Calvary.

It towers not with forehead
Ice-crowned into the clouds;
No sunny Alpine glacier
Its shoulders bare enshrouds.
But ne'er in all my wanderings
Seemed Heaven so near to me,
Nor earth so lost in distance,
As there on Calvary.

On its bald summit never
A crown of forest stood—
No gently-waving oak-tops,
No precious cedar wood.
But all the lofty cedars
That Hermon once did see,
Their lofty heads are bowing
Before Mount Calvary.

Go thither, earthworn pilgrim,
There seek thy rest at last;
And at the feet of Jesus
Thy heavy burdens cast.
Then come and praise with gladness,
How much was done for thee!
Know this: the road to glory
Leads over Calvary.

—From the German of Gerok.

"What Hath God Wrought!"

D OUBTLESS every child of God, who has lifted up his voice in imitation of him who was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," and has called upon the people of God to Reform, has had experiences like those of the greatest of all the prophets of God. He has been patronised to some extent, and has been persecuted more; he has been acclaimed and disclaimed; he has met opposition and apathy; he has been both encouraged and discouraged. The food that has sustained him in the way has been, chiefly, "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," and he has been strengthened in spirit by the divine promises, to which the bitter herbs of affliction and the wild honey sweetness of communion with heaven in the wilderness have given added relish.

All the prophets of God, whatever their mission and message, and whatever their position and relation to others of God's people, have had these experiences, from the mighty man, Moses, and that greatest of all prophets, John, to the least-known of the so-called minor prophets. Our Lord Himself, in "the days of His flesh," had the same experiences, and He, being a perfect man, would doubtless be more keenly sensitive to everything that savoured of opposition to His mission than any other would have been. Not overlooking the opposition of the men that sat in Moses' seat at the time of His ministry, one may imagine how He would be hurt by the all but murderous antagonism of his kinsmen.—John 7:1-6.

During the Gospel age, this experience of the pro-

phets and of our Lord has been the common lot of all those who have desired and endeavoured to live godly in Christ Jesus. The Master, in predicting that this would be so, said: "So persecuted they the prophets which were before you." (Matt. 5:11, 12.) The servant has not been above his Lord, but has counted himself honoured to be allowed to be as his Lord in enduring suffering for righteousness' sake, in order that in due time he might be exalted to reign with the Lord who bought him, and who also left him an example that he should follow in His steps. But as John the Baptist had wild honey in the wilderness, and as the Israelites on the march had refreshing water from the rock, and as our blessed Saviour had the ministration of angels to comfort Him in His hours of trial, so have the people of God during the past age been blessed and comforted by the ministrations of divine Providence through the Word, through the brethren, or perhaps at times through the ministry of the invisible, heavenly angels, who are "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."—Heb. 1:14.

As the Lord said it would be, so it has been; not one of the faithful, who has tried to follow in His steps, has been able to escape the persecution. And, blessed be God, not one of these has missed the consolations of divine grace.—2 Cor. 1:3-7.

That which has been of necessity—for spiritual profit—the experience of all faithful believers in and followers of our Master, has been the experience of every reader of the "Advocate." And that which has been

the experience of our readers has been no less the experience of the "Advocate," too. The call for repentance and contrition on the part of those who are destroying the flock by poisoning them with false doctrines has not met with great approbation. The leaders have fouled the waters of Truth by stirring up the mud of man's assertions, and some of the "sheep" allow themselves to drink the fouled waters and praise them for their clearness! And some of these dear "sheep," when the muddled condition of the waters was brought to their notice, have reviled as evil speakers those who have sought to do them a genuine service. It is sad, indeed, to realise that many of the Lord's flock are still not able to discern their right hand from their left.

But, thank God, not all are so. There are still those who have their senses exercised by reason of use, and who by the grace of God are able to discern the difference between clean water and that which is thick with mud. There are still "sheep" (and we believe there are many of them whose acquaintance the "Advocate" has not yet had the privilege of making) who are attentively listening for the Master's voice as it expresses His Word, whether through their own reading or through the ministry of others, and who gladly follow that voice whithersoever it may lead them, counting it a privilege to leave all and follow Him. Some of these, during the past twelve months, have left the fouled waters, and have been gratefully drinking at the springs of Truth. While always regretting the obstinacy of those who will persist in drinking muddy water when there is no need to, one is made glad by noting the satisfaction which the clean water gives to those who appreciate it.

For whatever of opportunity the "Advocate" has enjoyed of being a true guide to those who have sought the clear waters, we are grateful to the Master, who has given these privileges. And our desire is that He might give us more and still more extensive privileges in the

same direction, if it please Him. This we believe He is doing and will continue to do, and we rejoice in the prospect of being allowed to be useful in His blessed service—"to glorify God, to honour His Son, and to comfort His people."

No doubt, the Lord can, and sometimes does, work miracles now as in the past, to furnish the necessary supplies; but His usual method seems to be to allow His people to co-operate together in the work, in order, perhaps, to test and to cultivate and to demonstrate, to themselves and others, their unity of spirit in His service. By means of this co-operation, in the divine Providence, the "Advocate" and its work have gone forward in the past year. (That it may be clearly understood by new readers how thoroughly the "Advocate" is a work of loving co-operation, it should be mentioned that there is no charge against the "Advocate"—except one-third of the net office expenses—for anything but paper, printing and postage. All services rendered to the "Advocate," whether editorial or by those who contribute articles, is without charge, and many thousands of wrappers have been addressed and papers wrapped in them by friends of the Truth, as a labour of love.) The figures presented below will let all see what has been done in the past year. This report covers thirteen issues of the "Advocate," from June, 1910 to June, 1911, both inclusive, totalling 58,000 copies, all paid for, and nearly all in circulation. The distribution of these copies was, approximately—Australasia, 11,200; U.S.A. and Canada, 34,000; Great Britain and Europe, 9,800; besides occasional copies to India, and elsewhere, and some of each issue reserved. Truly the world is the "Field".

During the first fortnight of June, the "Advocate 7000" Fund had received voluntary donations as follow—No. 50G, £6; previously reported, £140 1s. 7d.; total for 12 months, £146 1s. 7d. = \$709.93.

Expenditure.					
Paper and Printing 58,000 Copies "Advocate" ...	...	...	£259 2 0		\$1259.22
Postage ...	...	...	108 18 10		529.45
One-third net Office Expense (12 months) ...	...	...	12 3 2		59.09
Total ...	...	...	£380 4 0		\$1847.76
Receipts.					
Subscriptions and Sales of Extra Copies ...	...	...	£ 98 1 8		\$476.68
"Advocate" 7000 Fund ...	...	...	146 1 7		709.93
			£244 3 3		\$1186.61
Deficit, supplied from "Cheerful Giver's" Fund ...	...	...	£136 0 9		\$661.15

This report shows an average circulation of nearly 4,500 copies per issue for thirteen issues, whereas the report of a year ago showed an average of only 3,000 per issue for fourteen issues. The increase of the average circulation has been almost 50 per cent., which is gratifying, and is a cause for thanksgiving to Him who overrules the work of the Harvest. Yet this increase, gratifying as it is, is far from satisfactory. Just by way of letting you know how to take this, let us say that if the circulation of the "Advocate" were to reach 100,000 or 1,000,000 copies per issue, even that would not be satisfactory, for we should still be looking out for more readers. If we have some good things, why should we not be ready and anxious to share them with as many as will take them?

It was our desire during the last twelve months to

send out more copies than we were able to do, with the object of assisting as much as possible to liberate some dear friends who are under the influence of the scandalous teaching that they never needed our blessed Lord Jesus as their Mediator to reconcile them to God, and that they are being offered for the sins of the world. To this end, the "Advocate 7,000 Fund" was established, and as many copies as possible were sent out by its means, but we were not able to send each issue to all the names available, so we did the best we could with the funds that came to hand. Should greater prosperity attend the "Advocate" during the coming year, we hope to do even better in this and other directions, for we are not forgetting that there are other Christians under the influence of other erroneous doctrines, and we desire to help them too, by your co-opera-

tion under divine Providence. The "Advocate 7,000 Fund" will therefore be continued during the coming year, and all who feel that the Lord would be pleased to have them help it along may do so at discretion.

Those who feel disposed to do so, can ascertain from the above figures that the cost of the 58,000 copies there reported on works out at just over 1½d. (3 cents per copy, postage and all expenses paid, or about 1½d. (2¼ cents) per copy exclusive of postage, making the postage—which is calculated at four different rates, depending on destination, etc.—average just under ½d. (1 cent) per copy. If the circulation were greater—say, 25,000 or 30,000 copies per issue—the cost per copy would be very much less than the above. And if the "Advocate" had as many regular subscribers as that, at the current rate, a handsome profit would be shown, all of which would go into the work for the further extension of the knowledge of the Truth among the people of all nations. In the meantime the "Advocate" has something less than 2,000 subscribers on its list, so there is plenty of room for the activity of its friends in securing new readers. The price of the paper, small though it be, need deter no one from being a regular reader, for it is gladly sent free to those who are interested in it, but unable to pay for it, and all friends so circumstanced will be most willingly supplied as long as the Lord shall provide the means to publish.

As for other names, the "Advocate" must needs look to the energy of its friends to secure new readers. There must be a good many in all parts of the world who would gladly read the paper did they but know of its existence. No doubt there are some near you who are only waiting for you to approach them on the subject. Besides this, you are reminded that we accept trial subscriptions at Melbourne, London and Brooklyn. Send four addresses and the price of a year's subscription, and the "Advocate" will be sent three months to each of the four addresses. The same addresses can be repeated at the end of the three months, if you so desire, or you can send another four. Send us the addresses of Sunday-school superintendents and teachers, and of other Christians, and free samples of the "Advocate" will be sent them.

The Cheerful Givers

During the first fortnight of June, this Fund has received voluntary donations as follow:—

No. 182G, 8/-; 183G, 5/-; 184G, 5/-; 185G, 4/6; 186G, 5/-; 187G, 5/-; 188G, £1/2/-; 189G, 5/-; 190G, 4/6; 191, 10/-; 192G, 10/-; previously reported, £184 17/2; total for 12 months, £189 1/2 (\$918.77).

To this must be added the £273 12s. 8d. which stood last year as a credit to this Fund, having been borrowed from it for the purpose of assisting to give the publication of "Bible Talks" a start. The state of the Fund on 15th June, 1911, was as under:—

Carried forward Loan to "Bible Talks" ...	£273 12 8	\$1329.86
Receipts on A/c "Cheerful Givers" June 17, 1910 to June 15, 1911	189 1 2	918.82
Against this are charged the following:—		
Expenditures on Account of "Cheerful Givers"		
Deficit on "Advocate" ...	£136 0 9	\$661.15
Paper and Printing Tracts ...	70 8 9	342.32
Freight and Postage on Tracts, etc. ...	40 3 2	195.17
One-third net Office Expense ...	12 2 10	59.01
Balance Due from "Bible Talks" carried forward	203 18 4	991.03
	£462 13 10	\$2248.68
	£462 13 10	\$2248.68

Besides the above, some of the friends—as mentioned in the report of a year ago—have been contributing by agreement among themselves a certain sum per week toward the office rent. Their contributions during the past year have amounted to £18 10s. 6d., which amount has been deducted from the total office expense for rent, light, etc., the remainder being the "Net Office Expense," which is divided into three equal parts, one part being charged to the "Advocate" account, one part to the "Cheerful Givers' Fund," and one part to "Bible Talks." The total of the voluntary donations cheerfully given to the funds above mentioned during the last twelve months is £353/13/3 (\$1718.78).

It will be seen from the foregoing that the "Bible Talks" has been enabled to pay off a small portion of what was advanced to it from the "Cheerful Givers' Fund." We are glad to have been able to pay off even so small a portion, and regret that we could not do much better. Our ability in this direction depends entirely upon the sale of the books, and that depends mostly—humanly speaking—upon the labourers who enter the service, to carry the good news from place to place and from house to house by the sale of "Bible Talks" and the other books and booklets which have thus far been published.

During the past year there have been published at the expense of the "Cheerful Givers' Fund" 165,650 tracts for free circulation. These tracts varied in number of pages. The total number of pages of the standard "Bible Talks" size was 1,242,400, and nearly all of these are in circulation. This is an improvement over last year in quantity of tracts, the actual number being greater, besides which it is to be remembered that the present report covers only twelve months, whereas the former report was for fifteen months. All the tracts published have been paid for, as it is our policy not to involve the Fund in liabilities unless there is a reasonable prospect of being able to meet the accounts that come in. The best possible use is made of what the dear Lord sends, but beyond the ability thus granted we cannot go. Part of the tracts above mentioned and accounted for were printed and published in Australia, and part elsewhere.

The result following the distribution of these tracts is very encouraging. Particularly may this be said of the tract, "The Wideness of God's Mercy," which seems to have met with general favour among both the distributors and the receivers. You are invited and desired to make full and free use of all the tracts that we publish for free distribution; in fact, you are the ones that must do the distributing—you whom the Lord has blessed with the knowledge of the Truth on these subjects, and who are so impressed by the mercies of God that you yield your bodies as living sacrifices in His blessed service. This is one of the easiest opportunities

that the dear Lord gives us of showing how much we really desire to be what we profess to be, viz., ambassadors for Christ in giving out the good news of the Mediatorship of Jesus Christ, established at the Cross, and of beseeching men to be reconciled to God, and of helping with the gathering of the harvest at this, the end of the age. Let not the enemy overcome you with a spirit of slumber, but be diligent in business and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord—"for ye serve the Lord Christ."

Friends will be interested to know that the Lord of the Harvest is opening the way for the greater prosecution of the work of spreading the Good News in other languages than English. Besides the zealous efforts of the brethren, who, in Germany, Switzerland, and Scandinavia, are standing fast for the Truth of the One Mediator, and the One Sin Offering completed on Calvary, and who are publishing it in their own countries and languages as the way opens, the opportunity has come for publications in the Bulgarian language, and a beginning is to be made with the "Wideness" tract, which is to be published and distributed in Bulgaria. This will mean additional expense for us, but we are ready to follow the Lord's leading in the work, as it may please Him to give the ability. It is hoped that a beginning may be made this year in the French, and still other languages, as well as that the work in the English language may become broader and deeper. Pray for the divine blessing upon this and every feature of His work with which He permits us to be associated.

Correspondence

Letters and cards received—938.

Letters and cards sent—718.

The lessened volume of correspondence during the last twelve months, as compared with that reported for the preceding fifteen months is accounted for partly by the shorter period covered by the present report, but still more by the fact that correspondence which formerly was addressed to Melbourne is now addressed to the Brooklyn or London office, as may be more convenient for the friends.

Bible Talks

The circulation of the books under this head goes on apace. As you are aware, the major portion of this phase of the work is carried on by the efforts of the colporteurs, and by the efforts of friends who recommend the books to other friends, sometimes selling and sometimes giving them copies. We thank God for new labourers raised up to enter this work during the past year; and more of such will be raised up, we doubt not, during the twelve months just beginning. Some are seriously considering it. These co-labourers are engaging in the work for the love of the Truth, and one of them said—"I feel that I have found my work at last."

As the books are circulated by these noble workers—true pioneers—they are getting into the heads and hearts, as well as into the hands of new readers, and so some new friends have been found, and will continue to be found, by these efforts. And what an encouragement it is to know that one's efforts are really owned by the Lord to the blessing of some of His people with these good things! Such knowledge compensates for many disappointments caused by the coldness or hostility of others toward the Truth.

Colportering with the "Bible Talks" and the smaller books is a most practical manner of engaging in the work for the Lord. It not only goes thoroughly into the town and district where the work is done, but it

is also self-supporting as the work goes on. A recent fortnight's sales of one worker were 135 "Bible Talks," 20 "Everlasting Punishment," cloth bound, and a dozen smaller books. This sort of work is suitable for both sexes and is open to both, and the discounts allowed the workers on the various books are ample to meet the financial needs of the workers as they travel. Some thousands of "Bible Talks," "The Ransom, the Sin Offering and the Covenants," "The Church and its Ceremonies," and "The Dead," have been circulated during the past twelve months. Besides these, a new book—"Everlasting Punishment"—has been published in two styles of binding, and a 32-page booklet on "Miracles" has also been issued, the latter being just off the press, as mentioned elsewhere in this issue. With the exception of the copies in stock in Great Britain and the United States, the first edition of "Bible Talks" is about exhausted, and the same is true of the "Ransom" booklet. The E.P. book in cloth binding is going very well, and we trust will be used of the Lord to clear away the doubts that are in many minds as to His characteristics of justice and loving kindness. This has been the case in some instances already, you will be pleased to know, even as we are glad to be able to state. The booklet on "Miracles" will be helpful to those who have questions and doubts in regard to them, and will be good to keep on hand for lending to skeptics.

"One Book per Week"

In our circular letter of November 1st, 1910, reference was made to the idea—suggested by one of our Melbourne brethren—that one copy of "Bible Talks" per week was not much for any friend of the cause to dispose of, and even if not sold, it would not be much to pay for and give or lend to some one. This thought has appealed to a number of the friends here, and they have acted on it. Some times, if they saw no immediate opening for a book, they have paid for it, and have left it with us to send to a public library, or to use in some other appropriate manner. The friends taking part in this movement have not been many, but the results attained serve to illustrate the power of small things patiently persevered in. The copies of "Bible Talks" paid for and left with us to be used in some appropriate way for the advancement of the knowledge of the Truth amount to no less than 350; the copies taken and personally used by the friends who have adopted this method cannot be exactly numbered, but they would probably be nearly as many, thus making a total of about 600 "Bible Talks" circulated by the quiet co-operation of a few friends in the nine months since they definitely started their work, on the lines of "ONE BOOK PER WEEK." We mention this for the encouragement to activity of those friends in all parts who feel shut in, and that their field of work is extremely limited. Try this idea; do this little each week; and you will soon have reason to realise the truth of the Scottish proverb about the "Mony mickles." And, as you faithfully use the small opportunities, you will also find greater ones coming your way.

A Modern Miracle

Just here it seems fitting that an incident in our personal experience should be related to the glory of God and for our mutual consolation and encouragement, as showing that the Lord hears and answers prayer, that His watchful care is over His work and His people at all times, and that His mighty power is exerted whenever necessary in their behalf.

We have been much impressed with the manner in

which the work has gone on, and we are grateful for the many manifestations of divine providence. Yet we have been greatly hampered by lack of capital to open out the publishing work as we felt it should be extended, the returns from books thus far sold being at once required to meet bills for paper and printing. Mrs. Hennings and I were making this a matter of prayer, asking the Lord, if He favoured the project, to graciously supply the wherewithal, in some other way than by means of the "Cheerful Givers' Fund, as we were loth to divert even temporarily any more from that fund, which is none too large for the demands upon it. Our persuasion was that He could, did He choose to do so, cause the money to fall out of a clear sky, if He wished us to have it, and the project in view seemed a proper one for us to entertain and to pray about for the advancement of the work in which we are permitted to take part. In the meantime we went on with the preparation of another volume, in the hope that when ready the means would be available.

On the evening of Monday, November 21st, 1910, we were returning together from a Bible Class held in a Melbourne suburb—a class which I attend regularly, but which Mrs. H. attended only occasionally. We entered a train, intending to ride in it about two miles. When this train was within a few hundred yards of its destination it was run into by a locomotive which was running on a line diagonally crossing the one we were on. Our carriage was forced from the rails, and there was a sound of woodwork being wrenched and crunched as the colliding locomotive tore away the footboard from the carriage we were in; and when stopped, the colliding locomotive was just at our compartment. There were no bones broken, but the unexpected sight of that locomotive trying to enter our carriage gave both of us a shock. Mrs. Hennings has suffered from this much more than I, but is now, after seven months' incessant pain, making good progress in the right direction, we are thankful to be able to say. The Railway has awarded compensation that will be a help to us in the publishing work, but is by no means as much as we feel sure could be advantageously used in this

service of the truth; though, singularly enough, the amount is just about enough to give a start to the volume in preparation. The new volume will, D.V., be ready about the end of 1911, and we shall proceed with the preparation of another, in the hope that the way may open for it in the Lord's order.

Now, a collision on the railway is not in itself a miracle; nor was it miraculous that we should both have been attending a Bible Class together, which Mrs. H. rarely visited. The miracle is in that her course was overruled, so that she should be at that class on that particular evening, whereas she had arranged to be in the country in the service of the Truth that week, in company with another sister, which arrangement had been deferred for a week at the request of the other friend. Thus we were allowed to enter that train, the driver of which passed two signals which were against him, and so brought us into the collision. None of the circumstances in itself was miraculous, but the combining of them all in the manner described was as truly beyond human forethought and was as certainly miraculous as was the making of a passage through the Red Sea for the Israelites by a strong east wind *when they needed it*.

Mrs. Hennings feels it a privilege that her sufferings should be in the Lord's providence an occasion for the advancement of the work, and we ask you all to join in thanksgiving to God for our miraculous preservation from death and for the aid thus miraculously afforded the cause—as it were, out of a clear sky. Let us also be mutually encouraged, by this token of the Lord's oversight, to greater efforts in the service, and to more earnest prayers to the Lord that He would send yet more labourers into the vineyard, where the labourers are few, while the harvest is exceedingly great.

And, at the same time, may we ask the friends in all parts of the world to bear up continually before the throne of grace all the workers, that doors of utterance may be opened to them, and that they may have boldness to speak the truth of the Gospel, as they ought to speak it. We shall also remember you all in our prayers to the same end. God bless you all! Amen.



LOVE

It is impossible fully to describe Love itself; it is best shown by its works. Those who appreciate the love of Christ toward us, which the Apostle speaks of in 2 Cor. 5: 14, when He says, "The love of Christ constraineth us," the love which brought Him into the world to die for us, can love Him in return, but cannot realise fully the depths of that love. But they do realise that it is of God, that it is godlikeness in heart and mind and tongue, and their earnest effort is to imitate that perfect love.

We are pupils in Christ's school, and the lesson He is teaching us day by day, and which we must learn thoroughly if we would attain to the prize of the High Calling in Christ Jesus, is the lesson of Love; for it relates to all the thoughts and words and actions of our daily life. Therefore the Apostle Paul tells us in Col. 3: 14 to put on love, as it is the "bond of completeness."

The manifestation of the spirit of Christ in us is four fold:—

1st: Love supreme to God and loyalty to His cause,

even at the cost of much suffering.

2nd: Love to the Lord Jesus, who so loved us as to give Himself for us.

3rd: Love to the brethren, unselfish and pure, desiring always their welfare.

4th: Kind and generous love for all men, including our enemies, prompting us to do good as the opportunity occurs.

"The Greatest Is Love"

Faith, Hope and Love are the three enduring gifts, but the greatest of these is love, because God is love. It is His character and disposition to love; and as He endureth forever, Love will endure forever. The Apostle tells us (1 Cor. 13) that even if we have all knowledge and all faith and have not love we are nothing.

Love is as far above selfishness as good is above evil. It rejoices not with iniquity, but rejoices with the truth; it covers all things (1 Peter 4: 8), believes all things, hopes all things; Love fails not at any time; Love is kind and will hesitate even to think an unkind thought

or utter an unkind word. In Rom. 13: 10 we are told that Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law. If, therefore, we have not Love in our hearts for the brethren and for all men, we have not the evidence of being accepted as sons of God. So then we are to consider Love the chief test of our continued acceptance with God after we have become believers in Jesus.

Dwelling In God

We read in 1 John 4: 8, that he who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In the same chapter we are told that if we love one another God dwelleth in us, and His love has been perfected in us; he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

The Apostle Peter tells us (1 Pet. 1: 22) that having purified our lives by obedience to the truth to unfeigned brotherly love, we are to love each other from the heart intensely, to care for each other, and to help each other as much as possible to grow strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Keep Yourselves In the Love

In Jude 21 we are exhorted to keep ourselves in the love of God by building up ourselves in our most

holy faith (vs. 20), and by being obedient to the principles of righteousness. We are to judge ourselves constantly and strictly by the standard which God has given us; that is, the standard of love.

Love will keep us faithful unto death and make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Where fervent love rules the heart, it means full submission to the Lord, and to do His will at whatever cost.

In 1 Tim. 1: 5 it is said that "the end of the commandment" is love from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an undissembled faith. So we see clearly that the ultimate object of all the divine dealings with us, and the significance of the divine promises made to us, is the development of LOVE.

The Bond of Perfectness

Thus we realise what the Apostle means when he tells us to put on Love, as it is the bond of perfectness, in that we must make it the controlling power of our life in all its details, that Love must be the motive power, which actuates our every thought and word and action, and the more we allow Love to dominate us, so will we grow in the likeness and character of God; for God is Love.

— E.B.

The Field is the World

Three Days and Three Nights

A confirmation of what was stated in the "Advocate" for May, page 19, as to the use of the expression "three days," comes to us in rather a sad way. A child was admitted to the Melbourne Infectious Diseases Hospital late on a Saturday afternoon, and was taken away the following Monday morning. The account sent to the relatives was for three days at 7/6 per day.

Houses of Sand

Dr. Solomon Schindler, a Jewish Rabbi of Boston, after twenty years' endeavour to preach a Reformed, half-Gentile Judaism, manfully confesses some of his mistakes, in the hope that others will profit by his experience, and not repeat the same. One of his "mistakes" he describes as follows, as published in the Boston "Jewish Advocate":—

"I believed in the individual freedom of each human being in regard to religion. My idea was to have a religion for everyone. There should be as many religions as there were people, not one religion for all. I did not believe in that idea of one flock and one shepherd. No. I believed that every individual has the right and should enjoy the privilege of being himself, be free to form his ideals and become happy in the performance of whatever duties he may have laid down for himself. It was a great thought, and had a great deal to commend itself. But, my friends, it was a mistake. You cannot form an army in which every soldier can do as he pleases. He must stand under some authority, and he must do the bidding of that authority. You cannot form a labour union in which each member may act as he pleases. He may vote for a certain thing, but after a plan is decided upon he must abide by the dictum of his superior officer. He must strike when they tell him to strike, whether he cares to or not, and go to work whether he cares to or not. He cannot be free. He must sink his individuality. You cannot build a house out of sand—that is, out of the granules composing a heap of sand. What you have to do is to put cement to it and make the individual grains hold together—stick together. You must take away every liberty of motion they have. Then you can get stone and build a house of it. It will hold. But not the sand.

Distress In Jerusalem

Jewish papers are publishing appeals for aid to be sent to distressed Jews in Palestine. The Jewish colonies there are passing through a crisis, and in Jerusalem the distress is very acute. An eye-witness states that:—

"Hundreds of men, women and children are seen wandering in the streets more dead than alive in search of a bit of bread. The 'Home for the Old and Infirm' has been closed, and its inmates are fast dying from hunger and exposure."

New Colonies In Turkey and Egypt

The Young Turkish party is favourable to the formation of new Jewish colonies in Palestine, partly because the colonies already existing have proved profitable to the Government, three colonies yielding taxes to the amount of 717,000 piastres yearly. As Mesopotamia alone could easily hold a population of 100,000,000, and there are not that number of Jews in all the world, Turkey is ready to receive other immigrants, Arabs, Hindoos, etc., to fill up the vast waste places to be reclaimed by irrigation. The present panic and famine among the Jewish colonists is thought to be only temporary.

Of the new colonisation scheme in Egypt, the London "Times" published the following from a correspondent:—

"The Bible, the anniversary of which is being celebrated in England just now, in itself forms a bond between the English nation and the Jews. Equal enthusiasm for the ideas of freedom and thankfulness for good-will often shown strengthens this sympathy.

"Consequently, it seems to be altogether out of the question that Jewish colonisation in Turkey could ever in any way go against English interests.

"But more sympathetic still may be to England the settling of Jewish peasants in North-Eastern Egypt. This undertaking, which the General Jewish Colonising Organisation, with the help of other Jewish groups, has initiated by acquiring Rapha,

represents the first experiment of Jewish colonisation within the sphere of English influence—in other words, within a district where political conflicts are out of the question. In a few years the hands of diligent Jewish labourers will have turned the desert of to-day into flourishing garden lands that will bring taxes into the coffers of the Anglo-Egyptian Government. And England will be in a position to protect, according to its time-honoured tradition, the persecuted Jews, granting them hospitality without the need of enlarging the element of the East End."

Growing In Grace

As a constant reader of the "Advocate" for the past two years, permit me to express the help I have received from the truths it sets forth. My life has contained many disappointments and sorrows, which I have been obliged in large measure

to hide from others; but I thank God for the grace He has given me to keep my faith in Him and to persevere in the High Calling. In this the articles have been a great help, for they hold up something definite to believe in, and give a hope "which maketh not ashamed."

They also encourage one to be good and kind to others, regardless of the persecutions experienced. I am learning to rejoice more in tribulations, and to take them more as a matter of course. At first, it seemed hard to realise that a Christian must suffer, but I now see more plainly that suffering is a necessary part of our discipline. Therefore I rejoice that I am *counted worthy* to suffer for His Name's Sake. And I am learning to be more patient toward others, who also I know must have many trials which they cannot always speak of.

— Victoria.

A Group of Similitudes

(Continued from June Issue)

The Bread of Life

—John 6: 47-51—

(To the Multitude)

47. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.

48. I am that bread of life.

49. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

MANY WERE the parables and similitudes used to throw side lights on the character and work of our beloved Lord. Were anything lacking in the assurance of His love and kindness as manifested in His miracles and set forth in plain statements, one has only to think of the Good Shepherd who cares for His sheep, and even lays down His life for them, to realise the depth and tenderness of that love. And if one be in doubt as to the degree of his dependence upon Jesus, he has only to read of Jesus as the Bread of Life, to find the answer. The subject is still further illuminated by the reference to the experience of the children of Israel in the wilderness, who would have perished miserably had God not miraculously supplied the manna; yet that bread prolonged their lives for only a comparatively short time. (Exod. 16: 15, 35.) Much more to be desired is the living bread from heaven, which is able to give everlasting life.

The Jews, who were all their lifetime familiar with the use of parables and figures of speech, should have been able to understand our Saviour's reference to Himself as the Bread of Life. (John 6: 41, 52.) The reason they did not was that they had hardened their hearts against Him, notwithstanding that they were willing to sit among the five thousand and receive the natural food which He provided. These people have had many successors; they are willing to follow the Lord as long as such public association with His disciples assures them material benefits; if it adds to their social prestige or in some way or other puts money in their pockets. To feed on the Lord for the good of their souls is not in their line, and only a little reproach or financial loss or persecution, or a little pressing home of the truth, is needed to show the hollowness of their professions. (John 6: 60-66.) Such

cannot enter into the sentiments and feelings of the true disciples, who, like the Apostle Paul, gladly suffer the loss of all things and regard all the riches and emoluments of the world as but dung.—John 6: 60, 61; Phil. 3: 7, 8.

The Lord tried to impress upon the multitude the necessity of a correct valuation as between the physical and the spiritual things. The flesh profiteth nothing; they might have had a thousand miraculous feedings on the hill side, and have been practically no better off. "It is the spirit that quickeneth" or gives life, and the spirit was operating in the words which He spoke. (John 6: 63.) By hearing and obeying His words they should receive real profit—even everlasting life.

Eat His Flesh and Drink His Blood

Jesus is the bread from heaven because He is able to give life and sustenance to the believer (verse 33); and the believer receives the life only because he is willing and glad to eat of that bread (verse 35). Why does He divide Himself as it were into two, by saying—

"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you."—John 6: 53. See also vs. 54-57.

Because both food and drink are necessary to sustain life. Bread alone is not sufficient. Even with the manna, the children of Israel would have perished had not Moses, or rather the Lord through Moses, also provided water out of the rock. (Exod. 17: 6; Psa. 78: 20; Num. 20: 1-11.) Neither is water sufficient alone to sustain life, though one can live longer upon water alone than upon bread alone. Both food and drink, properly prepared and regularly partaken of, are necessary to sustain life in vigor and usefulness.—John 6: 35, 57.

"Hath Everlasting Life"

When our Lord said that the bread from heaven was such "that a man may eat thereof, and not die," it is evident that He did not mean that the earth-life of His disciples should be continued forever, because at other times he warned them of persecution and a martyr's death. (Matt. 10: 16-23, 28; Phil. 3: 9, 10.) The deliverance from death is in three parts; first, deliverance from the condemnation resting upon the sinner on account of Adam's sin and personal transgression (John 5: 24; Rom. 3: 25, 26; 8: 1); second, the establishment of the believer in righteousness through the sanctifying influence of the truth (John 17: 17; 1 Pet. 2: 20-23; 2 Thes. 2: 13); and third,

resurrection into the likeness of the Lord.—1 Pet. 5: 4; 1 John 3: 2.

Were the soul immortal, and destined to live forever in either happiness or misery, there would be no point to our Lord's statement that those who eat the bread of life shall live forever, and not die. He places life as the antithesis of death; life to the believer, death to the unbeliever. The believer "hath everlasting life" as soon as he believes, in that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8: 1.) Life is, as it were, placed in his hand as a gift; but it does not become a physical experience until the resurrection, as the Apostle states—

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."—2 Tim. 3: 8. See also 1 Pet. 1: 3-5.

The same truth concerning everlasting life as the possession of the believer is set forth in 1 John 5: 11-13—

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life."—Compare John 3: 36.

It is manifest then that believers have eternal life now only in that they have Jesus Christ; that is, they believe in Him; they eat His flesh and drink His blood; they acknowledge Him as the Source of their Life, because He died for them, and thus bought them with His precious blood. So long, then, as they have the Son, so long as they continue to believe in Jesus, with all that implies of fidelity and obedience, they have also the eternal life which is in Him, and are on the way to receive the actual new and perfect life in the resurrection. This is expressed in 1 John 2: 24, 25—

"If that which ye have heard from the beginning remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life."

To this agree our Lord's words in John 11: 25, 26, in confirmation of Martha's hope in the Resurrection. To this agree also many apostolic references to everlasting life; for example, Rom. 8: 24, 25; 1 Cor. 15: 12-57; Phil. 3: 11; Col. 3: 4; 1 John 3: 1-3.

The same principles will obtain in the Kingdom Age, for the life is in the Son, and only by Him can it be given. The terms of salvation will be the same—faith and obedience, or faith manifested by obedience. Rev. 21: 3-8.

Let us then who "see Jesus" (Heb. 2: 9) as the Bread of Life come to give life to a dying world, if they will but turn to Him; let us continue daily and hourly to believe on Him, to feed upon Him, that we may be nourished, and grow strong in the grace which is in Him. And at the last may we receive that glorious heavenly inheritance reserved for them that love Him!

The Serpent in the Wilderness

—John 3: 14, 15—

14. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up;

15. That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

THIS IS not a Parable or a Similitude in the sense of a story or a comparison drawn from ordinary everyday affairs, but is, like the Bread of Life, a Similitude based upon an actual historical fact. In the midst of the plague Moses lifted up the brazen serpent, and those who looked in faith, believing the promise that those who looked would not be destroyed

in the plague, were saved. (Num. 21: 4-9.) Similarly the Son of Man was lifted up on the cross, that those who look to Him in faith "should not perish, but have everlasting life."

God sent not His Son into the world to condemn afresh the ignorant and superstitious, whether civilised or heathen, but that the world through Him might be saved. (John 12: 47.) But the condemnation He brings is upon those who *after hearing the truth*, after having been brought to an exact knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2: 4-7), wilfully reject it, and despise the Son of God and the blood of His Covenant. This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and that men, after seeing and comparing both, prefer the darkness to the light because they love their evil ways. —John 3: 16-19; 12: 44-50.

But those who look at the Crucified, and see in Him their personal Saviour, they shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life. Eighteen hundred years ago was He lifted up. (John 3: 14; 8: 28; 12: 32, 33.)

Many have looked unto Him, and been healed of the plague of sin. Let us never forget that once we were completely undone, and that we owe all to Him of life and joy and peace we now possess!

The Bruised Reed and the Smoking Flax

—Matt. 12: 20—

20. A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory.

THESE WORDS were not spoken by our Lord Himself, but they were said about Him by the Prophet (Isa. 42: 1-4), and they come in here most appropriately in connection with those Gospel similitudes which show His loving and gracious character. Those who look unto Him shall live; He is the Bread of Life upon whom they feed; He is so tender that the weakest and poorest need not fear Him.

Matthew declares (vss. 15-17) that the miracles which Jesus performed in Judea and Galilee ("Galilee of the Gentiles"—Matt. 4: 12-15; Luke 4: 14, 31), together with the fact that He charged the people not to make Him known, were the beginning of the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy, and assisted to identify Him as the One foretold by the prophet seven hundred years before—"Behold my Servant, whom I have chosen."

This Servant, God's Elect, was to be a great Ruler and Judge. God had promised through Moses a great Prophet, who should be raised up to Israel, "of your brethren," and our Lord was that great Prophet, as declared by the Apostle Peter—the One of whom all the holy prophets had testified; the One referred to in the promise to Abraham, In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. This great Prophet, our Lord Jesus, was raised up unto Israel, and at Pentecost He officially began the blessing, as stated in Acts 3: 19-26. But His office of Prophet was not to be limited to Israel, over whom He likewise was King, being heir of David's throne; He was also to be the great Prophet and King of the Gentiles. Up to the time of our Lord, God's interest in the Gentiles had not been manifest, His chief concern being to keep His people Israel separate from Gentile corruption, and only in rare instances seeking their conversion, as when He sent Jonah to preach repentance to Nineveh. But this Servant, God's Elect, was to "bring forth

judgment to the Gentiles"; "bring forth judgment unto truth."

"He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth; and the isles (or coasts) shall wait for his law."—Isa. 42: 4.

That great work of setting judgment in the earth began at His first advent, and has been progressing since, to have its widest fulfilment in the Kingdom age. The Gospel truth has judged and condemned the nations, as the Law condemned Israel; wherever it has gone it has condemned heathen superstition and idolatry, as well as civilised scepticism, selfishness and hypocrisy. In the meanwhile the special work of the Gospel age has proceeded, in the taking out of a people for His name, and preparing them through suffering for the inheritance of the saints in light.—Acts 15: 14; 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12; 2 Thes. 2: 14.

The Prophet, confirming this, says—

"Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His Kingdom to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this."—Isa. 9: 7. R.V.

Lord and Christ

Now the remarkable thing is here: This great Ruler, this autocratic Monarch, came first to die to redeem mankind, thus losing in death all the dignities and titles attaching to Him. But God "raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory" (1 Pet. 1: 21); at His resurrection all these rights and titles were confirmed to Him, together with powers far above any possessed by Him as a man. A few only of these autocratic titles may be here quoted—

"God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both LORD and CHRIST."—Acts 2: 36.

"Him hath God exalted with His right hand (to be) a PRINCE and a SAVIOUR, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."—Acts 5: 31. The words "to be" are not in the original.

"The ble-sed and only Potentate, the KING OF KINGS, and LORD OF LORDS, who only hath immortality."—1 Tim. 6: 16.

"The Faithful Witness, the First-Begotten of the dead, and the PRINCE of the KINGS of the earth."—Rev. 1: 5.

"The Lord the righteous JUDGE."—2 Tim. 4: 8.

"The JUDGE of quick and dead."—Acts 10: 42.

(To be continued.)

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No. 5

Jesus at Bethany

—Luke 10: 38-42.—

THE first greeting is over. The travel-stained feet of the beloved arrivals have been washed. They sit in the cool, shady verandah, and feel as comfortable as possible.

Thus would the two women have it who superintend the hospitable house; the more comfortable their guests, the more pleased are they.

And now it is meet to prepare for the Lord and His companions a banquet which shall do honour to the house.

This lay especially on one of the sisters, Martha, the widow (presumably) of Simon the leper.

There were so many orders to be given to begin the work, that she could scarcely get time to breathe—for, according to all authorities, we have here to do with a superior household.

This, then, may have gradually driven away her good temper. The maids were not quick or not skilful enough; certainly the honour of the house would concern them less than it did the mistress, whose critical eye observed the preparation and decoration of the table, and found here and there things to alter.

And at the same time the service in the kitchen needed watching, in order that everything might be properly cooked and nothing burnt.

Our dear sisters, who themselves superintend a household, know by experience what it means to provide the necessities for a numerous company at the table.

And the nearer the same is to their hearts, the more willingly do they take upon themselves the accompanying trouble and work.

While Martha applied herself to this, her sister Mary sat at the feet of Jesus, and listened to the good tidings which He had to declare.

This was not mere convenience or self-seeking.

Firstly, it must have been pleasing to the guests themselves, if all and sundry in the house were not in trouble over their arrival.

The condition of repose which Mary was able to maintain in the midst of all the busy stir about her could not but be beneficial.

Particularly to the Lord, Who was so much and often in controversy, Who came so much and often in contact

with all the misery of fallen humanity, Who knew more about outward unrest than about outward repose.

This was *her* manner of showing kindness to the Guest, a manner for which our Saviour could have had only thoughts of thankfulness.

He realised the complete harmony between His ideal and that of Mary—that ideal which for thousands of years He had enjoyed together with the holy angels in heaven, where He was daily His Father's delight.

The repose, not only of mind, but also of manner, of her sister, "got on the nerves" (as we are accustomed to say) of busy Martha, running to and fro, and her store of patience—probably not too large—began to wane.

She certainly had more regard for the Lord Jesus, the great Prophet from Galilee, and more zeal for the honour of the house than the servants, yet she could sit there and never lift a finger to the duties of hospitality, which every right-minded housewife imposed upon herself to discharge! She could have been a most useful support for Martha in this moment, when everything was at the utmost tension.

But she did not move.

At length, after several more or less delicate hints—of which the Evangelist says nothing—had failed to take effect on Mary, Martha addressed herself to her Guest, in order that He might remind Mary of her duty.

"Lord," she asked reproachfully, "dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?"

This thought was so natural, so thoroughly appropriate to the situation, that the Saviour, from Whose thoughts nothing lay further than loveless criticism of others, gave full consideration in His rejoinder to this circumstance.

His answer shows that He was thankful for the fundamentally different conduct of *both* the sisters.

He knew that in both the sisters love for Him was the mainspring of what they did or did not do.

Therefore He must answer so as to pain neither of them, and this He was able to do, thanks to the great wisdom which was granted Him from the Father.

"Martha, Martha," said He to the mistress of the

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may begin with any number.

house, "thou art careful and troubled about many things."

The Saviour knew how to appreciate this, and where the host took no pains to honour the invited Guest, He felt the offence quite as keenly as His heart was now touched by the honour shown.

He did not say to Simon the Pharisee—"Thou art careful and troubled about many things." He was very sparing of his pains, as though he were interested to see how he could do violence to the duties of hospitality.

For this reason he received an admonition, which must have been the more searching, as it was kindly administered.—Luke 7: 44-46.

To remain true to Himself, the Lord could not express Himself to Martha otherwise than in recognition of her kindness.

Not that He had sought the gift; no, He sought only the fruit.—Phil 4: 17.

He was rejoiced if His speech and demeanor begat love to Him and to His Father, the God of Israel, in the hearts of those with whom He came in contact.

Indeed, this was the task which He undertook.

He came into this world, then, and has now come again, to make men acquainted with His Father, to show men that no being could be more worthy of their love than the Creator of heaven and earth.

Therefore He rejoiced sincerely at the zeal which Martha displayed.

But, according to His own recipe, "It is more blessed to give than it is to receive."

From Martha He received good; but Mary sat quietly at His feet, thereby putting the Lord into the role of *Giver*.

And, excepting the Father in heaven, who could understand giving better than our Lord?

Therefore, Mary would agree with Him from the bottom of her heart, when He called her part "the better part."

And to this was added the gracious promise, that the same should not be taken from her.

She should be allowed to continue to sit at His feet and learn.

She should be led in this school from knowledge to knowledge, and should thereby be caused to love ever more devoutly the Father in heaven and Jesus Christ, whom He had sent.

Should an opportunity come to translate this love into deeds, it would not fail.

If the Bridegroom should be taken from her, Who did not need her service, the least among His brethren would be thankful if she would benefit them with that which she had learned from the Bridegroom.

This was the best part, which awaited her in her further pilgrim journey.

Through the grace and mercy of God, we have been led thus far, that we need have no fears for the salvation of Martha's soul on account of her too great care for the outward things.

Our Saviour was no narrow-minded character, neither was He a surface skimmer; He went to the foundations of things, and Martha's zeal certainly stood this test.

This zeal could stand with honour before Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire.

It came out of as pure a heart as Mary's eagerness to learn, and therefore there was no danger—at least not at that time—that Martha would not be allowed to behold God's face.—Matt. 5: 8; 1 John 3: 2.

Only this lay before Martha: that she might view with less favour than her sister the service of the least among the brethren of the Lord, because she desired to serve Jesus personally.

Her zeal was directed more to the *Person* of Jesus, but Mary's, on the contrary, more toward the *Cause* represented by Jesus.

The *Person* was appointed to be forever removed from the circle of human sensibilities; the *Cause*, on the other hand, was to completely occupy the hearts of the disciples.

Therefore, well was it for him who apprehended this before the *Person* of Jesus was taken away.

To him the taking away of the Beloved could do no harm.

Even at this time Mary belonged to these.

To these may we also all belong.

Of course we believe that our Lord is again present.

But since He is invisible, He remains outside the range of our senses.

Besides, He needs no more our service, as once in the house of Martha.

There remains for us then *only* Mary's "better part"—to serve the Lord in them that are His.

"Die Aussicht" knows no other aim, no other purpose in life; if we might so express ourselves, no other justification for existence.—[And so the "Advocate."—Ed.]—E. P. in "Die Aussicht." Translation made for "The New Covenant Advocate."

A Group of Similitudes

(Continued from July issue.)

"Not Strive nor Cry"

Another remarkable thing is that this great "Servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom My soul is well pleased," and upon Whom God put His Spirit (He gave not the Spirit by measure unto Him, John 3: 34), did not strive nor cry, nor lift up His voice in the street. (Matt. 12: 38.) There was no playing to the gallery, no affiliation with the high and mighty for the purpose of impressing the populace, no sending before Him of runners with whips to clear a path through the crowd, as was the custom of the upper classes; no boasting or flaunting of wealth, or

* display of armor on horseback after the manner of a conqueror; so that, as foretold by the Prophet (Isa. 53: 2), there was no comeliness in Him that those who loved such outward show should desire Him. The great Servant and Well-beloved walked quietly through the streets like any ordinary citizen, using only such opportunities for teaching the truth as were open to any Jew under the Law and by grace of the Roman governors—at the street corners, in the market place, or other open spaces, in the syngagogue (where it was the privilege of any Jew in attendance to rise and speak to the portion of Scripture under consideration—Luke

4: 16-21), or in the homes of the people. On other occasions he resorted to the surrounding fields, or discoursed on the hillsides or the seashore.

For over three years He travelled up and down the country, footsore and weary, having no settled place of abode, dependent often upon the kindness of strangers for a cup of cold water. (John 4: 6, 7; Luke 9: 58.) He organised no bands for overturning the Roman power, took part in no quarrels, public or private (Matt. 22: 15-21; Luke 12: 13, 14), and discouraged the bickering spirit in his disciples, as in others (Mark 9: 33-39), in every way showing Himself a man of peace and quietness. Even when arrested in the garden, he refused to defend himself or to allow His disciples to do so. (Matt. 26: 47-52.) His power lay in His preaching, and in His many miracles; without pomp or display He performed more "mighty works" than any prophet who had preceded Him. "Great multitudes followed Him, and He *healed them all*." A good example this, of modesty combined with diligence in good works, worthy the imitation of all His followers.

Bruised Reed and Smoking Flax

This part of the prophecy also was fulfilled by our blessed Lord.

A reed is an aquatic plant, often of no value, as a bulrush; if bruised, it could be easily broken and thrown away, and no one be the loser. The "flax" referred to would be a taper, such as formed the wick of an oil lamp. When a wick smokes, the indication is that it is not burning properly; the light should be clear and bright. But of what are they the similitudes?

Another prophecy, quoted by our Lord as applicable to Himself, gives the answer to this question. (Isa. 61: 1; Luke 4: 18-22.) Jesus was sent to "*heal the broken-hearted*" and to "*set at liberty them that are bruised*." His mission was not to break the bruised hearts, as one might carelessly break and toss aside the bruised reed; it was not to discourage those who made even a slight and imperfect attempt to shine as a light amid the darkness of a degenerated Judaism, as one might impatiently quench a smoking lamp. No! His mission was to heal, to bind up, to comfort, to deliver and bless as many as might be making even the slightest effort to serve God and to do His will, or who, not knowing God, might be willing to come to Jesus and be healed of the bruises caused by sin. He came to call not the righteous, the whole, unbruised reeds, standing straight and proud in their own righteousness, but the sinners; and so we read that the reformed publicans and harlots went into the Kingdom before the self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees.—Matt. 21: 31, 32.

Let us, who desire to follow His steps, also bind up the bruised reeds and encourage to brighter shining the smoking lamps we see about us. Let us, as He did, go about doing good.

An Ox or an Ass in a Pit

—Luke 14: 5—

(To the Guests at a Pharisee's Table)

5. And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?

KINDNESS to animals is one of the indications of a humane disposition: it is one of the original characteristics with which mankind was endowed when Adam was made in the image of God. As lord of the earth, mankind were given charge of

the lower orders of creation, and though in many cases men descend to acts of cruelty, yet when their own interests are concerned, they often bestow more care upon their four-footed beasts than upon their families or their neighbours. Many a poor child has cause to envy the sleek pony or the well-fed calves in the stall, or even the caged bird singing in the sunshine.

In the Jewish Law there was no statute compelling a man to lift his own cattle out of a pit into which it may have fallen. Already at that date the Jews were good ranchmen, and would not lose an animal if they could help it. It was necessary to give them a command to assist in removing their neighbour's cattle from such a predicament; they were even compelled to return their enemy's ox or ass which had gone astray. (Exod. 23: 4; Deut. 22: 1-4.) But each man could be trusted to look well after the source of his own wealth; namely, his own flocks and herds. And even though the Sabbath enjoined absolute cessation from labour, no Jew was so dull-witted as to suppose that the Law forbade so simple an act of humanity as the release of an ox or ass from difficulty on the Sabbath day, or the leading of his flocks and herds to drink.—Luke 13: 15.

But our Lord did not refer to the Jewish consideration for animals by way of commending them for their high development in humanitarianism, but rather to bring home to them their utter selfishness and hardness of heart. Why? Because they gave more thought to their cattle than to the suffering human beings around them.

How effectively then this similitude struck home, when the lawyers and Pharisees and rulers of the synagogues complained because he healed the man of dropsy, the woman of her infirmity, the man born blind, and many others, on the Sabbath day! Sometimes we wish we could have been present to see our Lord's wonderful miracles; at other times we almost wish we could have been there to witness the discomfiture of the hypocrites when He exposed their folly!—Luke 13: 11-17; 14: 1-6; John 9: 14.

It is good to be sympathetic, but it is better to have the sympathies directed upon the most deserving objects. Luke's comments are worth serious attention—

"And when He had said these things all His adversaries were ashamed." "And they could not answer Him again to those things."—Luke 13: 17; 14: 6.

There was doubtless considerable cruelty to animals in our Lord's day, which He no doubt deplored; but His mission was not to them. It was the "lost sheep of the House of Israel" whom He had come to seek and to save, the "suffering daughter of Abraham" whom He came to unloose, the poor and depraved whom He lifted out of the pit. And He sent out His disciples on a mission like unto His, not to teach an improved Gospel of their own.

Men fall into pits as distressing to them as any into which their cattle stray; and how few of their fellow human beings are ready with a helping hand to deliver them and heal their wounds. The whole race is involved in the deep, dark pit of sin; the Jewish people were prisoners in "a pit wherein is no water"; that is, they were helpless under the bondage of the Law Covenant from which there was no escape; from both these pits Jesus came to deliver the distressed. In addition, many were in the depths of incurable disease, or hopeless despair, or tortuous grief. These, too, Jesus came to deliver, to lift up and to bless. We

ourselves gladly acknowledge His goodness in lifting us up out of the mire of sin; and placing our feet upon the solid rock, so that we can now sing—

"On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand."

How many do we see about us to-day lying weak and helpless in the pits and snares which the world lays for the unwary feet! Shall we say, It is our day of rest, and we cannot very well exert ourselves or soil our hands with such work; or, those cattle do not belong to me, they are not my concern, my associates are all on a higher level of society, and it would not do for me to be seen associating with such people. If we speak so, some one may say, You do not mind disturbing your rest and associating with your horse long enough to ride him and feed him and train him; you do not mind associating with your cow long enough to milk her; would you be willing to associate with a poor sinner if you thought there were anything in it for you? Thou hypocrite!

The Lighted Candle

—Mark 4: 21—

(To the Multitude)

THE PARABLE.

21. And He said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set in a candlestick?

THE INTERPRETATION.

22. For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested: neither was anything kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

23. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

Compare Luke 8: 16-18; Matt. 5: 14-16; Luke 11: 33-36.

THIS SIMILITUDE follows the parable of the Sower, as much as to say to the multitude that our Lord's parables and their interpretation were given to them for a purpose, and not, as they might carelessly have supposed, merely to give them a Jewish specimen of the modern "Pleasant Sunday Afternoon."

The people who heard His discourse were like candles—cold, clammy affairs, doing no particular good, but under right conditions capable of usefulness. They needed to be lit, and His Words provided the necessary "match." His words were a light, which if properly received by them would make them lights also. A lighted candle is a very different institution to an unlighted one. The one is cold and dead, and in the dark is of no more use than a block of wood or an iron file. But light it, and see the transformation! Note this also, that the candle somehow is forgotten, and we think only of the light. We do not say, Bring the candle, but bring the light! Not, It is a fine candle, but It is a fine light! So should the personalities of God's people, who are to shine as lights in the world, always be subordinated to the light itself.

The marginal reading and modern versions give "lamp" instead of "candle"; the ancient lamp being a dish containing olive oil, with a wick loosely lying in it. But whether the article of illumination be a candle, or a lamp, or a torch, the lesson is the same; each is useless of itself until lit, and even when lit is of little use unless placed in a suitable position to cast abroad the rays of light.

The light is placed not under a bushel, where its brightness will be completely concealed, nor under a bed where it will be extinguished (the ancient "bed" was merely a roll of matting or a sort of mattress spread on the floor), but on a lampstand, an important article of furniture in every Jewish household, which gives

the light the best opportunity for illumination—"and it giveth light to all that are in the house."—Matt. 5: 15.

So the disciples were not to conceal or to extinguish the light which was lighted in them by the words of truth they heard; it was not given them for such a purpose. Our Lord's mission was not still further to conceal the purposes of God and make darkness more dense and mystifying, but rather the reverse. The things which were hidden He came to reveal, the secret things He came to make known; and He desired to find and to use disciples who would assist Him in that work. Indeed, it had been foretold that He should speak in parables, and that these parables would supply the very light they needed, while at the same time making manifest the gross-hearted unable to understand them because of self-will and pride. (Psa. 78: 2; Matt. 13: 35, 14-17.) Whoever then has been "lit," whoever has received the light of truth, let him place himself in the best position possible for diffusing the light, that as many as possible may be helped by it.

In the Sermon on the Mount, the true Believer is compared to a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid, and which, particularly at night, shines out as a beacon to guide the weary traveller.—Matt. 5: 14-16.

The Object of the Shining

In this connection also it is made plain that the purpose of the candle is not to glorify itself, not to attract praise and compliments to itself, but to honour him who lit the candle and placed it in its advantageous position. So with God's people, every one a light shining in a dark place. Whatever is good or beautiful or helpful about them is not to be attributed to their intrinsic value—not even ten per cent.; but *wholly* to Him who lit them and enabled them to shine! It is right that men should see their good works and hear the word of truth from their lips. BUT these works and words must be genuine, disinterested and such as will "glorify your Father in heaven."

The Apostles also admonish us to do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, and as unto the Lord, even eating and drinking being done to His glory. Some have been puzzled to know how we can glorify God in the performance of the ordinary duties of daily life. We might suggest the following—

1. When we acknowledge that of ourselves we are incapable of works able to justify us in His sight, and confess that only in Christ can we be acceptable as worshippers and as servants of the truth.

2. When we continually turn our thoughts to the Lord, asking Him to accept our daily activities as expressions of our desire and endeavour to serve Him.

3. When we put to death the deeds of the flesh, and manifest instead the fruit of the spirit; when we exercise ourselves in self-control, brotherly kindness, forbearance, and other godly virtues, which commend themselves to others, and thus lead them to love the God we serve and imitate.

4. When we, if possible, follow the example of the Lord and the Apostles, and give all our time and strength wholly to the spread of the good tidings.

Our Lord as a Lighted Candle

In Luke 11: 33-36 our Lord seems to refer to Himself as a lighted candle, and possibly He had Himself in mind also in the other passages already considered. He had come as a light into the world, and all the efforts of the scribes and Pharisees had been directed toward quenching that light. The light hurt their eyes, it

exposed their evil deeds, it showed the sweepings behind the door, the dead men's bones in the whited sepulchres. They said, Take it away! Stamp it out! The people we have been deceiving will get to know too much!

But the light was not so easily put out as they supposed; and as they could not get away from it, they put their hands over their eyes, and buried their heads after the manner of the foolish ostrich. We once heard of a vulture who thought that by flying in the face of the sun he could extinguish it.

Having come as a Light, Jesus did not put the light under a bushel. The truths He brought as a message from His heavenly Father He declared openly. From one end of Palestine to the other He went, sending forth on the same errand twelve picked men, and afterwards seventy. And those who loved the light came to the light, and their deeds were made manifest, that they were wrought in God. Those who hated the light thereby placed themselves under a fresh condemnation, because they thereby demonstrated that with freedom of choice and every opportunity they preferred the darkness to the light; for it is written, They hated Me without a cause; and Jesus said to them, Because ye say, We see, therefore your sin remaineth, and you have no cloak or excuse with which to cover it.—John 3: 16-21; 9: 39-41; 15: 19-25.

The Light of the Body Is the Eye

That which enables us to become aware of light is the eye. It is a complicated bit of mechanism, and yet its chief function is merely to act as guide to the light waves, that they may be passed on to the brain, and so a consciousness of light be received by the owner of the eye. The whole body is then "full of light," not because the interior of a man's body is illuminated as if it were a room, but because the brain acts on the information given by the light and guides the whole body accordingly.

If the eye be defective, it performs its functions imperfectly; a common defect being popularly described as "seeing double." A person so afflicted sees nothing clearly; everything is blurred and uncertain. It is one of the manifestations of drunkenness, which gives the victim much trouble. Hence the necessity of having the eye "single," that the vision may be clear and accurate.—Matt. 6: 22.

One who wishes to receive the full benefit of the light which "shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord" cannot afford to become intoxicated, either with literal wine or with the wrong spirit and false doctrines of Babylon.—2 Cor. 4: 3-6; Eph. 5: 18; 1 Cor. 6: 10; Isa. 28: 7, 8; Rev. 18: 3.

A man is about to step over the edge of a precipice, when a sudden light warns him of his danger. The foot itself does not see the light, but it acts as promptly as though it did, because of the lightning-like communication received from the brain which took in the situation by the aid of the eye and the light. Had the eyes been blind, he would not have seen the light and received the warning; or it would be better to say, had his eyes been covered he would not have seen the light; for we should not reflect on the intelligence of a blind man by supposing him on the edge of a cliff without his cane to warn him of danger. This also illustrates another truth presented by our Lord—the blind, who knew they were blind, were in less danger

than those who were confident they could see, but refused to let in the light. When the latter sort of blind attempt to lead others of their kind, there can be but one termination to their career—the ditch. (Matt. 15: 14.) If the already defective eyesight of the scribes and Pharisees, which prevented them receiving the light which shone in His earlier teaching, became still more deficient by reason of their envy and hatred, how much less would they be able to receive His deeper teaching reserved only for His true disciples!

"If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"—Matt. 6: 23.

Let us not be of those who hate the light and close their eyes to it; let us rather go to the Great Physician to correct our defective vision, that so we may receive the full benefit of the light, and hear the Master's approving words—

"Blessed are your eyes, for they see."—Matt. 13: 16.

The Sun of Righteousness

IN HIS EARTHLY MINISTRY our blessed Lord was as a bright shining candle or lamp, limited in its radius, but illuminating successively the various districts which he visited. He told them plainly—"I am come a light into the world," and He faithfully gave them the light. In order to bask in that light the multitudes followed Him about; but often when their blindness and hardness of heart were particularly manifest, He withdrew from them. It seemed at times almost more than He could bear.

"Then said Jesus unto them, yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you. . . . While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of the light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and hid Himself from them."—John 12: 35, 36.

But the light of our blessed Lord was not always to be limited to Palestine, like a lamp to a small room. He was to be "lifted up," and from His cross was to shine a light penetrating to the utmost bounds of the earth. He was also by virtue of His death to become Lord of all, with all power in heaven and on earth; and to those who now believe He already gives inheritance in the light, enlightening their minds by His Holy Spirit, and strengthening them with mighty power to the patient endurance of long suffering with joyfulness. (Col. 1: 11-13.) Let us walk in the light, and so have continual fellowship with the Father and with the Son!—1 John 1: 3-7.

Of His resurrection power the sun forms a more apt similitude, for the influence of the sun is universal; there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. It is a beneficent power to assist growth, but it is also, when required, a destructive power. So the Lord blesses and heals those who come to Him, but burns as an oven against wilful evil doers. The Prophet Malachi says—

"Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble. . . .

"But unto you that fear My name shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth," etc.—Mal. 3: 2.

Similarly His disciples in their earthly mission, including all their successors down to our own day, are as lighted candles, shining, as the song has it, each in its own little corner. But the candle days will soon be over; for when the harvest of the age is ended, when all the wheat has been gathered into the barn—

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."—Matt. 13: 43.

The Blind Leading the Blind

—Luke 6: 39, 40; Matt. 15: 14—
(To the Multitude.)

39. And He spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch?

40. The disciple is not above his master: but everyone that is perfect shall be as his master.

THE two similitudes of Luke 6: 41-45 showed faults and failings and sins in various aspects.*

A small fault, like the "mote" in the eye, may obstruct the spiritual vision by reason of the continuous irritation and inflammation set up, causing the afflicted one to concentrate all his attention upon himself and his grievance; yet a kind friend may restore the spiritual sight by assisting the brother to get rid of the mote. (Matt. 18: 15-18; Gal. 6: 1.) Even a large fault or sin, like a "beam," may be removed, if the afflicted one will permit his brethren to assist in its removal (Jas. 5: 14-16, 19, 20), or if with the Lord's help he is able to rid himself of it.—2 Cor. 7: 1; 1 Jno. 3: 3; 1 Cor. 11: 31, 32.

So long as the fault, big or little, is indulged, the spiritual sight will be poor or altogether obstructed; nevertheless, it is to be noted, the fault is of such a nature that it can be purged out; it rests with the afflicted whether he will have it removed; no one can remove it without his consent.

The preaching of John the Baptist and of our Lord and His apostles was—Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Thus was placed on each individual who heard the message the responsibility of complying with the command, and of purging out the motes and beams. Whoever refused to do so manifested a wilfulness which the Lord condemned; their blindness became fixed, as is the case with the natural eye when foreign substances are not removed.

We may say, then, that there are two kinds of "blind," both of which may lead other "blind" into the ditch. There is a temporary blindness like that caused by a mote, and there is a permanent blindness like that caused by the failure to remove the mote. The mote may be ignorance, or prejudice, or pride, or envy, or bad temper, or greed, or self-indulgence, or any other form of selfishness, or it may be a "beam" of wilfulness and blasphemy. In many cases it is the latter kind of "blind" who lead astray the blind of ignorance and prejudice. Thus it was at any rate with the blaspheming scribes and Pharisees, who misled the ignorant masses of Judaism, so that they preferred a murderer to the Prince of life who had worked among them so many wonderful miracles. The responsibility of such blind leaders is very great. How can they escape the condemnation of Gehenna—the Second Death?—Matt. 23: 13-33.

Blind guides, though they do not realise it, make themselves ridiculous. As our Lord graphically expresses it, not being able to see distinctly, they cannot tell the difference between a gnat and a camel. (Vs. 24.) Perhaps they think it is "only a question of terms!" Again, they make themselves ridiculous by cleansing the outside only of the cup and the platter. They have forgotten that the gift is sanctified by the altar, and not the altar by the gift. The Lord well said, "Ye fools," as well as "Ye blind!"

There have been many false teachers, blind guides, in Christendom, privately bringing in damnable here-

sies, lying in wait to deceive. (1 Pet. 2: 1, 2; Titus 1: 10, 11; Eph. 4: 14.) Believing a lie themselves, they have great energy and zeal in inducing others to believe it also. (2 Thes. 2: 11: 12.) Thus they are co-workers with Satan, who was a liar and murderer from the beginning. (John 8: 44.) This kind of wilfully blind are also described in 2 Pet. 1: 9; Jude 8, 11. Having once been enlightened, they failed to pull out the "motes" and "beams," they failed to add to their faith the Christian virtues, and so they forget that they were ever cleansed, and they become blind to their real condition and to the truth. To them Satan becomes an angel of light, and they fancy themselves walking in the light, whereas they are really in pitiable darkness. (2 Cor. 11: 13-15.) They are aptly described by the Apostle Peter as promising liberty, but really making slaves of their followers. (2 Pet. 2: 18, 19, margin.) With soft feigned words of love and flattery, they lead their trusting victims to the ditch.

Like Master, Like Pupil

The blind follower falls into the ditch because His blind leader has fallen into it. Here comes in the significance of verse 40—

"The disciple is not above his master; but everyone that is perfect shall be as his master."

The Jews had choice between John the Baptist and his disciples who preached repentance, and the scribes and Pharisees who practised and taught hypocrisy; between Jesus and his disciples who lived holy lives and preached the Kingdom, and the self-righteous but iniquitous doctors of the law. Doubtless some said then, "It does not matter what you believe; it makes no difference what sort of preacher you listen to." Our Lord, however, did not share that opinion. It makes a wonderful difference who the teacher is, for the disciple will grow like him.

Those who took Jesus as their teacher and example were led in the right way, instructed in the truth, and developed in holiness. To have Jesus as one's ideal means to grow more like him every day, to be transformed by the renewing of the mind into the same image, from glory to glory. (Rom. 12: 2; 2 Cor. 3: 18.) Such shall also be like Him in the resurrection. (1 John 3: 2.) Similarly those who choose false teachers imitate them; they become imbued with a false spirit, accept and rejoice in false teaching, and their characters become warped and twisted accordingly. The same fate awaits all who make and love a lie.—1 John 1: 8, 10; 2: 4, 22; Rev. 21: 8; 1 Tim. 1: 10.

"He that is perfect shall be as his master." The ambition of every bright pupil in a school is to be like the teacher, to know as much as he does, to be able to draw, paint or figure as well as he can. His proudest day is when he is "perfect"; that is, when he has mastered his lessons, and is able to answer correctly and intelligently all the questions on the examination paper; particularly when he has finished his course and is ready to graduate with honours—a credit to the teacher and to the school, as well as to himself.

The great elements in our Lord's character, which it is essential for his people to possess, are mentioned by the prophet and by the Apostle, the hating of the iniquity being as essential as the loving of the righteousness.—Heb. 1: 9.

So let us submit ourselves to the instruction of the great Teacher, the lover of righteousness and hater of iniquity, that we may not only understand His teachings, but also grow like Him in character, and thus give

*See June Issue, pp. 46, 47.

honour to Him and to His training. Then we shall not be blind, but shall walk in the light—

"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."

"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John 1: 6, 7.

The House Swept and Garnished

—Matt. 12: 43-45—

(To the multitude, including Scribes and Pharisees.)

THE PARABLE.

43. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none.

44. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

45. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. . . .

Compare Luke 11: 24-26.

THE INTERPRETATION.

45. . . . Even so shall it

be also unto this wicked generation.

THE people had witnessed the casting out of many unclean spirits from the possessed; they had seen the transformation from the frenzy or disease caused by the obsession to perfect soundness of mind and body. They could, therefore, appreciate our Lord's reference to one so healed as a house swept and garnished—not only cleansed of the evil spirit, but adorned with many blessings.—Acts 3: 16; Luke 8: 35.

But does the spirit or demon thus cast out have no desire to return? According to the parable, he goes for reinforcements and seeks to re-enter his former abode. He finds the house empty, and, meeting with no opposition, immediately takes full possession. (Matt. 12: 44.) "And the last state of that man is worse than the first."

Our Lord's interpretation of the parable, though brief, is illuminating—"Even so shall it be also to this generation."

"This generation," the Jewish people in the closing years of their age, are thus likened to the house swept and garnished, to the man from whom an evil spirit or demon had been cast out. The "swept and garnished" condition may refer to the fact that for some years John the Baptist and our Lord, with their disciples, had preached repentance and had secured a large following, professedly repentant and cleansed. The populace several times wished to take Jesus and make Him King, and finally when He rode into Jerusalem upon the ass, in fulfilment of the prophecy (Zech. 9: 9, 10), they

hailed Him enthusiastically, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."—Matt. 21: 4-11.

But like the "empty house" of the parable, the Jewish people, while cleansed of some of their defilements, and garnished with some of the good things the Lord had given them, had neglected to take a master to guard them against the time when the evils cast out would attempt to regain possession. They had failed to give themselves wholly to Jehovah, to do His will, and thus to have the guarantee of His protection; they had failed to accept Jesus as their Messiah and King except in a very superficial and self-seeking sense. They were, therefore, without a Master, without a Guardian, without Defence against the multiplied evils already seeking the mastery. It was not surprising then that as the power of the Scribes and Pharisees increased, and our Lord's popularity waned, they were as ready to cry "Crucify Him!" as they had previously been to crown Him. Verily, their last state was worse than their first; it became increasingly bad, until finally the Lord cast them off altogether, and their nation was dispersed to the ends of the earth.—Matt. 23: 34-38; 1 Thes. 2: 14-16.

Though undoubtedly the application of the parable was directly to the Jewish nation as a whole, yet there may be in it a lesson and warning to individuals since that day, who have heard and to some extent profited by the preaching of the Gospel. To be "swept and garnished," but at the same time empty and idle, is not the desirable condition. That is not the purpose for which Jesus Christ came into the world, and for which He died on the cross; it is not sufficient to say, I believe, and to be purged of past sins, and to stop there; to accept the blessings which the risen Lord bestows, and refuse to dedicate to His use the cleansed house. No! It is necessary not only to be cleansed of sin, but to be filled with righteousness, not only to have Satan cast out, but to have Christ enthroned. (Acts 26: 18, 20; Rom. 6: 11-14; Col. 1: 13; Phil. 2: 10, 11.) It is imperative that every knee bow, and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. And that means doing His will day by day and all day to the end of life as fully as by His grace one is able to do. And He has said—

"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."—Heb. 13: 6.

"My grace is sufficient for thee."—2 Cor. 12: 9.

Those who have been cleansed must ever remember the possibility of falling again into sin, as described by the Apostle Peter (2 Pet. 1: 9; 2: 15-22); of again becoming slaves to former habits or sins. Those who do not strenuously cultivate the Christian virtues are in danger of going back like the dog to his vomit and the sow to the mire.

Jesus came to save His people from their sins, not to flatter them into thinking they may continue in sin.

Jewish History between Old and New Testament Times

MALACHI, the last of the sacred prophets of the Old Testament, in closing his ministry, foretold the advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the coming of his forerunner John the Baptist, about four hundred years before those momentous events. During that interval, various changes took place among the Jews, by which their national charac-

ter and condition were greatly affected; and the knowledge of these, from the best historical sources, must be desirable and important to every reader of the Bible.

Nehemiah was contemporary with Malachi; but how long he lived at Jerusalem after his reformation of the religious and political affairs of the Jews, we have no means of precisely ascertaining; it appears probable

that he died some time before the prophet. After his decease, Judea appears to have been added to the prefecture of Syria; and it remained altogether subject to the Persian governor of that province, under whom the high priest prescribed and enforced such laws of general policy as he might think proper, or the state of things required. But though the Jews were thus permitted to regulate their internal affairs, they enjoyed but an imperfect liberty; and even the high priest himself was appointed by the governor.

Alexander the Great, procuring himself to be chosen general of the Grecian forces against the Persians, defeated their army in Cilicia, under Darius their sovereign, B.C. 333. He then subdued all Syria and Phœnicia, and marched into Judea, to punish the Jews for supplying his enemies with provisions, while they refused such assistance to him. Jaddua, the high priest, hearing of his approach, called upon the people to unite with him in sacrifices and prayer, that God would avert the threatening calamity. Having humbled themselves before the Lord, it was communicated to Jaddua in a dream, that he should go and meet the conqueror, robed in his pontifical habits, and accompanied by all the priests in their sacerdotal garments. Attended by a numerous body of the people dressed in white, they thus marched in solemn procession to an eminence called Sapha, which commanded a view of the temple and of the whole city. The king approached, but was so struck with profound awe at the extraordinary spectacle, that instead of indulging in revenge, he hastened forward and saluted the man of God with religious veneration. All stood amazed at his singular behaviour; and Parmenio, a favourite of the king, asked the reason of this act of unexpected homage. To this Alexander is said to have replied, that the worship was not offered to the priest, but to his God; in grateful acknowledgment for a vision at Dio, in Macedonia; in which this very priest, and in this very habit, appeared to him, promising to give him the empire of Persia.

Having cordially embraced Jaddua, it is said that Alexander entered Jerusalem, and offered up sacrifices in the temple to Jehovah, the God of Israel. The high priest showed him the prophecies of Daniel, which foretold the subversion of the Persian empire by a Grecian king; by reading these, Alexander went against Darius with still greater confidence of success in his expedition; and, at the request of Jaddua, granted the Jews the free exercise of their religion, the observance of their laws, and exemption from the payment of tribute every seventh year, in which the law required that they should neither reap nor sow. Alexander defeated the numerous army of Darius, and the predictions of Daniel were accomplished in his overthrow of the Persians.—Dan. ii. 39; viii. 2, 5, 7, 20, 21; x. 20; xi. 2-4.

The Grecian conqueror greatly favoured the Jews; and Egypt having submitted to his power, he built Alexandria, and induced multitudes of that people to settle in the new city, granting them equal privileges with the Macedonians. This mighty conqueror died, aged only thirty-two years, B.C. 323; all his family were murdered, and four of his generals divided among themselves the vast dominions of their royal master, as foretold by the prophet Daniel, ch. viii. 8, 20, 23; xi. 2, 4.

Egypt fell to the lot of Ptolemy Lagus, who invaded Judea, and led a hundred thousand of its people captives into his country; but treating them liberally, many were glad to follow their brethren, on account of the

miserable condition into which wars had plunged their native land.

In the year B.C. 292, Simon, surnamed the just, high priest of the Jews, died. He was a man of singular wisdom and virtue, and the last of the men of the great synagogue, consisting of one hundred and twenty persons, appointed by Ezra for perfecting the restoration of the Jewish church. Simon the just, it is considered, made the last revision of the books of the Old Testament, and completed the sacred canon by adding the books of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Malachi.

The Jews in Egypt forgetting the Hebrew language, procured the sacred books to be translated into Greek for their use, and a copy of the five books of Moses was placed in the royal library of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about the year B.C. 284, and subsequently a copy of the whole collection. This translation of the Scriptures into Greek, which is called the Septuagint, became commonly used in all the churches of the Jews wherever they were dispersed. "This version, therefore," as Rollin observes, "which renders the Scriptures of the Old Testament intelligible to a vast number of people, became one of the most considerable fruits of the Grecian conquests. In this manner did God prepare the way for the preaching of the gospel, which was then approaching, and facilitate the union of so many nations, of different languages and manners, into one society, and the same worship and doctrines, by the instrumentality of the finest, most copious, and correct language that was ever spoken in the world, and which became common to all the countries that were conquered by Alexander."

For more than a century, Judea suffered grievously in the continual wars of Alexander's successors; especially from Antiochus, king of Syria, surnamed by himself Epiphanes, the illustrious, but by others, Epimanes, the madman. He deposed Onias, the pious high priest of the Jews, and sold the sacred office, for an annual tribute of 360 talents, to his brother Jason. Him he soon deposed, and again sold it to his brother Menelaus for 660 talents. On a false report that Epiphanes was dead, Jason attempted to recover the priesthood; with a thousand soldiers he entered Jerusalem, and by the sword, and with various torments, he put to death all whom he considered his adversaries. Antiochus having heard that the Jews rejoiced at his death, and supposing that all the nation had revolted, took Jerusalem by storm, the year B.C. 170; he slew 40,000 persons, and sold as many more for slaves; and plundered the temple of its splendid furniture to the amount of 800 talents of gold. In contempt of the God of Israel, he entered the holy of holies, and sacrificed a sow upon the altar of burnt offering. Antiochus then returned to Antioch, laden with the riches of his spoils, appointing Philip, a barbarous Phrygian, governor of Judea; Andronicus, a wicked wretch, to preside in Samaria; and the unprincipled Menelaus to the high priesthood.

In his fourth expedition to Egypt, ambassadors from the Roman people arrived, and threatened him with the vengeance of their victorious legions unless he withdrew his forces. Infuriated to madness by their authoritative interference, he led back his army through Palestine, and despatched Apollonius with twenty thousand of his soldiers, with orders to destroy Jerusalem, to put to the sword all the men, and to make slaves of all the women and children. These commands were executed with savage fierceness on the Sabbath day, when the people

were assembled for public worship; and none escaped but those who could reach the mountains by flight, or who concealed themselves in caverns of the earth. The city was spoiled of its riches by these impious invaders, and set on fire in several places; they broke down its walls and demolished the principal houses; and with the materials they erected a strong fortress on Mount Acra; which, overlooking the temple, the garrison were ready to sally forth and murder those who dared to approach it as worshippers.

On his arrival at Antioch, Antiochus published a decree, requiring all people in his dominions to conform to the religion of the Greeks; and Athenus was commissioned to instruct the Jews in the Grecian idolatrous ceremonies, and to put to death with the most grievous torments those who refused compliance with his abominable commands. Arriving at Jerusalem, he obtained the co-operation of some apostate Jews; he put down the daily sacrifice; suppressed all the public and private observances of the Jewish religion; defiled the temple of God itself, and rendered that sacred edifice unfit for sacred worship. He also sought out every copy of the Scriptures, and burnt all that could be found; he dedicated the temple of Jehovah to Jupiter Olympus, erected his statue on the altar of burnt offering, and punished with death all that could be found who had acted contrary to the decree of his sovereign.

Mattathias, a venerable priest of the Asmonean family, with his five sons, John, Simon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan, retired from the persecution at Jerusalem to their native city Modin, in the tribe of Dan. They were followed by Apelles, an officer of the king, who strove to compel them to observe the commands of Antiochus. The people being called together, Apelles addressed Mattathias to engage his compliance with the idol worship, promising him a reward of great honour and riches. The aged priest not only rejected his offers, but slew the first apostate Jew who approached the idolatrous altar. He also rose upon the king's agent, and, with the assistance of his sons, put him to death with all his attendants, demolished the idols and their altars, and then withdrew to the mountains. Being joined by a number of his faithful countrymen, he marched through Judea; broke down the heathen altars in all the cities; restored circumcision; cut off the ministers of the idols, and those Jews who had apostatized to their abominations, and re-established the true worship of God, B.C. 167. Mattathias died the next year, appointing his son, Judas, surnamed Maccabeus, to succeed him in the command of the army, which was soon joined by many who were zealous for the law of God. He defeated several large armies of Antiochus under his bravest commanders, recovered Jerusalem, purified the temple, restored the appointed worship of God, and repaired the city, which had been reduced to almost a heap of ruins, B.C. 165. Transported with rage at the defeat of his generals, Antiochus threatened to exterminate the whole nation of the Jews, and make Jerusalem their common burial place; but while these proud words were passing over his lips, the judgment of Heaven fell upon him; he was smitten with an incurable disease, with grievous torments in his bowels, and an intolerable ulcer, breeding vermin, by which his guilty life was terminated, B.C. 164. His son Eupator, under Lysias his general, engaged the neighbouring nations to unite in destroying the whole race of the Jews; but Judas, hearing of the alliance, carried the war into the countries of his enemies, and became a terrible scourge

to the Syrians, Idumeans, and Arabians. Judas died in battle, B.C. 161, and was succeeded by his brother Jonathan; who, with Simon his brother, continued to manage the affairs of his people with singular bravery and prudence.

Onias, the high priest, having settled in Egypt, Jonathan assumed the sacerdotal office at Jerusalem, uniting it with the honour of civil governor, and formed an alliance with the Romans, B.C. 161. Jonathan being slain at Ptolemais, by the treachery of Tryphon, who had usurped the throne of Syria, Simon was chosen to succeed him, B.C. 144; and after a reformation at Jerusalem, he rendered the Jews independent of foreign nations. Having made a tour through the cities of Judea, for the purpose of promoting their peace and order, his son-in-law, Ptolemy, entertained him in his castle of Dochus, at Jericho, and murdered him, with his sons Judas and Mattathias, B.C. 135.

Simon was succeeded in the government and priesthood by his son John Hyrcanus, who extended his authority to several adjacent provinces; he destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim, B.C. 130, after it had stood two hundred years, and compelled the Idumeans to embrace the Jewish religion. He renewed the alliance with the Romans, by which he secured considerable advantages for his nation, and died, B.C. 107, leaving the sovereignty and priesthood to his son Aristobulus. This prince raised Judea again into a monarchy, and was the first after the captivity who assumed to himself the title of king. He was succeeded by his son Alexander Jannaeus, who compelled the Philistines to embrace the profession of the Jewish faith, B.C. 97. He reigned twenty-seven years, and died through intemperance, B.C. 79.

The Roman alliance was now found to be prejudicial to the interests of the Jews, who suffered much through the civil discords of Rome. The royal and pontifical dignity became a subject of violent contention, and the assistance of the Romans being called in by Aristobulus, against his elder brother Hyrcanus, Pompey seated Hyrcanus on the throne, but made Judea a tributary province of the Roman Empire, B.C. 63. Pompey, with some of his officers, impiously entered the holy of holies; and Crassus, governor of Syria, pillaged the temple of ten thousand talents of silver, B.C. 54.

Soon after, Antipater, a crafty nobleman of Idumea, by the favour of Julius Caesar, was made procurator of Judea, B.C. 47, while Hyrcanus retained the priesthood. Antipater was succeeded by his son Herod the Great; who, being assisted by Antony, the Roman triumvir, through much bloodshed, obtained the royal dignity, B.C. 40. His authority was confirmed by Augustus Caesar, B.C. 30, and he maintained his dignity with distinguished ability, but also with most atrocious cruelty. During his long reign he built many cities; and to ingratiate himself with the Jews, he almost rebuilt their temple. (Mark xiii., 1; John ii., 20.) His inhuman barbarity towards the children of Bethlehem, in attempting to murder the infant Jesus, is recorded by the evangelist Matthew. Herod died soon afterwards, suffering the most dreadful torments. Under the government of his sons, Judea became more fully recognised as a Roman province; "the fulness of the time was come," as determined in the sure purpose of God; "Shiloh," the "Prince of peace," came, according to the prophecy given by the Holy Spirit from the lips of dying Jacob, Gen. xlix., 10; Messiah finished

his work of redemption, "making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness" (Dan. ix., 24, 26), when "the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile was broken down" (Eph. ii., 14); the Divine dispensation of sovereign mercy to all nations of mankind was introduced by the ambassadors of Christ; and, after being under the direction of Roman procurators for some years, "the sceptre," or tribal

government, "departed from Judah" (Gen. xlix., 10); the whole Jewish state, with its appointed ceremonial and magnificent temple, was altogether subverted, A.D. 70, by Titus, son of the Emperor Vespasian; and the unbelieving Jews were banished from their own land, and scattered throughout the world, living monuments of the truth and divinity of Christianity!—*Bible Companion*.

Visitations of Angels

That during ancient times the angels of God acted as messengers to men, and appeared as men for the purpose, is generally admitted by believers in the Scriptures. Of these appearances that of the three men who visited Abraham prior to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is one of the most circumstantial.—Gen. 18: 1-8; 19: 1-3.

In the "Advocate" for May, page 19, we noticed the accusation, probably thoughtlessly made, that our Lord, in appearing to His disciples after His resurrection with various fleshly bodies, was practising a deception upon them, if as we claim, on the authority of Scripture, he were really a spirit being and not flesh. (1 Cor. 15: 45, 47.) It is suggested that if such action on our Lord's part be considered a fraud or deception, then the appearance of the three messengers to Abraham was a deception, as were many other of the appearances of angels recorded in the Old Testament.

It is further suggested that, instead of thus charging God, the holy angels and our Lord Jesus with deception in authorising or participating in such manifestations of spirit beings in fleshly bodies, a more reasonable (as well as charitable) view of the matter would be to consider that God authorised the

Best Method of Communication

suited to the persons visited and the objects to be attained.

The range of vision of the human eye is limited, as is also its penetrative power. With the aid of a telescope it can see farther; by the use of a microscope it can see minute objects otherwise invisible. Every day the presence of microbes in and about us is made the subject of jest, although it involves an admission that there are objects "under our very eyes" which we cannot see. The human vision is limited also in that it cannot pierce through wood, iron or other substances called "opaque." It comes with bad grace then from human beings so limited to question the existence of spirit beings and to deny the possibility of their presence in the ether about us. The microscope proves the presence of the microbe in the air, the X-Ray enables the eye to see through opaque objects (although a few years ago anyone suggesting such a possibility would have been considered an irresponsible visionary), but no instrument has been yet invented to reveal the angelic presences. When these were to be revealed, other means were used. (2 Kings 6: 17.) And who shall say that those means were less scientific or less genuine than would have been the use of an instrument human-made for the purpose? Who knows but what some "ray" as yet undiscovered by science was made use of by God

to enable Elisha's young man to see the heavenly messengers? And here we may add a further question—Is God *deceiving* men in permitting these angels to be all about them without their being aware of it? Further—Did He practice a fraud upon the young man when He opened his eyes to behold the chariots?

We thus see two ways in which men may become acquainted with facts beyond their ordinary ken. The objects may in some manner be brought within sight of the normal eye, as when the angels appeared as men, eating and talking with Abraham. Or, the eye itself may be invested with power beyond the ordinary, as when the young man saw the angels encamped round about, or as when Saul saw the Lord above the brightness of the noonday. In neither case is there deception or fraud, but a manifestation of supernatural power in the interest of the persons whom God would favor with His confidence.

"Behold, It Is I!"

When therefore we come to consider the manner of our Lord's appearings to the disciples after His resurrection, we see that while either of the above methods could have been used, our Lord chose the method best suited (1) to reassure the perplexed disciples, (2) to convince them of His identity, (3) to establish the fact of His resurrection, (4) to constitute them *reliable eye-witnesses*. In any case, no deception was practised. Lord, graciously grant to Thy children Thy blessing, as we seek with reverence to study thy works and ways, and as we praise Thee in their contemplation; for all Thy works are perfect, and all Thy ways are truth!

Our Lord's Resurrection Body

The question as to what became of our Lord's human body, if it did not corrupt, and if He was raised from the dead a spirit being and not a human being, is a very interesting one, but it is not vital to belief, because it is not once mentioned by the Apostles as an article of faith. They were content to announce the simple facts concerning His birth as the Son of God, His death as the perfect sacrifice for sin, and His resurrection as Lord of life and glory, "far above angels."

A similar question occurs in connection with that spiritual body which was His when "before the world was" He enjoyed the distinction of being the Divine Word, by whom all things were created: What became of it when He left the glory and humbled Himself to be born of a virgin, and become a man, in order to die on the cross as the ransom for sinners?—Phil. 2: 6-11.

In the absence of Scripture on either subject, may we not reverently leave the answers until we are made like Him and see Him as He is, and when we may hope

that the things not revealed in the Word will be made known to us? Let us still remember the dictum of Moses to the children of Israel—

"The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us" . . . —Deut. 29: 29.

The Resurrection of the Saints

The question also frequently arises as to the kind of body to be given the "overcomers" at the resurrection. We are told in 1 John 3: 1-3 that "we shall be like Him;" and as our Lord was "made alive in the spirit" (1 Pet. 3: 18), it is clear that they shall also be made alive spirit beings and not human beings.—1 Cor. 15: 36-38, 42-44.

We believe that some err in laying too much stress on the body that is buried, as though it were the person, exclusively. But as there is no personality pos-

sible without life, we do well to think that the body is only a portion of the person, and that the bodily portion of the person may be altered or made anew without altering the identity of the person. For example, the Apostle said that we are waiting for our house from heaven, meaning the new body that is to be given to the overcomers (2 Cor. 5: 1-8.) This new body will not come out of the grave, for it has never been there; it is to come to us from heaven. But the individual overcomers that died in the faith have all been in the power of death; and of their identities it is said that they shall rise from the dead, or come out of the grave. (John 11: 24; 5: 28, 29.) We think we should avoid regarding the grave too much as though it were a hole in the ground, but should rather look upon it as the state or condition of death.

Adversaries and the Adversary

(Continued.)

Searching the Unknown

THESE is in all people a natural curiosity to know the future. This trait of character is the product of the combination of at least three very important and necessary elements of the human mind—elements which raise mankind far above the level of the brute creation, and demonstrate the truth of the statement of Genesis, that he was made in the "image" of God. These three elements are reason, imagination and hope. Reason argues from cause to effect, from the known to the unknown (and, vice versa, from known effects it searches out the cause); Imagination throws out hypotheses and theories, like feelers, to find paths in which reason may tread to advantage; and Hope gives confidence of success and buoys up the mind during the often long periods of investigation, uncertainty and discouragement.

Linked with the desire to know the future is the desire, inherent more or less in each individual, to make his own future; and, in the case of parents with their children, or generous-minded persons toward their neighbours, to assist in making the future of others. This attitude of mind toward life, far from being condemned in Scripture, is held up as most desirable, and many incentives are laid before men to encourage them to a future of hope and promise rather than one of misery and despair.

It may be objected that Mother Eve's venture in knowing and making the future was a decided failure, and a warning to all her children, particularly her daughters. Eve's imagination pictured knowledge as a most desirable thing to possess; her reason told her that the serpent, judging from his cleverness, was well qualified to put her in the way of attaining that knowledge, and hope led her on to expect very desirable results. But for none of these normal operations of a perfect human mind was she condemned. The condemnation came because of disobedience to God's express command, because she violated her conscience which warned her that the means involved for acquiring knowledge were not the best, and because she accepted information and favours from another source than her Creator, thus becoming practically a rebel

against the Divine Government under which she was placed in Eden, which limited both her and Adam to certain boundaries and privileges.

Mother Eve was deceived by sophistry, because while her imagination was able to conjure up advantages in the acquisition of knowledge, it had not up to that time pictured the possibility of treachery in the Garden; she did not fully realise that one who would suggest direct disobedience to a command of God was necessarily an enemy of God and therefore to be considered her enemy and repulsed as such. Of Adam it is written that he was not deceived or beguiled by the serpent, although his tenure of the garden exceeded Eve's, but when he found that she was in the way of obtaining a wisdom (as was supposed) superior to that which he would attain by continued loyalty to God, he readily partook thereof. (1 Tim. 2: 13, 14, R.V.; Gen. 3: 6.) Thus, in their anxiety to search out the unknown, they both believed a lie (Gen. 3: 4), and transgressed wilfully against the known will of God, for which disobedience both they and all their posterity have suffered the consequences.

But, as showing that in itself the desire to obtain knowledge, to unravel the mysteries of life, to understand the unknown, to delve for wealth, material, moral or spiritual, is not an evil, but rightly directed a good thing, we find God immediately after the transgression and banishment from the garden gratifying the element of curiosity in their natures by foretelling their future; and the blow which fell upon them when hearing the unhappy future predicted was mercifully tempered with a promise which would keep alive in them the very elements of character which led to their undoing; namely, reason, imagination and hope. But this time, having had a bitter experience, and having had demonstrated to them in a most impressive manner that God their Creator *was* God, able to maintain His position and to punish all, even the seductive serpent, who dare transgress His commands, these elements of their character were able to co-operate for their good. They could *reason* on the advantages of continued obedience to so wise and powerful a Creator; they could *imagine* what life in the garden would have been contrasted to the "thorns and thistles" condition

to which they were condemned; and they could *hope* joyously and confidently that what God promised He was able to perform, so that their ultimate future would compensate for present loss. The promise was, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." And God, who gave the promise, would in His own time and way supply such further information concerning how the promise would be fulfilled as in His wisdom seemed best. With this understanding the race began to multiply in the earth, and to perpetuate the worship of the true God.—Gen. 4: 4, 26.

Truth or Sophistry

Thus was the Adversary's first great attempt to wreck the purposes of God overruled for good to the victims of his lying deceit. And so have been and will be overruled and exposed His later attempts to accomplish the deception of their offspring. But unfortunately for the offspring, instead of profiting by the experience of their first parents and avoiding as they would the plague the "Father of lies," and cleaving to God, the author of their being in Whom is the hope of salvation, they seem to prefer Satan's deceptions to God's truth, and he is as at the beginning quick to take advantage of the legitimate spirit of inquiry to mislead them also. Of this we read—

"The whole world lieth in the Evil One."—1 John 5: 19, R.V.

"In whom the god of this age hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving. . . ."—2 Cor. 4: 4, R.V.

"And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.—2 Tim. 2: 26.

Since the fall, conditions have been largely reversed; before the fall, man in an environment of good was seduced by an emissary of evil; since the fall, man in an environment of evil must be enticed or persuaded by messengers of good, until the "new heavens and new earth" bring in again prevailing righteousness. (2 Pet. 3: 13.) Men must be shown how far those elements of character with which man was originally endowed have been perverted under the influence of the "god of this world," and their most legitimate desires and ambitions misdirected into unprofitable and even injurious channels. They must be shown what the will of God is in order that they may distinguish from it the will of the Evil One everywhere prevailing.

One of the best safeguards against deception is correct information as to what in God's sight constitutes legitimate inquiry into the unknown, and what constitutes unlawful prying into the secret things which God requires to be taken on trust.

Matters for legitimate inquiry may be considered under three heads:—(1) Those which concern the universe—God, salvation, the destiny of the race and of nations, the condition of death, the hope of a future life; (2) Those which directly concern the individual—Why am I here? what is my origin? what is my eternal destiny? where will I be and what will happen to me ten, twenty or sixty years from now? (3) Those which concern the present state of family and friends who have passed away—Are they in a state of happiness, or misery, or are they "asleep" awaiting the resurrection?

Beginning with the last, we find it embraced in the first; for while we naturally take most interest in the condition of our own beloved departed, it is obvious that whatever information may be obtained concerning the race as a whole, will cover that part of the race comprehended in our personal friends, unless it can be

shown that they are for good reasons exceptions to the rule. Thus our inquiry is narrowed down to two propositions, and we find that a considerable portion of the second proposition is also covered by the first (origin and eternal destiny); because ourselves, as well as our friends, are included in the race, and whatever is true of the race is true of ourselves, unless it can be proven that we are exceptions to the rule.

Having considered what are proper subjects for inquiry, the next point to be decided is, where to seek the information; and just here lies the pit into which many have fallen. Instead of seeking the Lord their God, they search in any and every direction but the right one. Like Adam and Eve they prefer the seductions of lies to the simplicity of truth; they are all too ready in a spirit of pride and bombast to despise the very One who could most assist them, and those of His human representatives who have accurate information to give; they find the path of disobedience and self-will as ever the easiest to walk in because of its flattery, that it will make one wise, and to be "as gods."

Genuine and Counterfeit Sources

But the humble-minded person of reason and intelligence, having before him the two sources of information, the genuine and the counterfeit, will have no hesitation in choosing the former. God, the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, *should* know more about the man He made and his destiny than the Deceiver ever on the alert to thwart those plans. To Him, therefore, we come, and find in His Word that which will satisfy the most inquisitive. Those nations which have not His Word, and have only the revelation of nature, cannot gather all the details, but they can learn at least something of the majesty and goodness of the Almighty, and it is the pleasure as it is the duty of those who have His Word to carry to these benighted ones this lamp of enlightenment that they may be turned from the religions of darkness to the true light shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.

It must be remembered, however, that the darkness of heathenism was the natural outcome of the preference of some of our race in the earliest times for the counsel of lies; they voluntarily wandered from the true God when they knew Him, and gave themselves over to many unprofitable inventions. (Eccl. 7: 29; Rom. 1: 21, 28.) God must not, therefore, be blamed for the sad condition of things everywhere prevalent in the earth. He permitted it for a wise purpose, which is also revealed in His Word for the benefit of those who will look there for it. A diligent searching of the Holy Scriptures is therefore recommended to all our readers. If you do not find there satisfactory information on the subjects stated in proposition one, write us for further literature. For the purposes of this inquiry we state, without attempting to prove,* that the Scriptures teach that death is not as some suppose the "gate of life," neither is it, as others contend, the end of all things, but that death is a "sleep," or a condition of non-existence, in which the human race are kept until the resurrection. It was Satan's lie that said, "Ye shall not surely die;" God said—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3: 19.) Which shall we believe? False religions say. Our dead friends are

*Scriptural evidence on this vital subject is offered in the pamphlet, "The Dead," obtainable from us for 3d. (6 cents).

now spirits in the air about us; they see us at our work and play, and take a lively interest in all our affairs. The Bible says, The dead know not anything. There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. There shall be a resurrection of the dead [not of the living], both of the just and unjust. (Ecc. 9: 5, 10; Acts 23: 6; 24: 15.) On which side shall we take our stand?

What will Happen To-morrow

Under the second proposition we noted as legitimate desires the wish to know in advance the course of one's own natural life on earth, and the wish to mould that life in such a manner as to achieve a certain position of dignity or affluence. The fact that persons with such desires often become the victims of charlatans does not discredit the desires. The reason for considering such desires legitimate is that God who made man with reason, imagination and hope continually appeals to those qualities. As already shown, this was done in the case of our first parents; and the Scriptures are a record of God's appeals to these qualities in the arguments, threats and punishments addressed to His people and others from then until now—affecting the life that now is as well as that which is to come.

Noah and those to whom he preached were shown that a flood was coming, and how to avoid disaster by refuge in the ark; Abraham was shown how by a temporary sacrifice in leaving the land of his fathers he might inherit a blessing and become a blessing to others; the Jewish nation was most minutely directed how to order their affairs in order to achieve the best results; Christians are exhorted as to the kind of lives to lead in order to have the favour of God, while sinners are warned to flee the consequences of their wrong-doing. In all this there is an appeal to enlightened self-interest, showing how thoroughly God understands the constitution of man and how to inspire him to make the best of himself and his opportunities. Even in the case of the Christian who follows in His Master's footsteps of self-sacrifice there is an appeal to self-interest, in that a glorious reward is placed before him, together with promises of daily and hourly help in time of need.—Col. 1: 11, 12.

But some Christians, and the number increases daily, are not satisfied with the amount of information the Bible gives concerning the destiny of man, largely because of ignorance concerning the true teachings of that Book. Their dissatisfaction is more with the erroneous teachings instilled into them by teachers who are themselves under various misconceptions concerning the purposes of God. As for the arrangement of personal affairs, some are not satisfied to work on the general principles outlined in God's Word by which to regulate their lives. They want detailed directions for specific instances. The sluggard who is told to go to the ant to learn forethought and industry prefers someone to tell him the winning horse in the race; the parents told to bring up their children in the way they should go, neglecting their duty of moulding character, of teaching them a trade or business, etc., indulge in idle fancies and vague fears as to what the child's future will be. In this unsettled state of mind they are an easy prey to numerous subtleties, which come to them with the cool assertion of the serpent—"Thou shalt not surely die." The dead are wiser and better and happier than ever, and if you wish proof on the subject we can give it to you at such an hour at such

a place. If you or your friends have any diseases, bring a lock of hair or a garment belonging to the person, and we will tell you exactly what is wrong, and what to do to make a perfect cure. Let us read your hand, and we will tell you the principal events which will befall you in coming years and the manner of your death. Tell us the day and hour of your birth, and we will tell you if you were born under a "lucky star." If you are anxious to do good in the world, write to us and we will send you a dozen lessons by which you will learn how to gain control of other people's minds, so they will at all times do your bidding whether they are near you or miles away. We will show you how to be successful in your love affairs, in business investments, in everything. No need to train your children; teach them to consult us, and we will secure them riches and honor. We would not tell this to everyone, but we can see you are a person of unusual intelligence. You would make a most successful 'medium,' or 'hypnotist,' or 'clairvoyant.' Only come with us, and *do as we tell you; then you will be wise, you will be as gods.*"

Two Roads

Thus is the dividing of the roads plain before the Christian—the one God's way, the other, the Adversary's: Be satisfied with the Scriptures as the revelation of God's will concerning mankind in general, and with its commands and exhortations and the Holy Spirit as guides as to how to order your individual life to the best advantage; or, Take the other road; ask of Satan the information God does not give, and receive the delusions and lies which he has ready for all foolish enough to put any confidence in him.

It is well to have fully before one's mind the consequences of disobedience to God and rebellion against His commands. Some in ancient times were allowed their own way with disastrous consequences; and disaster is sure to follow every similar side-stepping to-day. The way of God makes for holiness and the building up of a steadfast, self-contained and self-reliant character—not self-reliant in an egotistic sense, but in a good sense in being able to resist and overcome evil inclinations as well as evil teachers and teachings; strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. But the way of rebellion and Satan makes for weakness and instability of character on the one hand, or egotistical bombast on the other, according as one is a dupe of a charlatan, or the charlatan himself; and the strong tendency is toward falsehood, deceit and immorality. (Lev. 20: 1-6; Nahum 3: 4.) Do not therefore be deceived by anything as apparently innocent as divination by tea-leaves, the wearing of a charm, the telling of dreams or wishing while looking at the moon over the shoulder, or consulting a fortune-teller. Make the wall between God and Satan as high as possible, and you will not have the same temptation to look over and see, much less to walk in, the preserves of the Evil One. In other words, *Give yourself wholly and unreservedly to God*, to walk in His ways, and to do His will. Then He will keep you as the apple of His eye, and no harm will come to you. Men may deprive you of your fortune, your good name, of all of earth you hold most dear, but they will not be able to touch your soul; you will be safe because—

"Your life is hid with Christ in God."—Col. 1: 3.

"... We know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ."—1 John 5: 20.

Looked at in this way, it is not necessary for the child of God personally to "investigate" the claims of

the vast army of spiritualist mediums, necromancers, fortune-tellers, clairvoyants, etc., etc., who earnestly press their claims for recognition. We do not feel called upon to do a little stealing, or lying, or murdering, "just to see if there is anything in it;" we are quite satisfied to take God's declaration that such things are wrong and injurious. We see thousands around us indulging in these practices, but that does not justify us in following their example. Just so there are thousands interested in table rapping, "peeping and muttering," trance lectures, etc., etc., who tempt us in various ways to have part in their performances, but we are no more obliged to join them than we are to join the "Liar's Club" or the "Association of Up-to-Date Thieves." We are no more disconcerted by the cries of "narrow minded," "afraid," "coward," "ignoramus," when uttered by dabblers in occult art than we are by similar cries from those who wallow in moral filth and think us fools for not doing likewise. And we will not "follow their pernicious ways," if we hearken to the words of God ringing in our ears—

"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."—Prov. 1: 10.

"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and unto the wizards that chirp and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? On behalf of the living should they seek unto the dead?"—Isa. 8: 19, R.V.

Divination by a Familiar Spirit

It will not be amiss, however, to look a little more closely into such examples of the practice of necromancy, divination, etc., as are given in God's Word, in order to receive the full benefit of the warnings thus given. We have already noticed the method of divining by the cup, by the rod, by the liver, etc., in vogue among the ancients (both Jewish and Pagan), and their modern counterparts—divining by tea-leaves, by flower-petals, etc.

The case of Saul and the Witch of Endor is a most striking example of consulting the "dead," and the details are sufficiently minute to give one a fair idea of the *modus operandi*. Please read the account in 1 Sam. 28: 3-25. The description would fit well a modern "seance."

When Saul was made King of Israel, he had "put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land" (1 Sam. 28: 3, 9), as he was in duty bound to do. (Lev. 19: 31.) God was with him, and required only that obedience to Himself which was right and proper, and the people of Israel might have continued to flourish as under the Judges, notwithstanding that it was not of His ordering that they had desired a king; for as Samuel had said, in desiring a king after the manner of the idolatrous nations round about they were laying themselves open to many temptations and difficulties; besides, in rejecting Samuel, they were in reality rejecting Jehovah.

Rebellion and Divination

Saul's great mistake, however, in failing to obey God's command in the matter of the spoil taken from the Amalekites, brought down upon him God's displeasure and his rejection as King Samuel said—

"Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and stubbornness is as iniquity and teraphim. Because thou hast rejected the Word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king."—1 Sam. 15: 22, 23, R.V., margin. Comp. vs. 10-19.

This passage throws light on how God views disobedience. Saul's disobedience was an act of rebellion, and an act of rebellion on such a matter was as serious a sin in God's sight as the practice of divination, or allowing the diviners and wizards to remain in Israel. The reason: because the tendency of both acts was the same; viz., to break down respect for Jehovah and to bring the people under evil influence. Had Jehovah accepted as a sacrifice the animals which Saul spared, the people would have felt free on any future occasions to spare not only the flocks and herds of the enemy, but the enemy themselves, and ere long the land would have again been overrun with idolaters and Israel seduced from the worship of the true God. Even with the strictest oversight and the most rigid commands the people continually showed their predilection to evil. Their king, therefore, should have been strong in the Lord and in requiring obedience from the people, rather than becoming, as did Saul, a party to the wrong-doing.

God does not now, any more than then, leave it to His people to decide in what particulars they will obey Him and in what respects they will not obey Him. For them to exercise their own discretion is to become rebels, and rebellion and stubbornness are as offensive to God as divination. Why? Because they are the same in kind. In divination the rebel takes himself out of God's supervision and providence, and places himself under the control or guidance of evil spirits, who thus become his gods; in stubbornness and other acts of disobedience he also takes himself out of God's supervision and providence, but in this case he exalts his own will to godship. Thus rebellion and stubbornness are idolatry. This sort of idolatry or worship of the will is referred to by the Apostle in Col. 2: 23, where the Christian is warned against making rules for himself according to the doctrines of men, when he should be seeking to know God's will and to carry out His rules and instructions as given in the Scriptures of truth.

Saul's consultation with the witch at Endor was therefore only another manifestation of that self-will displayed in the matter of the Amalekites. The two transgressions are linked together by the Recorder—

"So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it, and enquired not of the Lord: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse."—1 Chron. 10: 13, 14.

The Witch at En-dor

By reading the account it will be seen that the so-called "witch" at En-dor was what in modern phrase would be called a "spirit medium." It will be noticed that the word "witch" does not occur in the text. As other Scriptures mention both witchcraft and the seeking of familiar spirits as being forbidden, it is evident that while both are joined together in condemnation distinction existed between them; they are two distinct manifestations of "demons," and both are to be avoided.

At this stage in his career Saul had come so far under the influence of Egyptian superstition as to believe that the dead could be consulted, else he would not have expected Samuel to answer his call. Thus he is shown to have departed from the faith of his fathers, who recognised that the dead were asleep until the resurrection. (Gen. 25: 8; Deut. 31: 16; Dan. 12: 13.) But even had Samuel not been dead, had he been alive in

heaven or in an intermediate state, it would have been most unreasonable to expect him to give Saul a message. Samuel would not after his death give a message he was not allowed to give during his lifetime to a rebellious king whom God had cast off from favor; least of all would he have been allowed to give a message through one of the very class with whom all intercourse was forbidden. This absence of logical reasoning on the part of both Saul and the witch is only another evidence of the fact that demonology spells degeneracy; it deprives its votaries of the right use of their senses.

The procedure was similar to that which is said to be followed at a modern "seance"; though it will be noticed that a concession was made by both Saul and the witch to the prevailing belief that the dead were asleep in the grave—

"Bring him up whom I shall name unto thee:" "Bring me up Samuel;" "I saw gods ascending out of the earth;" "an old man cometh up," etc.

In modern spiritualism the phraseology is adapted to the commonly accepted belief in the immortality of the soul and in the presence of the departed dead in the atmosphere around us, the inquiry being, "Whom do you wish to see or speak to?" or, "A friend is here, by your side, with a message for you," etc.

In the present instance Saul saw no apparition. The woman, having gone into a "trance," or become "possessed," described what she "saw"—an old man covered with a mantle. From the description Saul assumed the appearance to be Samuel, and the message given purported to be from him, though doubtless spoken by the mouth of the medium under control of an evil spirit, as is the case in modern spirit manifestations. (Vss. 13, 14.) It was only after she went into the trance that she knew her visitor was Saul, thus indicating her communion with an intelligence having more knowledge than herself.—Verse 11.

The spirit which impersonated Samuel also made a concession to the Jewish belief that the dead are silent in the grave (Vs. 15), saying, "Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?" (R.V.) The message following contained such information as an evil spirit might have acquired by familiarity with Saul and the events of the preceding days. Whether the prophecy concerning the death of Saul and his sons on the following day was correct or not is difficult to say. The account in 1 Sam. Chaps. 29 to 31 seems to indicate the lapse of several days before Saul and his sons were slain. At any rate, it was a foregone conclusion from the Lord's previous words to Saul that the battle would go against Israel, and Saul showed his rebellious spirit to the last in going out to fight against the Philistines to ward off a blow the Lord had arranged should fall.—1 Sam. 15: 28.

"Familiar Spirits" and "Mediums"

The description of the methods of the "Witch" at En-dor in calling up "Samuel" are thus seen to be sufficiently like the descriptions of modern spiritualist communications with departed relatives and friends to justify us in considering them identical. In both cases the claim to communicate with the dead is a lie, for the dead are asleep until the resurrection, and know nothing of the attempts made by friends to enter into conversation. What, then, is it that enters the medium, and speaks through his or her mouth? for it is admitted that the medium is under some outside influence and knows nothing of what transpires. We reply, nothing less than one or more of the evil angels, messengers of Satan, who seek to mislead as many of man-

kind as they can ensnare. And this knowledge, that spiritualism is a phase of demonology, justifies all lovers of God and the Bible in having nothing to do with it. If they do not wish to pursue a similar course of disobedience to Saul's, and to have likewise a disastrous end, they will seek all desired information at the hands of the Lord Himself; and what He does not give they will be content to go without.

But there is another reason for considering modern mediums to be identical with the ancient diviners with a familiar spirit, and for considering them to be under the control of evil spirits. The reason lies in the word itself, which is altogether different from the word elsewhere translated "spirit" in the Old Testament. The word translated by the two English words "familiar spirit" is *owb*, meaning "a mumble," and was used sometimes of a water skin (i.e., a water bottle), on account of its gurgling sound (Job 32: 19); hence its application to one possessed by a familiar spirit, who gives out odd sounds as well as rational speech, who also serves as a bottle or jar for the evil spirit.

When the prophet wished to describe the downfall of Ariel, the city where David dwelt, he could name no greater degradation than that it should be like unto a person possessing a familiar spirit, that should "peep" or "chirp" out of the dust.—Isa. 29: 4.

God's people are safe in avoiding everything that "peeps" (or "chirps," R.V.) and "mutters," that claims association with the dead, or that requires a darkened room for its most favorable manifestation.—Isa. 8: 19.

The present writer has never attended a Spiritualist seance, and cannot therefore speak from personal participation in table rapping, materialisations, etc. The writer takes for granted the methods followed and the results produced; because of the similarity of the descriptions in God's Word to the descriptions given by Spiritualists and others who have taken part in these things. Some may consider that this absence of personal contact with evil spirits disqualifies us from expressing an opinion. Those who thus think will pass over these words with indifference or contempt. But we do not regard ourselves as disqualified to speak out against the evil. As before stated, one does not have to be a consummate liar before he is qualified to declare with power and authority that lying is an evil to be avoided by God's children, and also by other persons who consider their own best interests. One does not have to break every commandment of God before he is authorised to preach from the house-tops that obedience is the best course. We speak, not as those who have been tarred with the pitch of demonology, but as those who have heeded the warnings in God's Word and desire to assist others to do likewise. Better avoid contamination if possible, than to pass through the agonies of mind which follow contamination and the subsequent effort to rid oneself of spirit control. Indeed, the only successful method of casting out the evil demons is by prayer and fasting, and in the name of Jesus.—Matt. 17: 14-21; Acts 16: 18.

(To be Continued.)

Jewels

IN the "Windsor Magazine" for June, the Duke of Argyll concludes an article on the British Crown Jewels with the following beautiful words—

"No man has ever seen the sard, the topaz, the beryl, and the emerald blaze as the great stones of the Holy City in the Vision of the Apocalypse. We have only known the little dust of the vast treasures of the earth heaped over blazer than the

eggs of a sparrow or of a dove. We, in our littleness, prize these tiny shreds and splinters of the hidden wonders, esteeming them the greatest of human possessions, for which virtue and honour have often been bartered. Does it not prove our insignificance? Does it not show how much of what we call our history has been made by ambition to acquire what no millionaire can have, and that what we can have now is nothing as compared with the unmeasured treasure which the God who made the glittering dust can grant to those to whom His honour is all in all?"

Knowledge

THE PRESENT DAY is called the Day of Enlightenment, and it is indeed a time of great and increasing knowledge on many subjects, the Holy Scriptures included. That this should be so is not to be wondered at, for the Prophet was caused by the Holy Spirit to predict the circumstances which surround the present generation.—Daniel 12: 4, 9, 10.

"But notwithstanding the great increase of knowledge, there is still much misunderstanding of very important subjects, 'Everlasting Punishment' being one of them. Largely on account of misunderstanding this subject, the loving character of the Heavenly Father is often grievously misrepresented by those who would not for a moment willingly do so. The same misunderstanding causes Christians to be perplexed and placed at a disadvantage, while infidels grow bolder and more scornful, and sceptics become confirmed scoffers.

"Let it be clearly seen from the Scriptures that 'Everlasting Punishment,' mentioned in the Bible as the penalty for wilful sin under enlightenment, is not that 'eternal torment' which has filled the minds of so many Christians, and a new song will be put into their mouths, even the loving kindness of our God, while the seat of the scornful will be overturned.

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No. 6

Two Women and Two Cities

PERHAPS none of the faithful servants of the Master was as highly privileged as the Apostle Paul in the matter of instructing the Church. In visions and revelations he was more abundant than the other apostles, and so great was his pre-eminence in this respect that the Lord saw good to allow him to have a thorn in the flesh, lest he become puffed up with pride through the abundance of the revelations.

The nature of his "thorn," while not positively disclosed, is perhaps hinted at in the epistle to the Galatians, where the Apostle, referring to the great love which these brethren had for him, testified that they would, if possible, have plucked out their own eyes, and have given them to him. (Gal. 4: 13-15.) Again, in the same epistle, Paul seemed to refer to a difficulty with the eyes as his trouble, when he said, as though mentioning a portion of the epistle written by his own hand and not by that of his secretary, "See with how large letters I have written to you with mine own hand." (Gal. 6: 11, R.V.) These words and the recollection that Paul was stricken blind on the road to Damascus, when the Lord appeared to him in His resurrection glory, make it quite feasible to believe that Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was defective sight. But, thanks be to God, the defect in the Apostle's physical sight was no hindrance to his spiritual vision, and it was his privilege to discern the great fact that a dispensational change had come, and that the believers in Christ were not required to associate themselves with the Law Covenant, and put themselves under Moses, great and honoured servant of Jehovah though he had been.

To the Galatians in particular, who had come under the perverting influence of Judaising teachers, the Apostle expounded this grand fact, that they were at liberty to keep themselves from association with the Law Covenant. Not only were they at liberty to do so, but they were also informed that they would be frustrating the grace of God, did they associate themselves with the Law; "for if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought." (Gal. 2: 21, R.V.) In standing completely separate from the Law, they would be doing no violence to it, nor could they

be accused of disrespect to Moses, because the Law of Moses, given by divine authority, was never intended by God to be a permanent institution. The Law was appointed only temporarily, and its limit was definitely stated, as was also the reason for its having been given.

"It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made."—Gal. 3: 19, R.V.

In order that the exceeding sinfulness of sin might be made more apparent (Rom. 7: 13), Moses was commissioned to give these commandments to the people, and to be the mediator of the Law Covenant between God and the children of Israel; but the authority of Moses expired when Jesus Christ was raised up as the antitype of the typical Moses, to be the Mediator of the New Covenant. Moses had predicted that this would be so, and that his authority and covenant would thus be superseded.

"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken; according to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among thy brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words, which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him."—Deut. 18: 15-19, R.V.

The fulfilment of this prophecy in the raising up of Jesus to the position of power and authority was referred to by an inspired apostle soon after the Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father (Acts 2: 33), had been given.

"Moses, indeed, said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, as he raised up me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul, which shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people. . . . Unto you first, God, having raised up His Servant, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."—Acts 3: 22-26, R.V., margin.

Jesus was the "Seed," at Whose induction into His great office the authority of Moses was superseded. The

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blessing which He began at once to give, and which He will continue giving, both before and after His second coming, until all have been reached with it—"all the families of the earth," both dead and living—consists of the effort that will be made to turn every one away from his iniquities. (Acts 3: 26.) This is the blessing that was promised in the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12: 1-3) to be given by His Seed to all the families of the earth (Acts 3: 25.) But to those who respond to this effort that is or is to be made on their behalf by bringing them to the promised accurate knowledge of the Truth (1 Tim. 2: 4), and who believe in God and approach Him by the one Mediator in true faith (1 Tim. 2: 5, 6; John 14: 6; 5: 24), a further blessing is granted, in that they are justified on account of their faith. Such are said to be blessed "with Faithful Abraham." It is well to note the distinction between these two blessings. The one, *in or through* Abraham's Seed, is ultimately to be universal in its extent, because every child of Adam is to be brought under the influence of that effort which began at Pentecost among the Jews, to turn "away every one of you from his iniquities." The other blessing, *with* Abraham, will be granted only to those—however few or many they be—who exercise the requisite faith after receiving the enabling information. The blessing of justification will be granted only to those who are of faith as Abraham was.—Gal. 3: 6-9.

The Commands of the Law

When one thinks of the commands of the Law of Moses, those known as "the ten commandments" invariably come first into mind, and in some cases they are the only ones that come to mind. This is a great mistake, because the commands of the Law of Moses were many more than ten. Ten commandments were written on the tables of stone by the finger of God, and others were written in books by Moses by dictation from God. Some seek to minimise the value and importance of the commands written in the books, as though they were in some sense less important and weighty than those written on the tables of stone. Those who seek to make this distinction are addicted to the bad habit of trying to divide the Law of Moses into two portions, calling the one "moral" and the other "ceremonial." But the Lord authorised no such distinction, for both the tables and the books were placed in the Ark of the Covenant as a witness against the Israelites.—Deut. 10: 5; 31: 24-26.

Moreover, our Saviour, when expounding certain questions, illustrated His teachings by references to several of the commandments, being some of those written on the tables, and some of those written in the books. The commands quoted by Him from the books are moral commands, which fact shows the folly and the falsity of the distinction thus unwarrantably sought to be made between the books and the tables of stone.—Matt. 5: 21-48.

The Covenant of the Law

The covenant based upon these commands was that the Jew who would keep these commands would thereby demonstrate himself as being a righteous man, and one worthy of everlasting life. "The man that doeth them shall live by them." But, on the other hand, if they failed in one point, they made themselves guilty of all, and brought upon themselves the special curse of the Law, additional to that through Adam, under which

both Jews and Gentiles were born.—Gal. 3: 10, 12; James 2: 10.

As far as the redemption of the Gentiles was concerned, the death of our Saviour in any manner, even quietly and peacefully, would, for aught we know, have been as efficacious as death on the cross; but in order to redeem the Jews from the extraordinary curse that had come upon them on account of their position under the Law Covenant, it was necessary that He be born under the Law, and that He hang on the cruel cross.—Gal. 4: 4, 5; 3: 13.

Exemption from the Law

That the Christian is exempt from the Law Covenant is now generally agreed among believers. It is generally understood among Christians that we are not under the Law Covenant, nor in any way associated with that Covenant as such; neither do we look to Moses as our Mediator, but to Christ. But there are still some who cling to the Commandments (particularly the Ten) of the Law, not realising that we are as much exempt from them as we are from the Covenant concerning them. It may seem a strong statement to make, that the Christian is exempt from the commands of the Law of Moses; yet it is quite true. But it must not be inferred from this statement that we believe that the Christian is exempt from commands of all and every sort whatsoever. By no means do we believe that! He is even, under the New Covenant, given some commands that are identical in their import with some of the commands that were given to be obeyed by those under the Law Covenant.

The Jew who became a believer in Jesus would be in much the same position as a citizen of one country who should become naturalised in another country. In his native country, he would have had to obey certain laws; he must not steal, he must not murder, etc., etc. As a citizen of his new country, he is not required to consider the laws of his native country, neither may he plead them in his behalf if called in question; he is now compelled to obey the laws of his adopted country, without regard to what the laws of his native country may have required of him. But he finds that some of the laws of his adopted country are identical with those of his native land. So he obeys them; but not because they were laws of his native land; he now obeys these laws because they are the laws of his adopted country, into which he has been received as a citizen. Under the Law Covenant, the Jew was commanded to honour his father and his mother; under the New Covenant the Jewish Believer in Jesus finds a command to children to obey their parents. So he does it, but not now because it was one of the commands written on the tables of stone or in the books, but because "this is right."—Eph. 6: 1-3.

So it is with all the commands given to the Lord's people under the New Covenant; they are obeyed solely because they are given as commands under the New Covenant. If some of the New Covenant commands are identical with some of the Old Covenant commands, they are not therefore to be more zealously obeyed; if one of the New Covenant commands is quite new, and was never mentioned in the Old Covenant (John 13: 34), it is not to be less carefully heeded than if it had been written on each of the tables of stone and on every page of the books that were placed in the Ark. In

other words, though we may and should learn many important truths from the Old Covenant (Testament), we do not look there for our commands; we find them in the New Covenant (Testament).

New Covenant Commands Searching

The commands given to God's people under the New Covenant are very searching in their character. Under the Old Covenant, the actual deed was the thing principally noted; under the New Covenant, the thought or desire which might lead to the wrong deed—whether it actually does so or not—comes into question, and is the cause for condemnation in the Lord's sight. Thus, according to the terms of the New Covenant (Testament), covetousness is idolatry. (Col. 3: 5.) And—

"Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the Gehenna of fire." "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."—Matt. 5: 21-23, 27, 28, R.V., margin.

Every moral precept of the Old Covenant finds its more searching counterpart in the New Covenant, after the manner just illustrated. By these, the Christian learns that—

"The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."—Heb. 4: 12.

But if the New Covenant commands are so much more searching than were those of the Old Covenant, and its condemnation so much more ready, the harbouring of every wrong thought bringing condemnation, regardless of whether or not that wrong thought were translated into action, the New Covenant is so framed as to permit the exhibition of divine Mercy as the old Covenant could not do.

"For I will be merciful to their iniquities.

And their sins will I remember no more."

—Heb. 8: 12, R.V.

By this arrangement most gracious, for mercy to be shown to those who confess their sins, the ground of mercy being the propitiatory sacrifice of the man Christ Jesus Who, by virtue of this sacrifice of Himself, became the Mediator to reconcile God and men, and is also the high-priestly Advocate to intercede for those reconciled ones who confess their sins (1 John 1: 8 to 2: 2), only unconfessed sins are unforgiven, and this because the unwillingness to confess indicates that such sins are approved by the will of the transgressor, and are therefore wilful sins. Such sinners, so far from confessing their faults, glory in the things they ought to be ashamed of, and their end is destruction.—Phil. 3: 18, 19.

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."—Heb. 10: 26, 27.

The wilful sinner does not fearfully look for the judgment and fiery indignation; according to the Apostle he glories in his wrong and shameful course, minding earthly things, vain glory and the like. He is not afraid; it is given to others to be fearful, and to weep for him.—Phil. 3: 18.

The New Covenant Sabbath

If every moral precept of the Old Covenant had its more searching counterpart in the New Covenant, so has every ceremonial observance of the Old Covenant its answer in the New Covenant; and the New Covenant substance of each and every ceremonial shadow of the Old Covenant is CHRIST. The sacrifices of animals looked forward to Him; the ceremonial meats and drinks, and the observances of holy days, also looked forward to Him. It is easy for the devout Christian to see how each of the sacrifices of the Old Covenant was a type of Christ. Perhaps it is less easy to discern how the holy days were also shadows, the substance of which is to be found in Him. In fact, the shadowy nature of the Jewish special days, of which the weekly Sabbath was the most frequently recurring, as well as the general example, seems to have escaped the generality of Christian intelligence, so that instead of seeking the substance of, say, the weekly Sabbath and the other Sabbaths, most Christians have been content to grasp at another shadow of their own making—that is to say, another weekly Sabbath—which they observe on the first day of the week, whereas the divinely appointed shadow was commanded to be observed on the seventh day of the week.

The fact that the Jewish meats, drinks and days were shadows, and that the substance, which they foreshadowed, is of Christ, is stated by the Apostle—

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come: but the body is of Christ."—Col. 2: 16, 17.

That the Christian substance of the Jewish Sabbath is far more comprehensive in its scope than was its shadow, even as the moral precepts of the New Covenant are far more searching than were the moral precepts of the Old Covenant, may easily be seen by comparing the two. Under the Old Covenant, the person was to do all of HIS work in six days, and on the seventh day he was to do no work. (Ex. 20: 9-11.) But the Christian, under the New Covenant, is to do NONE OF HIS OWN WORKS FOR EVERMORE; he "hath ceased from his own works." (Heb. 4: 3, 10.) Having believed in Jesus, he has entered into a rest, inasmuch as he is now trusting in the finished work of Jesus on His behalf, and this substantial rest, of which the Jewish Sabbaths were but shadows, is constant and everlasting. The substantial, Christian Sabbath is thus shown to be an attitude of mind to be perpetually maintained, rather than a cessation from physical labour to be observed at stated intervals. This being so, one sees not only the far greater scope of the Christian Sabbath, as compared with that of the Jewish Sabbath, but one also sees that it is at least seven times as easy to sin against the Christian Sabbath as it was to sin against the Jewish Sabbath; for the Jew could transgress against his Sabbath only on one day of the week, whereas the Christian has opportunities to sin against his Sabbath every moment of every day of every week.

From the Christian standpoint, the observance of days is a deplorable weakness; such observances on the part of the Galatian brethren excited in the Apostle feelings of apprehension on their behalf. He said:—

"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain."—Gal. 4: 11, 12.

Nevertheless, the Apostle taught that the spirit of liberality should be allowed to govern their conduct toward each other in such matters, and he also taught that one Christian was not to sit in judgment over another Christian in the matter of observing or not observing certain days.

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. . . . So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."—Rom. 14: 5-12.

This is the line of conduct that should be followed by all Christians toward each other, whenever the subject of the observance of days is in question. If a brother thinks the Lord desires him to observe one day out of seven as a Sabbath unto the Lord, he is of course weak, in that he does not discern that the Christian Sabbath is not an occasional day, but a perpetual condition of resting from one's own works, in Christ. In the congregation at Rome, there was a proportion of Jewish Believers, and some of them were "weak" in not discerning their duty and privilege to separate themselves from the Law Covenant, with its regulations concerning Days and Diet. (Rom. 14.) The stronger brother should not condemn the weaker brother, but should endeavour to point out the better way to the weaker brother. Neither should the weaker judge the stronger, and each should have a loving consideration for the other.

Diet and Days are classed together by the Apostle in Rom. 14 as subjects on which the New Covenant (Testament) regulates the Christian conscience, not by imposing stated observances, but by showing that the Old Covenant observances are now obsolete. The Christian finds in Christ Jesus the higher conditions foreshadowed by the rudimentary regulations of the Jewish Law, and he is not to consider himself bound by those rudimentary regulations, but by the conditions and laws of the New Covenant only.—Gal. 4: 3, 9, margin.

Sunday Rest not to be Ignored

Although the New Testament imposes upon those under it no command to observe a day of rest from physical labour at stated intervals, it does say that the Christian shall be subject to earthly rulers (Rom. 13: 1), and that every ordinance of man should be submitted to for the Lord's sake. (1 Peter 2: 13.) Now it so happens that in some countries where Christians live, the laws of the land require that ordinary labour shall cease, as far as possible, on the first day of the week. This ordinance is therefore to be obediently observed by all Christians, in the spirit of the enactment, which is not that all public utilities, as gas, water and electric light works, telegraph and telephone, trams and trains, should be altogether shut down on that day, nor that Christians and others should shut themselves up in their houses on the Sunday, refraining from drawing water from the tap, or from lighting the gas, or from turning on the electric light, or from riding in the trams and trains appointed to run on that day. On the contrary, this law of the land is very advantageous to Christians, in that it enables them to meet together for worship and for study of the divine Word, and to build one another up on the most holy faith; besides which they have the advantage of the rest from the occupations of the other six days, and from their more or less distracting influences, although these may and

should be minimised by the recollection that the Christian is to do every thing with an eye single to God's glory.

The Sunday laws are great blessings to Christians, both physically and spiritually, and they should be appreciated accordingly. Nevertheless, it should be clearly understood that the Sunday laws are laws of the land, made by the temporal rulers of the land, as seemed to them good for the regulation of the social affairs of the nation; and that, therefore, the Sunday laws are not in any sense divine decrees. The divine decree is that God's people should be subject to the laws of the land they live in. If said land has Sunday laws, then God's people living there are subject to them. If the country have no Sunday laws, then God's people living there have none, and must arrange as best they may for opportunities to meet together for worship and edification. If, as in Mahometan countries, the law of the land appoint Friday as the day of rest from ordinary occupations, the people of God living in such countries can and should use Friday as their day for the assembling of themselves together.

The Allegory

Using two women and two cities as illustrations, the Apostle further explains the two Covenants—the Old and the New—in order to convince the Galatians. He refers to the two sons of Abraham, the one by the bond-woman and the other by the freewoman. The former was born after the flesh, that is to say, there was nothing unusual in the manner of his bringing into the world. The latter was born according to a promise, and the promise was fulfilled in circumstances quite out of the usual, in that the parents were both as good as dead when this child was born.—Gal. 4: 22, 23; Rom. 4: 17-21.

The two women and the two cities are figures of two covenants.* Hagar represents the covenant made at Mount Sinai, and the city of Jerusalem in Palestine stood for the same, being the principal city of the people of the covenant in question, and also the place where God put His Name. Hagar was a bondwoman: the Law Covenant was a covenant of bondage; Jerusalem in Palestine was "in bondage with her children," the Jews and the proselytes to the Law Covenant. Sarah was a freewoman; the New Covenant is a covenant of liberty from many bondages; and Jerusalem which is above is free. "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of a promise." (Diaglott.) Being children of the heavenly Jerusalem, and not of Sarah, we are, of course, not children of the promise made to Abraham. But as Isaac was born in unusual circumstances, according to a promise, so those who receive

*"These are the two covenants" is the reading of the Authorised Version of Gal. 4: 24, and the Sinaitic MS. sustains this reading. But it is at least interesting to observe that the article "the" is omitted by the Alexandrian, Vatican 1209, Ephraem, and Claromontane MSS., these four being the next in antiquity to the Sinaitic. Their testimony is held to outweigh that of the Sinaitic, standing alone, by such eminent critics and compilers of the Sacred Text as Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Elliott, Lightfoot, Westcott and Hort, and the translators of the Revised Version. It is therefore not wise to build too much on the retention of "the" in this sentence. "These are two covenants" is the reading preferred by even Dr. Tischendorf, although in this he goes contrary to the Sinaitic MS., which he had the honour of discovering, and in favour of whose special readings he showed at times—it is said—almost a bias.

Jesus are children of God miraculously born according to a promise that we are God's children through faith in Christ Jesus. (John 1: 12, 13; Gal. 3: 26; 1 John 5: 1.) "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free."—Gal. 4: 24-26, 28, 31.

"Jerusalem which is above" is not a literal city in the heavens where God dwells; this is merely a manner of designating the New Covenant, or governmental arrangement.

That Believers in this age have indeed come to the "heavenly Jerusalem" "which is above," is shown by other references to the position of the Church, in which it is said:—

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (literally, "the heavenlies") in Christ."—Eph. 1: 3.

"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."—Eph. 2: 6.

"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known (literally, "made known") by the Church the manifold wisdom of God."—Eph. 3: 10.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in heavenly places."—Eph. 6: 12, margin.

"Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, . . . but ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM, . . . and to Jesus, the mediator of the New Covenant. . . . See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spoke on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven."—Heb. 12: 18-25.

The children of Israel, after entering into the Law Covenant with God at Mount Sinai through Moses, their Mediator, found plenty of opposition to them in the course they had set out to follow. Similarly, the Christian, having entered into the New Covenant between God and himself through Jesus, his Mediator, finds that the enemies intrude themselves even into the "heavenly places" of "the heavenly Jerusalem" unto which he has come. These enemies are various; the political and ecclesiastical rulers of this dark world are some of them, the fallen angels are others, and there are also "false brethren," full of the spirit of wickedness, but outwardly of fair seeming, who with soft words and fair speeches seek to beguile the simple, and sometimes succeed in tripping up the unwary. Of these enemies, the Apostle warns those who have come into the New Covenant, "the heavenly Jerusalem," and are in the enjoyment even now of "spiritual blessings in the heavenly places," saying:—

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in heavenly places."—Eph. 6: 12, margin.

The New Covenant in Operation in the Gospel Age

It has already been noted in these columns that every item of the New Covenant blessings enters into the experience of the believers of this age, and that this fact is a demonstration that the New Covenant is in operation in this age, and toward the believers in Jesus during this time; it is therefore but confirmatory of the faith to observe the Apostle's statements, as above quoted from Hebrews and Ephesians, showing that the Church is being blessed with the heavenly, spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, and that the "City of the Living God," "the heavenly Jerusalem," the New Covenant, is the mother of us all.

A detailed statement of the New Covenant blessings is given in Heb. 8: 10-12, and from this it is easy to

refer to many other passages in the New Testament Writings, showing that these several blessings, in their entirety and without exception, are the privilege of the Gospel age people of God to enjoy, as well as their duty to cultivate in themselves and to preach to others. Following are the details and a few corroborative references.

1. "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts."—Heb. 8: 10.

"Forasmuch as ye [Believers since Pentecost] are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us [Apostles], written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart."

2. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people."—Heb. 8: 10.

"Ye [Believers since Pentecost] are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—2 Cor. 6: 16.

"Now therefore, ye [Believers since Pentecost] are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."—Eph. 2: 19.

3. "They shall not teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."—Heb. 8: 11.

"This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it."—John 17: 3, 26.

"I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father."—1 John 2: 13.

It is to be noted that in Heb. 8: 11 the words "they" and "all" do not refer to the world in general, but are limited to the class described in verse 10. They who have the laws of God written in their minds and upon their hearts; they who have Jehovah as their God; they who are recognised by Him as His people; "THEY shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord." There will be no need for them so to teach each other, because all of them shall know the Lord, from the least even to the greatest. It will be recognised that the knowledge which God's people have of Him is much more intimate than that preliminary information which is to be vouchsafed to every child of Adam and Eve to the end that they might believe in Jesus and submit themselves to His rule. All the members of the fallen race must know about God, and about the Mediator between God and men (John 1: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4-7), before they can know God as their God and Father, and themselves as His children.

All these gracious blessings of the New Covenant can be and are being accomplished for and in us because,

4. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. 8: 12.

"Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us, . . . their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin."—Heb. 10: 15-22.

"Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Eph. 5: 32.

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—Cor. 5: 20, 21.

Further and more extended references to this may be found in the "Advocate," Feb. 1910, pp. 175-179. Readers can secure copies by applying at any of our offices.

The New Jerusalem Coming Down

During the Gospel age, the New Covenant is spoken of as the "Jerusalem which is above," the "Heavenly Jerusalem." This may be understood as alluding to the fact that during this age the people of God have been kept aloof from the affairs of this world—in it, but not of it—and they have not been commissioned to undertake the regulation of the arrangements of the present evil age. Their minds have been set on things above, and they have also had a calling to a heavenly inheritance, not an earthly one.—1 Peter 1: 3-5; Col. 3: 1, 2.

But at the beginning of the "Thousand Years," after the fleeing away of the present order of things in this world (symbolised by "earth" and "heaven"—Rev. 20: 11; 21: 1), the holy city, the New and Heavenly Jerusalem, which in the meantime has been "above," is to come "down" to take hold of and regulate the affairs of men on the earth. Described under the symbol of "The Bride, the Lamb's wife"—this symbol being quite a usual one in the Scripture to designate a Covenant (Gal. 4: 24-26; Isa. 54: 1-10), and not being restricted to the called out company of people known as the Church (Eph. 5: 28-32)—it is easy to see that the New Covenant or governmental arrangement is meant, because the New Covenant words are used, and the New Covenant results follow.

"And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God, and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more; the first things are passed away."—Rev. 21: 2-5, R.V.

Clothed with divine glory and authority, and lightened by the glory of God, the New Jerusalem, unlike the old Jerusalem in Palestine and the Old Covenant which centred there, has no temple of bricks and stone, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. That is to say, during the Thousand Years, the New Covenant conditions of the worship of God, through Jesus as the Temple, will be in order as they have been since the first advent of our Saviour. The nations shall walk in the light of it, and so thoroughly will the regulations of the New Covenant govern in the affairs of men in that time, that the honours and dignities of earthly royalty and political power shall be surrendered to it. (Rev. 21: 22-26.) But nothing unclean, nor any worker of abomination, nor any maker of lies, shall be allowed to enter into that Covenant, or become a citizen of that Kingdom then, any more than the same sort would be allowed now. All who would become citizens of that Kingdom now, when the citizenship is "in heaven," must first be cleansed through faith in the blood of the Lamb (Phil. 3: 20; Col. 1: 13, 20-22), and having become citizens, they must put away lying and every abomination in order that they may be permitted to retain their citizenship. The same conditions will be enforced in the next age.—Rev. 21: 27; 22: 14, 15.

The height and greatness of the wall of the city, or New Covenant governmental arrangement, signifies the definiteness and insurmountability of its conditions of citizenship. (Rev. 21: 12.) The only entrance is through the gates, but there are twelve of them, and

they face in every direction, so that there is no lack of facility to enter. (V. 13.) Honour is done the twelve apostles of the Lamb, in that their names are inscribed in the twelve foundations of the City, which extend through the thickness of the wall, showing that their teachings must be attended to by every aspirant to citizenship in that City. He must needs give attention to them as he passes through the portals and walks along the 144 cubits that measure the thickness of the wall. And this is the same, whether he approach from one direction or from another. (V. 17.) In measuring the thickness of the wall, the cubit appears to be taken as the symbol of a man; the one hundred and forty-four cubits being the total of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, would suggest that each of them measures twelve cubits in this wall; that is to say, each of the apostles of the Lamb contains in himself and gives forth the teachings of all the twelve, so that one entering into the City will be constantly put in remembrance of the same things by all the teachings of all the apostles.

Measuring the City

The ground plan of the City is square in its outline, being four sided, and the length as large as the breadth. Measuring the City with the divine standard (golden reed), the result was found to be twelve thousand furlongs. It is generally assumed that twelve thousand furlongs are the measurement of one side of the City. It should be noted, however, that it is not so stated in Rev. 21: 16, but that, after saying that the City lieth four square, its length being as large as its breadth, the statement is, "he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs." "Measured the city" would mean more than measuring one side, or even two sides. There seems thus to be good ground for taking the twelve thousand furlongs as the total of the four sides, which, after measurement, were found to be equal; that is, 3000 furlongs each side. Then it is stated that the height is equal to the length and to the breadth, which is understood to mean that the city is 3000 furlongs in height, the cubic capacity of the symbolic structure thus being 27,000,000,000 furlongs.

The word "furlong," here used by the Authorized Version, is not a translation of the original; it is an English measure, and it was probably used because it is the measure known to English readers nearest in length to the Greek *stadion*, used in Rev. 21: 16. But since the cubically figured City of the vision symbolises the New Covenant or governmental arrangement, the matter of exact measurement in feet and inches, furlongs or miles, according to the English style, is not the question; one should rather seek to know what the Greek *stadion* would symbolise, since it, as well as the City, is undoubtedly symbolic, and not literal. The answer to this seems to be given in 1 Cor. 9: 24, where *stadion* is translated "race."

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? SO RUN THAT YE MAY OBTAIN."

From this it is gathered that the *stadion*, which was the length of the racecourse in the Olympic games, is used by the Apostle to symbolise the Christian life, and the necessity for great effort to be put forth in order that the prize may be gained. It is undoubtedly so used in 1 Cor. 9: 24, with the glorious prize of the High Calling in view, and the purpose of its use in the

symbolic language of Rev. 21: 16 seems to be the same; viz., to symbolise the fact that in the next age, as well as in this, there will need to be effort made by him who would gain the everlasting life that will then be offered to the obedient, though without the glories of the joint heirship with Christ that are included in the promises to the overcomers in this age. Each symbolic *stadion* in the symbolic City may be taken as symbolising the reward of everlasting life gained by one runner in the race, and the total number—twenty-seven thousand millions (27,000,000,000)—may be understood to be an indication of the number that will gain everlasting life, first and last, under the blessed provisions of the New Covenant. This great number is not far from the estimates which have been made by some who have

sought to arrive at an approximate idea of the number of descendants from Adam and Eve. If their estimates have been near the mark, and if the above suggested interpretation of the symbols of the Holy City be found to be correct, the indication would seem to be that the offers of salvation under the New Covenant in this age and in the next will have been so generally accepted, that the number of individuals of our race who will at last be found unworthy of everlasting life, and will be destroyed in the Second Death, will be a comparatively small proportion of the total. This were a consummation devoutly to be wished. But may we, who now have the opportunity to gain the prize of the High Calling, so run, that by the grace of God we may gain that which is held out before us!

Mary of Bethany, and Mary Magdalene

—Matt. 26: 10-13.—

FOR CENTURIES there has been among Christians a difference of opinion as to whether these were the names of two women, or different names for the same woman, living with Lazarus and Martha at Bethany. Some ancient writers considered the sinful woman of Luke 7: 37 as identical with these two Marys. When Master Faber, of the Paris University, said, in the year 1519, that in his opinion these were three different women, an English bishop wrote a book against him, and the whole Romish church was aroused into indignation against him for "holding such evil opinions," and had it not been for the intervention of the king, he might have been martyred.

Protestant opinion inclines to the view that there were two anointings, and that Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7: 36), in whose house the sinful woman anointed the feet of Jesus, was so called to distinguish him from Simon the leper, whose home was in Bethany. In the house of Simon the leper, supposedly the husband of Martha, her sister Mary would be at home (John 12: 2, 3), whereas the woman in Luke 7 was "a woman in the city" who repaired to the Pharisees' house because she heard that Jesus was there.

Another distinguishing feature between the two anointings is our Lord's comments. He says nothing in Luke 7 to indicate that that anointing was for His burial, but rather that it was opportune as a reproof of Simon the Pharisee, for his discourtesy in not supplying Jesus with the ordinary attentions due to a guest; whereas the anointing by Mary was in anticipation of His death. Again, the woman of Luke 7 wept penitential tears, while Mary's tears were those of a loving disciple. The woman in Luke anointed His feet, Mary poured the contents of her alabaster box upon His head as well as His feet. (Luke 7: 45, 46; Matt. 26: 7; John 12: 3.) There is nothing strange in two women having an alabaster box of ointment, for oil mingled with spice was in common use, though that carefully preserved by Mary is mentioned as particularly precious and costly.

Mary Magdalene is first described in Luke 8: 2, 3, as one of several women who had been "healed of evil spirits and of infirmities," and who followed the Lord and the twelve about on their missionary journeys, ministering to their wants out of their substance, and thus appears to be of an entirely different life and position from that of the woman referred to in the previous

chapter. The fact that she was a woman of means, who could thus travel about, makes it not incredible that she is the same who, when at home, lived with Martha and Lazarus at Bethany.

There is some uncertainty as to the meaning of the word *Magdalene*, whether it indicates her birthplace as Magdala, or whether it is descriptive of her character. The view of the Romanists, that she had been immoral, is not borne out by the description in Luke 8: 2, for demoniacal possession did not necessarily imply immorality, and there is no proof that she is the woman referred to in Luke 7: 36-49, who was not a demoniac. The modern practice of calling fallen women "*Magdalenes*" has not therefore Scriptural support.

The following article, recently received, contains some interesting thoughts concerning our Lord's last days with His Bethany friends.

Jesus Anointed for Burial.

Our Lord was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief through His whole life; but those sorrows assumed a peculiar character during his last few days.

They call attention to the reality of His human nature, and all the exquisite tenderness of human sensibility in Him. It is with this view of our Lord before our hearts, that we shall perceive and derive personal benefit from considering the connection between His sufferings and the character of those around Him. The solitary scene in which we are privileged to behold the Lord's distress of mind in some degree softened by the seasonable exercise of human sympathy is mentioned in our text. The woman received from the Lord the most extraordinary commendation to be found in Holy Writ—"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her"—a commendation which would seem to render it impossible for any faithful servant of the Gospel to pass over the mention of this woman.

The history is briefly recorded in the context. At the 6th verse we read that Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, and there came unto Him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His head as He sat at meat. But when His disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much and given to the

poor. Jesus, instead of joining in their complaints, approved of her overflowing affection to Himself. He vindicated her. He said—

"Why trouble ye the woman, for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial."—Matt. 26: 10-12.

Mary's Comprehension

It was customary to anoint dead bodies, but here was a strange thing, that a living body should be anointed for the burial; that a friend should anticipate the death and anoint for the burial previous to the death. This requires some explanation; there is a peculiarity about it. She hath wrought a good work on Me! She hath done this for My burial. It is a peculiar case.

The common view taken is very unsatisfactory. The interpretation generally put upon it is, that this woman was overruled by Divine Providence to do this, but that she herself personally had no knowledge that it was for His burial.

All such interpretations make this woman an unconscious instrument in the work. They admit a peculiarity in the fact, but they admit no peculiarity in the woman. Now, our Lord ascribes a peculiarity to her. He not only says, it was done for My burial; but He says, "*She did it for My burial.*" And he gives a special commendation of the woman.

In tracing the real peculiarity in this case, we shall perceive the connection between our Lord's sufferings and the conduct and character of this woman. Everything else connected with personal companionship seemed to aggravate His sufferings; but here is a bright spot; here was a gentle hand of soothing sympathy.

The Blindness of the Disciples

(1) First, then, our Lord had frequently and plainly informed His disciples that He was to be put to death. In parables He had represented Himself as the last messenger of Jehovah, the Lord of the vineyard, seized, cast out, and killed by the wicked husbandmen. He had also represented Himself as the good shepherd giving his life for the sheep.—Matt. 21: 33-41; John 10: 1-18.

In direct words He had predicted the same event with all minuteness of detail. Refer to His words in Matt. 16: 21—

"From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."

Nothing could be plainer, but observe the effect produced on the disciples—

"And they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things that were spoken."—Luke 18: 34.

How are we to account for this? The things were spoken clearly to them, yet they knew them not. It is evident their attention was not given to the things spoken. As therefore they knew not that He was going to die, they could not possibly sympathise with Him with reference to His approaching death.

(2) The object of dwelling upon this is manifest when we consider in the second place this woman in contrast with them. By reference to John 12: 3, we learn who the woman was: "*Then took Mary.*" That this is the same incident is made clear beyond contradiction by the similarity of our Lord's words with

those in Matt. 16—"Against the day of My burying hath she kept this." (John 12: 7.) This so entirely identifies the two incidents that we are justified in saying that woman was Mary, the sister of Lazarus and Martha.

Mary's Character and Disposition

Another portion of Scripture must be referred to, to ascertain something of Mary's character and conduct—

"Now it came to pass as they went, that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word."—Luke 10: 38.

This sitting at Jesus' feet was very marked, so as to call her sister's attention to it. But Martha was cumbered with much serving. (There are many Marthas in the world, cumbered with much serving, to one Mary sitting at the Master's feet.) She came to Him, and said, "Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?" Jesus gently reproves Martha:—

"Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."—John 12: 41, 42.

Here, then, we learn the character of Mary: she was a quiet, retired, meditative hearer of Jesus. She sat at His feet, and the consequence was, she caught His meaning; she caught what the apostles failed to catch; she discovered from her Lord's language that He was to die. She took Him at His word, sitting at His feet. The apostles, as we have already seen, had failed to do this. They expected a place in His kingdom. It was, in fact, a matter of rivalry among them, as appears by the petition of Zebedee's wife, on behalf of her two sons, and by their constant contentions among themselves. (Mark 9: 33-45; Matt. 18: 1-5; Luke 22: 24-30; Matt. 20: 20-28.) Hence, when it came to pass that their Master was really delivered to be crucified, they all lost their fortitude, forsook Him, and fled. Peter seems to have entertained a lingering hope that Jesus would declare Himself at last, and manifest His glory in the high priests' palace, as He had done on Mount Tabor, but he was disappointed; and then, to deliver himself out of the dangerous position in which he found himself, he denied his Master, and confirmed it with oaths.

One True Sympathiser

The disciples did not believe that Jesus would be put to death. Had He no one, then, to sympathise with Him in His approaching sufferings? None who believed His word so plainly spoken? It is an interesting enquiry. For, as Jesus was alive to the feelings of His brethren, so as to sympathise with them, He was also sensible of the want of that consolation which would have been derived from their sympathy with Him: they fell asleep in the midst of His agonies. "What!" He exclaimed, "Can ye not watch with Me one hour?" What! not one among all those He loved who really believed what was going to befall Him, and would pour their sorrow into His bosom, mingling their tears with His? O, yes! there was one—at Bethany—a tender, loving, though silent, sister. On the last opportunity she had, previous to His agony, she had come, and in a most expressive manner condoled with Him concerning His death and burial. Such sympathy in reference to His approaching death was dear to our Lord.

There was one weaker vessel which inhibited the balm; the nearest approach to an angel visitor was found in the soothing ministrations of an affectionate and loving woman, who performed that duty in the zeal and fervour of true faith and holy love. Mary received from her Lord this glowing commendation, again to be repeated—

"Verily I say unto you, that whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this that this woman hath done be told as a memorial of her."

The word of Christ has been fulfilled; the gospel has carried everywhere the memory of that woman; that friend of Jesus has filled the house (which is the Church) with the odour of that ointment.

This sentiment appears throughout the whole of Mary's conduct. During those trying hours the women did not forsake their Lord, but followed Him

to the cross, and afterward to the tomb. When they returned from the sepulchre, they prepared spices and ointments, which they brought early the first day of the week, that their Dead might be honoured in His tomb, notwithstanding the ignominy of His death. (Luke 23: 27, 49, 55, 56; 24: 1-11; Mark 15: 47; 16: 1.) Commentators have not failed to discover Mary of Bethany in Mary Magdalene. We have only to compare the narratives to see how the same loving disposition is manifested in both, and our Lord again acknowledges it by sending her forth as the herald of His resurrection. (Matt. 28: 9, 10.) "Touch Me not," was not spoken in reproach, but to inform her that He was not going immediately to His Father, that there was plenty of time, but that she was to speed on her mission; she would again have an opportunity to embrace Him.—John 20: 1-18.

W. J. S. S.

A Group of Similitudes

The Savour of Salt

—Luke 14: 34, 35.—

(To the multitudes.)

34. Salt is good; but if the salt have lost his savour, where-with shall it be seasoned?

35. It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

The Sinaitic and Vatican MSS. read, "Therefore salt is good"; this reading being followed by the Revised Version and various other versions.

"Salt" is used as a similitude also in Matt. 5: 13 and Mark 9: 50.

THE USE of the connective, "therefore," joins this similitude to the preceding parables of "The Tower" and "The King going to War." Before anyone can be a true disciple of Jesus, he must realise that of himself he is nothing. The Jews addressed were condemned by their Law, and all their works of self-righteousness were as filthy rags; it was in vain they sought to build institutions they were unable to finish; it was also folly to oppose themselves to Jesus, the rightful King, when He came against them with all-conquering power. To the Gentiles also comes a lesson from these two parables; to hasten to acknowledge their own insufficiency, and to seek a treaty of peace with the King of kings, owning Him as Lord of all. Each individual, whether Jew or Gentile, male or female, bond or free, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, must absolutely forsake all that he hath in order to become an approved disciple of Jesus. (Verse 35.) "Salt, therefore, is good." What has "salt" to do with building towers, and going to war? What has it to do with true discipleship?

The disciples of Jesus, previous to full surrender, may have been "thoroughly respectable," and guilty only of what people generally condone as insignificant sins or faults; or, he may have been an openly flagrant sinner, as a thief, a murderer, or a profane person. What should be thoroughly apprehended by all Christians, as well as by intending converts, is that the convert is not acceptable to the Lord by reason of any

innate goodness he may possess, nor unacceptable by reason of any inherent badness of disposition. Acceptance is due rather to repentance, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and complete surrender and obedience. None of his good qualities or good deeds of the past, none of his evil qualities or evil deeds repented of, add to or take from the glory of Christ as the sole author of his salvation. To "forsake all that he hath" means as much to forsake pride and glorying in his own good works as to put away open sin and crime. It must not therefore be supposed for a moment that when Jesus said that "salt is good" he had any reference to a superior element in some persons which set them on a higher plane than their fellows. As a matter of fact, the Scribes and Pharisees had a grudge against Him because He continually placed them on the same level as the publicans and harlots—all were sinners. The apostles assert the same thing; all of Adam's race were constituted sinners by the transgression in Eden; all the world stands guilty before God.—Rom. 5: 12; 3: 9-23.

"Have Salt In Yourselves"

If, then, there is nothing in an unconverted person which may be referred to as "salt," is there "salt" in the converted person? and in what does it consist? We believe that when our Lord said, immediately after urging His hearers to forsake all and become His disciples, that "salt is good," he meant them to understand that THOROUGH, DEVOTED DISCIPLESHIP IS GOOD. There is a particularly attractive and desirable flavour about salt which cannot be equalled by any other spice or seasoning. So the sincerity and earnestness of complete discipleship cannot well be displaced by any other quality or activity on the part of the believer. There is no possible substitute for absolute self-surrender and daily taking-up of the cross; there is no easy way into the Kingdom, borne upon "flowery beds of ease;" there is none but the narrow way of complete devotion to the will of God, following in the footsteps of our beloved Saviour and Exemplar.

*For explanation of these parables see the "Advocate," March, 1911, page 188.

But suppose the salt should lose its savour? Suppose someone who takes up the cross lays it down again? Suppose the absolute self-surrender and devotion of true discipleship alters its condition and becomes complacent drifting, or half-hearted, begrudged service, or traitorous self-seeking? What worth would there be in it?

Loss of flavour in the salt means more than may at first appear: an alteration of the flavour means a change in its chemical constitution. Such a change is not easily brought about, as every housewife knows; for of all the seasonings salt alone may remain uncovered for months and still retain its taste unimpaired. But if the salt has once become insipid, its usefulness is gone, not only so far as the flavouring of food is concerned, but also for other purposes, such as the preserving of meats and as an antiseptic. As our Lord said, "IT IS GOOD FOR NOTHING," but to be cast out and trodden down. (Matt. 5: 13.) It is like the faith without works mentioned by James—absolutely dead and useless.—James 2: 17-26.

These are plain words, and they need careful heeding by every professed or intending disciple. To be forewarned is to be fore-armed. The Lord wished the Jews, and He wishes us to-day, to understand clearly what discipleship means; what are its conditions and responsibilities, and what constitutes unfaithfulness thereto.

It is not enough to be "salt," or thoroughly devoted, to begin with: it is necessary to continue in that attitude consistently and persistently to the last, or the Lord will not be pleased. He wants the whole heart, and He wants it all the time. "Faithful unto death" is the requirement.

The worthless salt is cast out: so are the lukewarm professors spewed out of His mouth as a thing distasteful and abhorred. (Rev. 3: 16.) Like salt which has lost its savour, and is not fit even to disinfect the dunghill, such worthless Christians do no good anywhere, not even serving as antiseptics of worldliness or sin.—Jude 12: 13.

Uses of Salt among the Jews

"Indispensable as salt is to ourselves, it was even more so to the Hebrews, being to them not only an appetizing condiment in the food both of man (Job 6: 6) and beast (Isa. 30: 24, see margin), and a most valuable antidote to the effects of the heat of the climate on animal food, but also entering largely into their religious services, as an accompaniment to the various offerings presented on the altar (Lev. 2: 13). They possessed an inexhaustible and ready supply of it on the southern shores of the Dead Sea. Salt might also be procured from the Mediterranean Sea, and from this source the Phoenicians would naturally obtain the supply necessary for salting fish (Neh. 13: 16) and for other purposes. The Jews appear to have distinguished between rock salt and that which was gained by evaporation, as the Talmudists particularise one species (probably the latter) as the 'salt of Sodom.' The salt-pits formed an important source of revenue to the rulers of the country, and Antiochus conferred a valuable boon on Jerusalem by presenting the city with 375 bushels of salt for the Temple service.

"In addition to the uses of salt already specified, the inferior sorts were applied as a manure to the soil, or to hasten the decomposition of dung (Matt. 5: 13; Luke 14: 35). Too large an admixture of salt was held to produce sterility; and hence also arose the custom of sowing with salt the foundations of a destroyed city (Judges 9: 45), as a token of its irretrievable ruin.

"The associations connected with salt in eastern countries are important. As one of the most essential articles of diet, it symbolised hospitality; as an antiseptic [it symbolised] durability, fidelity and purity. Hence the expression, 'Covenant

of salt' (Lev. 2: 13; Num. 18, 19; 2 Chron. 13: 5), as be-tokening an indissoluble alliance between friends; and again the expression, 'Salted with the salt of the palace' (Ezra 4: 14), not necessarily meaning that they had 'maintenance from the palace,' as the Authorised Version has it, but that they were bound by sacred obligations of fidelity to the King. So, in the present day, to eat bread and salt together is an expression for a league of mutual amity. It was probably with a view to keep this idea prominently before the minds of the Jews that the use of salt was enjoined on the Israelites in their offerings to God."

The Salt of the Earth

Our Lord's statement, "Ye are the salt of the earth," must also be considered as applying to His disciples, only after they have become such by taking up their cross to follow Him. It is then also that they are accurately described in the parallel statement, "Ye are the light of the world." All their value, either as "salt," or as "light," begins after they have taken a positive stand in the interest of their Lord and Master and His teachings.

What distinguishes a Christian from the world around is here indicated by the two substances, salt and earth. The salt was found in the earth, but still it was separate and distinct. So the Christian, while obliged to continue living in the world, is not a part of it; and must maintain his separateness. "Come out from among them, and touch not the unclean."—2 Cor. 6: 14-18.

Some rock salt, until it has undergone the beautifying and refining process, is often the colour of earth, and only distinguishable from it by its taste and properties. It is often discovered by wild animals, who come from miles around to obtain this necessary article of diet, and who thus reveal its presence to man. So the Christians may outwardly appear very much like other people, but those who long for something tasty always find in them a sincerity and goodness, and devotion to their Lord, stimulative to faith and endeavour. But, as the Lord's refining processes go on, the difference between the true disciples and their neighbours grows more apparent. The inward flavour and quality are emphasised by reason of the removal of any foreign admixture. It is important then to maintain this separateness, and this purity and beauty, and not by any means to deteriorate into an unclean or insipid state. In the latter case the "salt" is of less value even than earth; the latter can be used to build an embankment, but the "salt" is washed away in the flood. Good-for-nothing "salt" is on a par with the cut off and withered branches of the vine.—John 15: 6; Ezek. 15: 1-5.

Salt as a Preservative

Our Lord's words are sometimes thought to mean that His true disciples are "preservers" of the world; but, as can be seen from the above remarks, preservation is not the function of the salt in connection with the earth around it. Neither is it the prerogative or the duty of the Christian to attempt to preserve the social order around him. His mission rather is to demonstrate his separateness by an exhibition of the salt qualities lacking in the world. So also the Christian shines as a light in the darkness; not to preserve the darkness, but to dispel it. He is a "new man," created in righteousness and true holiness, and therefore different to those who are still under bondage to the corrupt "old man."—Eph. 4: 20-32.

*See "Smith's Bible Dictionary."

But the pure salt, separated from the earth, does act as a preservative of foods worth storing up for future use; so the sincere Christian is interested in preserving all that is good and true, both of character and teaching, and general principles of truth. The "salt in himself" preserves him from decay (moral or spiritual corruption); and, being thus preserved himself, as a genuine disciple he is able to assist in the preservation and salvation of others. (2 Pet. 1: 4; Phil. 1: 27; 1 Tim. 4: 11-16.) His speech, also, is flavoured with the same grace and sincerity, carrying with it both an anti-septic effect in connection with evil, and a preservative and stimulating effect in connection with good. (Col. 4: 6.) Such words stir up the pure minds of others to renewed fervour in the Master's service. Oh, that there were more of these Christians with words of love and truth to counteract the everywhere prevalent deceit and bitterness!

The Camel and the Needle's Eye

—Matt. 19: 23-26.—
(To the Disciples.)

23. Then said Jesus unto His disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

24. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.

25. When His disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

26. But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

This saying occurs also in Mark 10: 23-27.

AS IT IS obvious that a camel cannot literally pass through the eye of a sewing-needle, some interpreters consider that some other sort of needle is meant. They say that the large gates of the eastern cities, which were closed at night, contained a small door, through which belated travellers might enter, and that this door was called a "needle's eye." Their explanation is, that as a camel laden with merchandise could not pass through with his load, but might squeeze through if the load were first removed, so a rich man cannot enter into the Kingdom with all his wealth, but might do so if relieved of his burden. We do not, however, find this statement concerning the door in the gate confirmed by reference books on Jewish antiquities.

Some Anglicised versions of the New Testament carry this thought so far that they translate verse 24, "It is easier for a camel to pass through a narrow doorway," etc., but this is a mutilation rather than a translation; it is an attempt to interpret, rather than to give our Lord's own words, and let the reader interpret. It is this tendency to play fast and loose with the original that makes some modern versions unreliable as aids in study. Bible translators, as well as Bible expositors, should recognise the free use by both Old and New Testament writers of types, symbols, figures of speech, etc. In the present instance the Lord undoubtedly made use of a hyperbole, the meaning of which His disciples discerned.

Another reason for questioning this interpretation is found in the exclamation of the disciples (vs. 25), and in our Lord's own words (vs. 26)—

"With men this is impossible."

The disciples, being humble fishers, were accustomed to think of rich men as possessing every advantage; and, as many rich men were sanctimonious, their pro-

spects for entering the Kingdom of God were considered indisputable. It came as a surprise to hear otherwise; not that rich men could freely enter the kingdom minus their riches, but that they *could not enter it at all*; "this is impossible."

What our Lord said was, that it is just as impossible for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God as it is for a camel, such as were common carriers in Palestine, to pass through the eye of a sewing needle. This statement carries astonishment to many more than the listening disciples!

Dr. Adam Clarke quotes several proverbs current among the Jews, showing that expressions such as this were common, and signified a thing impossible; as follows—

"A camel in Media dances in a kabe;" a measure which held about three pints. "No man sees a palm tree of gold, nor an elephant passing through the eye of a needle;" because these are impossible things. "Rabbi Shesheth answered Rabbi Anuram, who had advanced an absurdity, Perhaps thou art one of the Pambidithians who can make an elephant pass through the eye of a needle;" that is, says the *Aruch*, who speak things impossible." See also Lightfoot on this passage.

Gadsby inclines "to the opinion that at the time the Redeemer spake this parable, he was with His disciples in one of the public *khaus*, there being no other resting place for them; and there, seeing the people mending their camel-saddles, for which purpose they use a long needle like a straight packing needle, he pointed to them and said, as it were, 'These camels can as soon pass through the eye of those needles as a rich man can enter into the kingdom of God.'"

Rich and Poor

It might be asked, Is not this rather severe on the rich; are there not some who will enter the kingdom? Are they to be everlastingly lost just because they are rich? Some have thought the Parable of Dives and Lazarus to teach this, but a better interpretation has been found for that parable.* There are many rich persons who are very charitable, and who use proportionately very little of their means on themselves; what of them?

This brings us to the necessity of defining who are the "rich" who cannot possibly enter into the Kingdom of God, and what is meant by "enter into the kingdom." The kingdom of God is viewed in the Scriptures in two aspects, so far as the High Calling is concerned; the triumphant reign, when the saints are raised in the likeness of their Lord, and the present probationary state, when all the aspirants for kingdom honours must first "suffer with Him." In the case of the rich young man, the attainment of the glory of the kingdom, or eternal life, was out of the question, until he would first enter upon the probationary stage by becoming a humble follower of Jesus. He balked at the sacrifice involved in forsaking his wealth, and wandering the country with a group of fishermen. The measure of his anxiety for eternal life was indicated by the tenacity with which he held to present wealth and place. And so it has been found with the vast majority of persons of wealth, be their riches in money, houses and lands, and such like, or in reputation, fame, self-conceit, and such like. They are not willing to forsake all, consequently cannot even enter into the first or discipleship stage of the kingdom.

Forsaking All

The young man had great possessions; and our Lord's advice to him, to sell all that he had, and give to the poor, indicated that he would not have been so rich

*See page 100, "Advocate," October, 1910.

had his heart been touched by feelings of common sympathy and humanity. In a country like Palestine, where no provision was made by the state for the care of the poor, and where the blind, the lame, the leper and other afflicted crowded one another in the markets, at the temple gates and elsewhere, holding out their hands for a pittance with which to keep the wolf from the door, there would be something radical lacking in anyone who could retain "great possessions" unmoved by pity for their condition.

The Lord did not ask the young man to give Him his money; but the young man would have been well advised had he accepted Jesus as His Master, and utilised His superior wisdom in the disposal of His fortune. In order that the young man might not himself have become a penniless beggar, doubtless he would have been allowed to retain a small percentage for daily necessities; or the Lord might even have advised some systematic scheme of regular relief for needy but worthy persons. But the young man was too disappointed at the moment to inquire further. Let us hope that at a later day he saw his privilege to follow in the Master's footsteps, and to spend both life and means in doing good.

Wealth brings a certain pride and hardness of heart very detrimental to spiritual grace; in order to pile it up a degree of indifference or callousness toward suffering must be cultivated; or, if the wealth be inherited, the same undesirable hardness of heart is required to retain it. Hence the Apostles' warnings to the early Church—

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, IS NOT OF THE FATHER, but is of the world."—1 John 2: 15.

Here the cleavage between God's service and the world is clear and distinct. Equally striking are our Lord's words, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Mammon is not to be the master and the rich the slaves, but the rich are to be the masters or stewards of their wealth, and, as servants of God, they are to distribute it, or use it in good works. (Matt. 6: 24-34; Luke 16: 9-14.) There is not one Gospel for the rich and another for the poor. Both must forsake all, become poor in spirit, and then they shall "inherit the kingdom."—Matt. 5: 3.

Supposing Gain is Godliness

Wealth is a hindrance, even when not possessed, if the entire heart and life are set on obtaining it. It is common to see families who struggle for a position in life add church going as a further badge of respectability, when in reality their hearts are centred on earthly things. They suppose "godliness is a way of gain" (R.V.); that is, they think association with the believers is to their social or financial advantage; their motive is entirely selfish. Such persons are a great drawback and cause of corruption wherever they are found.—1 Tim. 6: 4-8.

Those who covet riches and social position are drawn away into many "foolish and hurtful" practices,—misrepresentation for the sake of gain, unfaithfulness to God, association with worldly people, which result in the scaring of conscience, and which ultimately "drown" them in "destruction and perdition." They are "rich," not in money or goods, but in self-will and self-assertiveness and in covetousness. (Verse 10.) "The LOVE of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (R.V.), the most pernicious of which is that the mind is drawn away from the truth, from spiritual thoughts and hopes, to the strife and contentions of worldliness. Thus they are seduced from the faith, and pierce themselves through with many sorrows. (1 Tim. 6: 9, 10.) It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye than for such unfaithful, world-loving Christians to enter the Kingdom in glory, notwithstanding they may have for a time enjoyed the blessings of the kingdom in probation. So the Apostle Paul warns the Galatians—

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—Gal. 6: 7, 8.

It is necessary always to remember that, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God" (James 4: 4), and that the friendship of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ for us is based upon faith and obedience—

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you."—John 15: 18.

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."—John 15: 14.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, . . . but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."—Matt. 6: 19-21.

Effect of the Reformation on the Holy Roman Empire

A description by an eminent historian of the formation of the Protestant "image" of the Papal "beast."—Rev. 13: 14.

THE remark must not be omitted in passing, how much less than might have been expected the religious movement did at first actually effect in the way of promoting either political progress or freedom of conscience. The habits of centuries were not to be unlearned in a few years, and it was natural that ideas struggling into existence and activity should work erringly and imperfectly for a time. By a few inflammable minds liberty was carried into antinomianism, and produced the wildest excesses of life and doctrine. Several

fantastic sects arose, refusing to conform to the ordinary rules, without which human society could not subsist. But these commotions neither spread widely nor lasted long. Far more pervading and more remarkable was the other error, if that can be called an error, which was the almost unavoidable result of the circumstances of the time. The principles which had led the Protestants to sever themselves from the Roman Church should have taught them to bear with the opinions of others, and warned them from the attempt to connect agreement in doctrine or manner of worship

with the necessary forms of civil government. Still less ought they to have enforced that agreement by civil penalties; for faith, upon their own showing, had no value save when it was freely given. A church which does not claim to be infallible is bound to allow that some part of the truth may possibly be with its adversaries: a church which permits or encourages human reason to apply itself to revelation has no right first to argue with people and then to punish them if they are not convinced. But whether it was that men only half saw what they had done, or that finding it hard enough to unwind priestly fetters, they welcomed all the aid a temporal prince could give; the result was that religion, or, rather, religious creeds, began to be involved with politics more closely than had ever been the case before. Through the greater part of Christendom wars of religion raged for a century or more, and down to our own days feelings of theological antipathy continue to affect the relations of the powers of Europe. In almost every country the form of doctrine which triumphed associated itself with the state, and maintained the despotic system of the Middle Ages, while it forsook the grounds on which that system had been based. It was thus that there arose National Churches, which were to be to the several Protestant countries of Europe that which the Church Catholic had been to the world at large; churches, that is to say, each of which was to be co-extensive with its respective state, was to enjoy landed wealth and exclusive political privilege, and was to be armed with coercive powers against recusants. It was not altogether easy to find a set of theoretical principles on which such churches might be made to rest, for they could not, like the old church, point to the historical transmission of their doctrines; they could not claim to have in any one man or body of men an infallible organ of divine truth; they could not even fall back upon general councils, or the argument, whatever it may be worth, "*Securus indicat orbis terrarum*." But in practice these difficulties were soon got over, for the dominant party in each state, if it was not infallible,

was at any rate quite sure that it was right, and could attribute the resistance of other sects to nothing but moral obliquity. The will of the sovereign, as in England, or the will of the majority, as in Holland, Scandinavia, and Scotland, imposed upon each country a peculiar form of worship, and kept up the practices of mediæval intolerance without their justification. Persecution, which might be at least excused in an infallible Catholic and Apostolic Church, was peculiarly odious when practised by those who were not Catholic, who were no more Apostolic than their neighbours, and who had just revolted from the most ancient and venerable authority in the name of rights which they now denied to others. If union with the visible church by participation in a material sacrament be necessary to eternal life, persecution may be held a duty, a kindness to perishing souls. But if the kingdom of heaven be in every sense a kingdom of the spirit, if saving faith be possible out of one visible body, and under a diversity of external forms, persecution becomes at once a crime and a folly. Therefore the intolerance of Protestants, if the forms it took were less cruel than those practised by the Roman Catholics, was also far less defensible; for it had seldom anything better to allege on its behalf than motives of political expediency, or, more often, the mere headstrong passion of a ruler or a faction to silence the expressions of any opinions but their own. To enlarge upon this theme, did space permit it, would not be to digress from the proper subject of this narrative. For the Empire, as has been said more than once already, was far less an institution than a theory or doctrine. And hence it is not too much to say, that the ideas which have but recently ceased to prevail regarding the duty of the magistrate to compel uniformity in doctrine and worship by the civil arm, may all be traced to the relation which that theory established between the Roman Church and the Roman Empire; to the conception, in fact, of an Empire Church itself.—"The Holy Roman Empire," pp. 331-334, by James Bryce, D.C.L.

Can the Second Death be Incurred in this Age?

(Extract from Reply to a Correspondent.)

BY WAY of further comment on your question regarding the Second Death, and whether it can be incurred in this age, would say that I regret to note that my previous words have had no effect in helping you to see what seems to me to be the truth on this important subject. So little effect have they had, that you even define the "abyss" (Rev. 20: 3) as meaning death, and make the statement that Satan will be dead for a thousand years, and will then be raised from death to what I suppose you would consider the second life, before being cast into the lake of fire, which is the Second Death. My difficulty here would be to know how Satan would be raised from death without a sacrifice being offered for him. You made the statement about Satan in order to remove from your path the difficulty occasioned by my former statement that the Second Death is not necessarily preceded by the second life, to sustain which statement I cited Satan, the "beast" and the "false prophet," who are to be cast

into the lake of fire, which is the Second Death, but who are not spoken of as suffering death prior to being cast into the Second Death. You have not successfully contradicted my statement on this point about Satan, and you have not at all mentioned the other two, to show that they must live twice before they can be cast into the Second Death.

As I see it, dear Brother, your conception of the relative position of the Second Death is fundamentally wrong, and needs correction. Not only does the Scripture fail to say or to infer that the Second Death must be preceded by the Second Life; it actually says that some will be cast into the Second Death who have not lived twice, as Satan, the "beast," and the "false prophet." If you know any Scripture which says, or from which it may be fairly inferred, that the Second Death must be preceded by the second life, I should be glad to have it mentioned, for I have not seen such, and you have not referred to one.

In considering the position of the Second Death relative to other death and life, we shall get a useful point by bearing in mind the usage in connection with the typical valley of Hinnom, used as a type of the lake of fire, which is the Second Death. Into the typical valley of Hinnom were cast the dead bodies of criminals judged to be unfit for decent burial and memorial in a tomb which could be marked and visited. They were cast into this after being executed in the ordinary way, and by this means they not only perished in the usual sense, but they may be said to have died twice, in that their memory perished also, by their being destroyed in this manner without burial in a marked spot. This being cast into Gehenna was a type of the Second Death, but this typical second death was not preceded by a typical second life; was it? If the typical second death was not preceded by a typical second life; why should it be insisted that the actual second death must be preceded by an actual second life? As I say, it appears to me that your conception of the relative position of the Second Death requires to be somewhat altered.

I would also mention that the Apostle tells in Heb. 10: 26-29, and particularly in v. 29, of a "sorer punishment" than death under the Law, which "sorer punishment" it is possible to bring upon oneself in this age. As death was the extremity of punishment under the Law, and a redemption is provided for those who suffered death under the Law, the "sorer punishment" can refer only, I think, to that death from which none will be brought back, because no redemption from it has been provided. That death is the Second Death. I take it therefore that in Heb. 10 the Apostle is referring to the possibility of the Second Death being incurred in this age, for nothing else would seem to fit the description—"sorer punishment," sorer than death without mercy under the Law of Moses.

I have read, as you request, the Diaglott literal translation of 1 John 5: 16, but I see nothing there to

modify the sense expressed in the other column or in the Authorised Version; the sense is exactly the same in all the readings. In this passage the Apostle says that there is a sin unto death, and he says that the believers should not pray for it. Such words would be absolutely useless to us if it were not possible in this age to sin unto death. Why should the Apostle command us not to pray for one who had sinned unto death, if no one could sin unto death? He would be mocking us.

What the sin unto death consists in is well known from more than one statement of Scripture. The statements are different in words, of course, but they all come back to the same thing at the end, and that is wilful resistance against the Holy Spirit. This can be done in a variety of ways, just as the Spirit's operations are various. It can be done by attributing the works of God to Beelzebub—if this attributing be done in a wilful manner (Matt. 12: 22-37); by wilful false teaching (2 Peter 2: 1); by walking as enemies of the Cross of Christ (Phil. 3: 18, 19); by living after the flesh, after becoming a son of God, and minding earthly things. (Rom. 8: 13.) In a word, as Paul puts it—

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. FOR HE THAT SOWETH TO HIS FLESH SHALL OF THE FLESH REAP CORRUPTION; BUT HE THAT SOWETH TO THE SPIRIT SHALL OF THE SPIRIT REAP LIFE EVERLASTING."—Gal. 6: 6, 7.

In all these, the Apostle is speaking of Gospel age believers, and it is plain that he means to tell us that it is possible in this age to sin the sin unto death, and to bring upon oneself the penalty of that sin, that is to say, the Second Death. So I come back again to the question—Why should John have commanded us to pray for some sinners, but not for those who sinned unto death, if it were not possible for one in this age to sin unto death? It would be mockery indeed.

With What Body do They Come?

(Reply to a Correspondent.)

MANY thanks for yours just received. I am always glad to hear from you, and to have the benefit of any comments that it may seem to you good to make on what appears in the "Advocate." And I am not less glad in this case to have your comments on the article in May issue on "The Resurrection of Jesus," even if in some points we have not seen alike. Perhaps time will bring us nearer together on some of these things on which, as yet, we are not of quite the same mind. I hope it may be so; but in any case we may feel certain that if we are faithful unto death, we shall in the future learn a good many things that we did not know at all, and that we shall be perfected in the knowledge of those things in which our present information is imperfect.

Just by way of a few comments on your remarks re the article above mentioned, would say that there was, as you have noticed, a variety of views mentioned in the article. These views have come to us from various directions, not all from "Advocate" readers, and we just gathered them all up together for the one article, as you saw.

As far as 1 Cor. 15 is concerned, where you quote—"IT is sown in corruption, IT is raised in incorruption," believing as you do that in each case the "IT" refers to the body, I should like to direct your attention to the fact that according to the context of this passage in verse 37, it would appear that the "IT" cannot refer to the body, for "thou sowest not that body that shall be." The Apostolic illustration of the grain seems to confirm my thought, for it is not the sown grain that springs up, neither is the stalk that rises from the ground fashioned out of the materials of the bare grain that was sown. The bare grain that was sown perishes, and the germ of life that was in the grain is clothed upon with another kind of body (that is, a stalk), not fashioned out of materials supplied by the original grain, but formed from elements furnished by the earth and the air. The germ of the wheat sown with a grain body is raised with a stalk body. Similarly, the individuality or identity of the saint (called a "new creature," on account of the new bent or direction given to his mind by the power of the Truth and the Holy Spirit) is sown with a corrupt, fleshly body, and

that same individual or identity is to be raised with an incorrupt, spiritual body. I take it, too, that just as the stalk body for the wheat germ is not formed from the elements of the original grain body, which perishes, neither is the spiritual body of the saint to be formed from the elements of his human body, which is to perish, and many of which have perished centuries ago, in fire and in dust, the ashes of some of them being cast into the waters, for the express purpose of discrediting their memories. If, then, "thou sowest not that body that shall be," and if the "IT" which is sown is to be the "IT" that shall be raised (which we both agree it is to be) does it not follow that the "IT" is not the body, but the identity of which the body is only a portion? Yet the human body is not an essential portion of the saint's identity any more than the grain body is an essential portion of the germ of the wheat, because under proper conditions that grain body can be dispensed with, indeed, must be dispensed with, and must perish, in order that the germ may be "clothed

upon" with the new stalk body. The Apostle distinguishes between the two bodies of the saints, when he describes the present body as a "tent," while the future one is called the "house from heaven." (2 Cor. 5.) Now, a tent is not a house, neither could you build a house out of the materials that go to make up a tent, no matter how you might change the materials. Does it not appear, then, that the Lord's purpose is to give to the saints an entirely new body, fashioned out of quite different materials than those that have entered into the composition of our present body? It seems so to me. He Himself said, as showing that the two sorts of materials are quite different each from the other—"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit."—John 3: 6.

Dear Brother, your deep interest in the spread of the truth, by means of the "Cheerful Givers," is appreciated, and we pray that the Lord's blessing may attend you in your efforts to serve Him in this and in every way that may open to you.

The Resurrection of the Ransomer

(Reply to a Correspondent.)

MANY thanks for yours just received. We are glad to have your comments on the article in the May *Advocate*, entitled, "How could Jesus justly be raised from Death, if He gave His Life a Ransom for ALL?" We are glad also to note the earnest desire on your part to have all the items of your faith in harmony with the Scriptures, and would say that the same is our desire.

It would appear that you have somewhat misunderstood the article in question, and that you have not given sufficient prominence to some of its statements. There is nothing in the article which states that the penalty for sin, pronounced in Eden, is understood by us to have been anything less than everlasting death. We quite agree with your thought that if the penalty pronounced in Eden had been something less than everlasting death, then Christ died unnecessarily; for the sentence, had it implied something less than everlasting death, must in time have expired, and the prisoner must then have been set at liberty without the payment of a price or the substitution of another in his place. We thoroughly agree with you that the Bible use of the word "death," unqualified, when mentioning the penalty for sin, is an indication that endless death is meant.

Moreover, there is that in the question which affirms that our understanding is that the penalty for sin is endless death. On page 22 the statement is made:—

"It is conceivable that the Son might have fallen under one of the severe temptations to which He was exposed. This possibility must be admitted, or the temptations were only make-believe. Had Jesus succumbed to one of the temptations, He would have become a sinner; in which event His death would have been a penalty for His own sin, and not a sacrifice for ours. HAD SUCH A MISFORTUNE OVERTAKEN HIM, IT IS MANIFEST THAT HE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN RAISED FROM DEATH IN FULFILMENT OF THE ORIGINAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE FATHER AND HIMSELF, because His part of the agreement would not have been fulfilled."

Here it is stated that in our understanding the penalty for sin is endless death. This is the portion of the article to which, in our opinion, you did not give sufficient prominence. As for the brother whom you men-

tion as saying that "he is glad to see that the editor of the *Advocate* now sees that the wages of sin is death, not everlasting death," you may take it from us that he has made a mistake. We do not see it that way at all; and we recognise this as a suitable occasion to re-affirm that we understand the Scriptures to teach that THE PENALTY FOR ORIGINAL SIN IS ENDLESS DEATH, and that if said penalty had been anything less than this, it would not have been necessary for Christ to die in order to redeem us from death; it would only have been necessary to wait long enough, and then we could all have been released without a redemption. Had release without a redemption been possible, Christ certainly would not have needed to die for us.

The explanation offered in the May *Advocate*, as to how our Redeemer could be raised from death, if He gave His life a Ransom for all, having in mind that the penalty for sin was not limited death, but endless deprivation of life, appeals to us as the most satisfactory we have as yet heard of. To say that His resurrection as a glorious spirit being would not invalidate His death as a man for our redemption is a very unsatisfactory attempt at an explanation. If that were true of Jesus, it would be equally true of Adam at the first; in which case might not Adam have been raised from death as a spirit being without invalidating his death as a man? If so, the death of another for his redemption would have been unnecessary.

Our Saviour had to become a man in order that He might taste death for every man, and be the corresponding price which Divine Justice required for the purpose of redemption (Heb. ii., 9; 1 Tim. ii., 4-7), but the fact should not be lost sight of that the flesh and blood as such were not the Ransom. "His Life," "Himself," was the Ransom (Matt. x., 28; Mark x., 45; 1 Tim. ii., 6), "Himself" being at the time a flesh and blood—human—being, in order that He might correspond to that which was to be purchased. As the purchaser of a loaf shows his good faith by giving up the price of the same into the baker's hands, the customer thus parting with all right to said price, and having no power over

it, so did our Lord Jesus commit His spirit, or power to live, into the Father's hands, in perfect good faith. Himself thus relinquishing all power over it. On this point, the May issue sought to explain that *when the price was given up to Him Who had the right to receive it, the purchase was complete.* This must be so, even in view of the understanding that the penalty for sin is endless death. To take any other view would seem to make impossible the payment of the price until it had been demonstrated that our Lord was, and had been, for ever dead—a manifest impossibility, because you could never get beyond the limits of "forever," in order to prove that He had been forever dead, and that so the price of our redemption was to be regarded as paid.

The transaction having been completed upon payment of the price, it must be manifest, as mentioned in the May *Advocate*, that just as the baker has the price of the loaf in his power, and may do with it what he pleases, without impairing the transaction by which he acquired the amount, and may even give it back to the customer if he like, so the Father, having received the life of His Son, given in all good faith and relinquished out of His (the Son's) power as the redemption price of our race, could not be bound by anyone as to what He would do with that life, so received. The Son had completed His part of the transaction by giving up "His Life," "Himself," and the Father had the price. The transaction of the purchase of our race was then completed, and the Father might do as He would with the price He had received, and the transaction by which He had received said price would remain unimpaired, no matter what He did. It was His good pleasure to give the Son His life "again," but now as a spirit being, as arranged, and so He did—"for our justification." (John x., 17, 18, Diaglott; Rom. iv. 25.)

The question is important, and well worthy of the best study of God's people; it is therefore recommended that the article in the May *Advocate*, pages 20-22, be again read, in connection with the above further explanation, and comparison of the Scriptures. Any better thoughts on the subject will be gladly welcomed by us.

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No. 7

The Second Coming of the Lord and our gathering together unto Him

"But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the presence of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that sleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Wherefore comfort one another with these words.—1 Thess. 4: 13-18, R.V. margin.

AFTER leaving Philippi, where the shameful treatment of stripes and imprisonment without sanction of the Roman law was administered to them, and was overruled by the Lord for the conversion of the keeper of the prison, Paul and Silas, having Timothy in their company, came in due course of their journey to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. Following his invariable custom when visiting a new territory, Paul attended the synagogue, and for three Sabbath days he reasoned with the Jews out of the Scriptures. He sought to show them by the inspired Word that it was part of the divine arrangement that the Messiah should suffer and die, and that He should be raised from the dead. He alleged also, that Jesus, having fulfilled these particulars, is the Messiah; or, as the Vatican manuscript puts it, that "this is the Christ, even Jesus whom I preach unto you."

As a result of these three Sabbath days of preaching, and the explanations which doubtless were given inquirers during the week, accompanied by the signs which most certainly were wrought by the hands of Paul and his fellow-workers, the powers of the Jewish "heavens" in Thessalonica were greatly "shaken." It is related that "some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few." The unbelieving Jews, moved with envy, stirred up the rabble of idlers in the market place, in whose company they would not have permitted themselves to be seen on any other occasion, but who were good enough for the present purpose: they incited these roughs, toughs, hoodlums and larrikins to set all the city on an uproar, and to assault the house of Jason, where the preachers were lodging, crying,

"These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; . . . these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king, one Jesus." Ordinarily, the Jews hated the Caesars and everything pertaining to them with all the fervor of their very ardent natures; they expected "another king," and all hopes of a revival of their nation were based on that expectation. But they would not have Jesus to reign over them, hence their great carefulness for the decrees of Caesar—not that they hated Caesar less, but Jesus more.

The rulers of the city were somewhat troubled when they heard these things; nevertheless, they did no more than take security of Jason and some other brethren, probably having in mind the general character of the Jews, and being somewhat suspicious of this sudden ebullition of loyalty to a hated throne. The believers promptly sent away Paul and Silas to Berea, a city not far distant. On arrival there, the preachers, undeterred by recent experiences, resorted to the synagogue, and there met with a class of Jews more noble than those of Thessalonica, "in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." Therefore, many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men not a few. Their searching of the Scriptures of the Old Testament abundantly substantiated the teaching of Paul and Silas, and they received the truth gladly.

But the Jews of Thessalonica were not content with having made that important city untenable for Paul and Silas; when they heard of what had happened at Berea, they came thither also, and pursued the same tactics as at Thessalonica. Immediately the brethren sent away

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Paul under escort, and those who conducted him brought him as far as Athens. Undoubtedly they must have profited by the further instruction given by the Apostle on this journey, and would be sorry to part from him; but he required the company of his yoke-fellows, left behind at Berea, and sent the brethren back with orders to them to come to him with all speed, and he would wait for them in what was then the centre of learning and culture of the heathen world.

From the narrative of Acts 17: 1-15, it would be gathered that the Apostle's stay in Thessalonica was less than five weeks in length, truly a very short time in which to have accomplished so much. But in that short time he had learned to love the brethren there very dearly; and when he could no longer forbear, Timothy having now come from Berea and being available to act as messenger, Paul sent to know their faith, lest by some means the tempter might have seduced them from the truth. But when Timothy returned, bringing good tidings of their faith and love, and that they had the Apostle always in good remembrance, greatly desiring to see him, as also he desired to see them, the Apostle was greatly comforted in all his affliction and distress. These good tidings put new life into him, as he said—"now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord."—1 Thess. 3: 1-8.

The disposition of the Thessalonian brethren was in great contrast to that of the Corinthians. The latter had learned much from Paul, for he had been there a long time. No doubt they esteemed him somewhat for the sake of the things they had learned from him, but they permitted their affection for him, as well as their good manners, to diminish almost to the vanishing point, in that they made light of his affliction and professed that in their sight his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible. (2 Cor. 10: 10; 1 Cor. 2: 1-5.) The Thessalonians, on the contrary, possessed and manifested a great affection for the Apostle, as he had for them (1 Thess. 2: 8), and as all of God's people should have for those who are honored by being permitted to act as His messengers. (5: 12, 13.) If receiving the messenger is counted as receiving the One who sent him (Matt. 10: 40), loving the messenger will be accounted as loving the One Who sent him, and despising the messenger will be viewed as despise done to the One Who sent him.

Overjoyed by the good news from Thessalonica, the Apostle would send a letter—the first to the Thessalonians—to these dear brethren, so young in the faith and yet so strong and fervent. He joins his fellow-workers' names with his own in the opening salutation, but it is apparent from the remainder of the epistle that the letter is from the Apostle himself (2: 18; 5: 27), and the customary benediction (5: 28), written with his own hand, was to be the token in every letter.—2 Thess. 3: 17, 18.

Sounding out the Gospel

In his first letter to these brethren, the Apostle recalls with thankfulness to God their work of faith, their labour of love, and their patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God our Father. This happy condition could only have resulted from the facts mentioned in 1: 5. These brethren had received the Gospel not in word only (some to-day do not even receive the Gospel in word, not to say anything beyond words), but also in power (for the work of faith), and in the Holy Spirit (imparting the flavor of love to their labours), and in much assurance or conviction (giving

patience in hope). They became followers of the Lord and the Apostle, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit.

In all this they were notable examples to the believers in Macedonia and Achaia—may we also say Europe, America, and Australia?—because that from them the Word of the Lord sounded out, so that in every place that the Apostle visited the fame of the Thessalonian Church was already known, and he needed not to say anything about them. Many of these brethren had been Jews, many more had been idolators: they turned to God from idols, "TO SERVE the living and true God, and TO WAIT for His Son from heaven." Here is the first mention in this epistle of the Second Coming of the Lord. These brethren were waiting for Him: that great event was longed for; it was the desire of their hearts; it must have occupied a prominent position in their minds and a large share of their conversation. But it is worth noting that they were not waiting with folded hands. While waiting they were serving the living God, Who had raised Jesus from the dead, and Who would at the right time send Him from heaven again. And it is also worth noting that their service, in which they set the example, and as it were made the pace for all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia—not forgetting Europe, America, and Australia—was in SOUNDING OUT THE WORD OF THE LORD IN EVERY PLACE. (1: 8.) Truly, it is a huge mistake to say as some do that interest in the Lord's Second Coming interferes with missionary zeal. None could have been more interested in the Second Coming than were the Thessalonian brethren; and it is certain, from the testimony of the Apostle Paul, that there were no more zealous missionaries in the world at that time than these same Thessalonians. But how is it with us? Are we following their illustrious example? Are we sounding out the Word of the Lord to every place? Do we appreciate the fact that the Gospel has been committed to us as a trust, even as it was to the Apostle (1 Thess. 2: 4; 2 Cor. 5: 19), and are we fulfilling our obligations as trustees of the Good Tidings?

It should also be noted that, inasmuch as the Thessalonian brethren were "waiting for" God's Son from heaven, according to apostolic instruction, the Second Coming of the Lord could not have occurred at the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which had transpired some twenty years before ever the Apostle visited Thessalonica; and, by the same token, the conversion to Christianity of the Thessalonians was not in each several instance a manifestation of the Second Coming of the Lord, for these brethren, though converted, were still "waiting." Thus does the Scripture expose the fallacy of two notions concerning the Second Coming of the Lord, which, though decidedly unscriptural, have nevertheless obtained considerable credence in Christendom.

The High Calling Invitation

The object of the Apostle in visiting Thessalonica in furtherance of the cause of the Gospel which was entrusted to him, and in preaching there and elsewhere in every nation "another king, one Jesus," was not to compel the allegiance of the whole world forthwith to the "other King." That phase of the Gospel work will come in its due season. But in the meantime the whole world is allowed to remain more or less under the power of the evil one (1 John 5: 19, R.V.; Eph. 2: 2), and it is not to be supposed that He Who pronounced the words of Matt. 12: 29 would send His servants to under-

take a wholesale spoliation of the "strong man's" goods while allowing the "strong man" still to roam at large. The Gospel is now preached among the nations for the purpose of seeking out those individuals who would be so attentive to it, and so appreciative of it, as to obey it (Rom. 16: 26), notwithstanding the opposition of the prince of this world. Such renounce the world and its evil ruler, and are delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. (Col. 1: 13.) Being reconciled to God through the one Mediator between God and men, and drawing near to God in this the only way, they have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and they are allowed to rejoice also in the hope of the glory of God. (1 Tim. 2: 5-7; Rom. 5: 1, 2; John 14: 6.) Or, as the Apostle wrote to the Thessalonian brethren—

"He called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Thess. 2: 14.

"Walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory."—1 Thess. 2: 12.

It requires no stretch of imagination to believe that the "strong man" would be in a great rage at the sight of some of his subjects setting out for another kingdom, with the hope of joint heirship in its glory, and that he would do everything possible to make the way difficult for them. And so he is permitted to do, part of the object in preaching the Gospel under present circumstances being to allow the temptations to come to those who profess allegiance to Jesus, in order that their faithfulness may be fully tested and developed, and the unfaithful thus be manifested. Our King Himself had to suffer many things in the days of His flesh, and those who would become His joint heirs must suffer with Him.

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."—2 Tim. 2: 12.

"Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8: 17.

The Apostle had much to communicate to his beloved Thessalonians on the subject of the glories of the High Calling, and the present responsibilities of those who were running for the prize of glory. In fact, this was the greater part of his message to them in both of the epistles. Nevertheless, he did not forget to mention that in the day of our Lord's Second Coming, when He should be glorified in these saints and they in Him (2 Thess. 1: 12), there would be other saved ones, and that Jesus would "be admired in *all them that believe in that day*." (2 Thess. 1: 10.) And why should there not be believers in that day? If the testimony of the Apostle among the Thessalonians was believed by some in this day, when the evil one and his numerous deceptions are at large, why should not the Gospel be believed and obeyed by many—even "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, . . . saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb"—in *that day*, when the "strong man" shall be bound, and his deceptions restrained, in order that his "goods" may be taken as a spoil by One Who is stronger than He? It will be even so. The veil and covering of death that is over all nations shall be swallowed up victoriously; and the Lord Jesus shall not only be glorified in His saints, but shall also be admired in all them that believe in that day, not having been believers before that day, whether through lack of opportunity or through misunderstanding. (Isa. 25: 6-9; Rev. 7: 9, 10; Jer. 12: 14-17.) The only portion of the "strong man's"

goods that will not be taken as a spoil will be the evil systems of his invention, whether political, social, commercial, or ecclesiastical, and those persons who wilfully persist in doing evil after being fully informed as to the consequences, and offered all the aid necessary to effect a complete reformation. These evil systems and persons, accursed, shall depart from the presence of the Lord into the "everlasting fire," prepared for the devil and his angels, and shall there be destroyed, root and branch, destruction being the just punishment of their wilful sinning—"punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."* —2 Thess. 1: 9.

The Parousia of Our Lord Jesus

The Apostle, being separated in person from the converts at Thessalonica, was in distress, greatly desiring to see them. He would have gone to them time and again, but Satan was permitted to hinder him. He longed for them, as for a great treasure. They were his treasure, and would be manifested as such when, at the Second Coming of the Lord, he and they would be joined to Him according to the Master's promise. (John 14: 1-3; 2 Tim. 4: 8.) They should be a crown of glory for him in that day, as he said:—

"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus at His presence? For ye are our glory and our joy."—1 Thess. 2: 19, R.V. margin.

This is the first use in these epistles of the word *Parousia*: in the Authorised and Revised Version ordinary texts it is translated "coming," but the Revised Version marginal reading, as above quoted, gives "presence" as a more exact rendering of the word. In this judgment both Strong's and Young's Concordances concur. The word is derived from a present participial form, and is defined as meaning "a being near," or "a being alongside of." It seems clear that the word "coming" does not express the meaning of *Parousia*, because "coming" implies moving from one locality to another, not *being* in one position or relation. Moreover, coming may be taking place while one is far from being *near* or *alongside* of one's destination. It seems equally clear that "arrival" does not express the meaning of *Parousia*, because arrival is merely that point of time at which the movement implied by "coming" ends. "Arrival" is not "a being near or alongside of," because "being near" implies remaining in one position or relation for a space of time, whereas "arrival" implies only a point, not a space, of time. "Presence" seems thus to be the only English word that suitably expresses the thought in the present participial form of *Parousia*, because "presence" implies a *remaining near* or alongside of, during a space of time. In order to have clearly before the mind the relations of these three English words to each other, it may be stated that "arrival" occurs at that undimensioned point of time which at once terminates the period of "Coming" and begins the period of "Presence."

Meaning of Parousia

It is most important to the study of this subject that the meaning of *Parousia*—"presence"—be well in mind. The word *Parousia* occurs in the New Testament twenty-four times, the reference in nearly every case being to our Lord. In the two short epistles to the Thessalonians,

* For reference to and explanation of all the Scriptures on the subject of the penalty for sin, and its punishment in the present life and in the future, the reader is kindly referred to the 112 page book entitled, "Everlasting Punishment." This will be supplied post paid in cloth binding for 1/1 (29 cents); in paper covers, 6d. (10 cents).

the word *Parousia* occurs no less than seven times, being nearly one-third of the total number of occurrences of this expressive word in the whole of the New Testament. Six times in these epistles *Parousia* refers to the presence of our Lord; the seventh time it refers to the presence of "that Wicked."

At nearly every occurrence of this word in the New Testament, the Authorised and Revised Versions translate it "coming" in the ordinary text; but the Revised Version always notes in the margin the more exact rendering, "presence." Following are all the occurrences of *Parousia* in the New Testament. It would be well to look up all of them, and mark the word "presence" in the margin, wherever in any of these references the word "coming" has been used.—Matt. 24: 3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. 15: 23; 16: 17; 2 Cor. 7: 6, 7; 10: 10; Phil. 1: 26; 2: 12; 1 Thess. 2: 19; 3: 13; 4: 15; 5: 23; 2 Thess. 2: 1, 8, 9; James 5: 7, 8; 2 Peter 1: 16; 3: 4, 12; 1 John 2: 28.

Bearing in mind the definition of *Parousia*—"presence"—it appears that in 1 Thess. 2: 19 the Apostle was meaning that his dear Thessalonian converts, if faithful, would be his crown of glorying—not during the time of our Lord's coming from heaven to earth, not at the moment of His arrival, but during all the period of His Presence, including the thousand years of the Kingdom Age. This whole period should always be thought of when the Lord's Presence is mentioned, in order that the full scope of His Second Advent be not minimised in any degree. It was not a certain moment that the Thessalonians were "waiting" for, nor yet a certain twenty-four hour day. They were waiting for the time when their prayer and ours should be fulfilled—"Thy Kingdom Come!" (Rev. 20: 4.) At that time their hearts should be established "unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."—1 Thess. 3: 13.

The Divine Presence with Believers

But someone will ask, Do not believers in the Lord Jesus Christ enjoy His presence with them at all times? Did He not say, just before His ascension, "Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the consummation of the age?"—Matt. 28: 20, R.V. margin.

Without doubt, believers in Jesus do enjoy the presence of the Saviour with them during the time of their running in the race for the prize of the High Calling. Not only so, but they have the presence of the Father as well, as the Lord had promised should be their privilege.

"If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."—John 14: 23.

This being the privilege of all true believers in Jesus, it must be allowed that the Thessalonian brethren were enjoying it; it must be admitted that the Father and the Son had come to them, and were abiding with them—with each of them individually, this being a promise to each one who loves Jesus and keeps His words. The Apostle would of course know that the believers in Thessalonica were enjoying this high privilege of the presence of the Father and the Son; yet he says that they were "waiting for" God's Son from heaven (1 Thess. 1: 10), and he refers to the *Parousia*—presence—of the Lord as still future from that time (1 Thess. 5: 23); which demonstrates that the presence of the Lord that they were waiting for was not the presence of the Father and of the Son which it is the privilege of believers to enjoy during the time of "waiting." The manner of the presence of the Father and the Son

granted to believers prior to the time when we shall be gathered to Him is fully explained in the following Scripture statements, to which others might be added.

"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."—1 John 4: 15.

"If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, BECAUSE HE HATH GIVEN US OF HIS SPIRIT."—Vss. 12, 13.

"And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us."—1 John 3: 24.

From these statements it appears that the manner in which the believers now enjoy the presence of the Father and the Son is by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, given at Pentecost in fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, and as promised to the Son by the Father. (Acts 2: 16-18, 33.) Finally, the Apostle John distinguishes between the Holy Spirit, by which God and His Son dwell in the believing people and they in Him, and the *Parousia*, saying:—

"And now, my little children, abide in Him; that if He shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before Him at His presence."—1 John 2: 28, R.V. margin.

This manner of enjoying communion with God and His Son, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, being dependent upon the repentance and turning from sin of the individual, and being granted only to those individuals who do repent and turn away from sin, is doubtless the blessing that is spoken of in the Apostle Peter's words to the Jews on the occasion of the healing of the lame man at the gate of the temple. All modern versions are in agreement with the Revised Version, from which the following is quoted:—

"Repent ye, therefore, and turn again,

THAT your sins may be blotted out,

THAT so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence (not *parousia*, but literally 'from the face') of the Lord;

AND THAT he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus."—Acts 3: 19, 20, R.V.

The fact that the "sending" of the Lord Jesus here referred to is made to depend upon the repentance and turning again of Peter's hearers, as shown in the arrangement of the clauses of his exhortation to them, indicates quite plainly that he was not here referring to the *Parousia* of our Lord during the Thousand Years. The *Parousia* of our Lord during the Thousand Years will not depend on the repentance and conversion of anyone; in fact, the beginning of it is to be at a time of great unbelief, as our Lord and the Apostles intimated. (Luke 18: 8; 2 Tim. 3: 1-9; 4: 3, 4; 1 Tim. 4: 1, 2.) The "seasons of refreshing from the face of the Lord," and the sending of Christ above referred to, being made dependent in Peter's inspired address upon the repentance and conversion of his hearers, would be the blessing referred to in the above citations from John's writings, the privilege of dwelling in God and of having the Father and the Son abiding with us, which is granted to believing individuals and only to such, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. May this be the happy portion of each reader of these words!

The Lord's Presence among His People

The fact that our Lord has been present among His people during the Gospel Age should not be overlooked. John saw seven golden lampstands, and one like the Son of Man standing in their midst. It was explained to John that the lampstands were the seven Churches—symbolic, we believe, of the different states of the

whole Church during the age. Thus was the Lord's presence with and care over His people illustrated in the magnificent vision.—Rev. 1: 12, 13, 20; 2: 5, 16; 3: 3, 11.

The Disciples' Question

About twenty years before the Apostle wrote to the Thessalonians, the disciples of the Lord had come to Him with a question concerning His presence. They asked—

"What shall be the sign of thy presence, and of the consummation of the age?"—Matt. 24: 3, R.V. margin.

This question suggests that the disciples may have believed that the Lord would be present and the fact of His presence remain undiscerned without some sign to make it known. For them to have had such a thought would not have been at all surprising. The Messiah was present among His own people, the Jews, and but few of them identified Him as the Messiah, although His ministry of more than three years was attested by such miracles and teachings as had never been known before His time. The disciples had confessed that He was the Christ, and that the Messiah had come; but the majority of the Jewish nation would not be convinced even by His many wonderful works. These things, and the hostility of the rulers of the people to Jesus, would have caused the disciples to anticipate similar difficulties in regard to the recognition of the fact of His Second Presence, and so they would have asked the Lord the above mentioned question.

The manner of our Lord's answer indicates that the question of the disciples was very apropos; for no other question addressed to Him has His reply recorded at such length as this one, which extends through two chapters. Moreover, He intimates that their apprehension that His second Presence might be a fact unrecognised for a time was well grounded—

"And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the presence of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they KNEW NOT until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the presence of the Son of man."—Matt. 24: 37-39, R.V. margin.

As in Noah's days the people carried on their ordinary occupations in ignorance of what was coming upon them, so in the presence of the Son of man the people would carry on their occupations—seeking after food and drink and clothing, which interest the Gentiles more than the Kingdom of God does (Matt. 6: 31, 32)—in ignorance of His presence and of the great dispensational change impending as a result of His presence. For it is to be carefully noted that the Lord's presence does not begin at the moment of the overthrow of the present order of things, any more than Noah's days began at the time the rain commenced to fall. The days of Noah began a long while *before* the deluge came. The Presence of the Son of man begins *before* the time of trouble which is to overthrow the ecclesiastical heavens and the social earth, and the time of trouble is caused by His Presence. A few references will substantiate this statement, as made by our Lord in the verses last quoted.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, . . . IT shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."—Dan. 2: 44.

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time."—Dan. 12: 1; Matt. 24: 21, 22.

But as Noah and his family, who had faith to believe God's Word, KNEW the time they were living in, so does our Lord intimate that those of His people who are on the watch would KNOW the fact of His Presence at the proper time, and in advance of others. This is the intimation of the exhortation to "Watch." When the time of trouble is doing its work, the fact of the Presence of the Son of man shall be made known by that means to the nations and tribes of the earth. "Behold He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him," is the manner of stating this in symbolic language employed in Rev. 1: 7; Matt. 24: 30. For other illusions to clouds as symbols, see Joel 2: 2; Zeph. 1: 14, 15; Psalms 18: 4-16.

The Pharisees' Question

The Pharisees demanded of the Lord when the Kingdom of God should come. In His reply, our Lord said that the Kingdom would not come in a manner visible to the eye of flesh, neither would it be localised in a geographical sense, but it would be in the midst of the people—invisibly in the midst, one may suppose, as the kingdom of Satan, whom Jesus is to depose, is in the midst of the people but is not localised geographically. He said:

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."—Luke 17: 20, 21, R.V. margin.

His Presence like "Lightning"

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming [presence] of the Son of man be."—Matt. 24: 27.

It has been thought that these words of our Lord are in contradiction to the thought that His presence is to be for a time in the world while the people are in ignorance of the fact that He has arrived. It is said that His Second Coming is to be as suddenly accomplished as a flash of lightning, and that it must therefore at once be known to all the people on the earth. But it is to be carefully noted that our Lord does not here tell of His coming, nor yet of His arrival; He speaks of His Presence. Moreover, the word here translated "lightning" is used in Luke 11: 36 to mean another kind of shining than a lightning flash; viz., the bright shining of a lamp, which is a steady glare. The Greek word is *astrape*, supposed to be derived from *aster*, meaning a star, this word being used in the English language as the name of a star-like flower, with petals to represent the rays. Now, a star does not shine occasionally, like lightning, but steadily. Furthermore, the description of the shining mentioned in Matt. 24: 27 would seem effectually to exclude the "lightning" interpretation in this case, because it speaks of a shining that comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west. The reference to the sun seems so clear as to require no further comment. But even if the "lightning" interpretation were admissible, one would require to be awake in order to see the flash and hear the thunder, and it is well known that many in Christendom are not awake. It is well known that in the natural order of things, but few people see the sun rise, because they are asleep at that hour of the day. With the most of us, the sun is well started on his journey before we know anything of the fact. If one be awake at the right time, he will see the sun's first rays. If asleep, he knows nothing and sees nothing, but the sun is shining, nevertheless. Our Lord's words above quoted should therefore not be considered as contradictory of verses 37-39, but rather as adding em-

phasis to the exhortation to "Watch!" Only the watchers will be able to discern the fact of the Lord's presence at the first, and to appreciate the beauty of the rising of the Sun. The teaching of the Lord was quite in harmony with the feeling that must have been in the minds of the disciples when they addressed to Him the question of Matt. 24: 3, and His answer to their question gave them and all to understand that His people would need to be on the watch to discern—that He would soon come? No. They would need to be on the watch to discern His Presence, just as at the first advent God's people needed to be on the watch to discern Messiah's Presence among them. Then, as now, there were many who fully believed that Messiah would *soon come*; but among that many there were only a few who admitted that Messiah *had come*. The majority denied His Presence, and that denial was followed by fearful consequences to themselves, even the destruction of their city—wrath to the uttermost.—1 Thess. 2: 15, 16.

If we of this time claim to be children of the light and of the day, as were the Thessalonian brethren, it will be exceedingly unbecoming of us to sleep, when we should be wide awake and watchful.

"Let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thess. 5: 6-9.

One Taken, the Other Left

Our Lord further explained to the disciples that in the time of His Presence, associations should be severed; of two who were together, one should be taken and the other should be left. (Matt. 24: 40, 41.) This does not refer to the moment of His arrival, but to the period of His presence, as shown by the word "then" at the beginning of verse 40, which connects this statement with verses 37-39, in which the Lord compared the days of Noah with the days of His presence. See also Luke 17:26, where the plural word "days" is specifically used concerning the time of our Lord's presence, in comparison with the "days" of Noah.

A thought which has obtained much acceptance among those who are interested in our Lord's second advent is that those who are "taken" in fulfilment of Matt. 24: 40, 41 will be suddenly caught up into the atmosphere, while those who are "left" will be obliged to remain on the earth. A little tract has been written describing a "dream" that someone is supposed to have had, in which the great consternation of those who are "left" is depicted. Mother and sister are missing; relatives and friends are gone; the driver has been "taken" from his express train, flying across the country at sixty miles an hour, while the stoker has been "left." One might also "dream" that a surgeon had been "taken" while in the midst of a delicate operation, and the patient "left" to look after himself. All this seems unduly imaginative, and not in agreement with the explanation given by our Lord Himself, when the disciples asked Him, "Where, Lord?"

"And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together."—Luke 17: 34-37.

The answer certainly is enigmatic, yet it is given for our instruction. It would seem that if anything is to be learned from this answer it should be by considering the keen scent and sight of the "eagles" (literally vultures) for the "body" or carcass which is their food.

to be the allusion to the eagerness of the eagles for their food, their keenness in discovering it, and the fact that they will, if necessary, travel a great distance to get to it. The Truth is the spiritual food of God's people. Those of God's people who are like the eagles will be very keen for their food, and will go wherever it is, in order to get it. In plain words, the answer to the disciples' question, as to where these should be taken, while the others were left, would seem to be that in the days of His presence the keen, wide-awake Christians would be gathered from every direction to the Truth, while the sleeping ones would be "left." An apparent allusion to this is found in Luke 12: 37.

The Apostle does not contradict the Lord

Having gathered that the intention of our Lord was to have His disciples understand that His presence at His second advent would be for a time in the world while the people remained ignorant of the fact, one is confronted with the Apostle's words in 1 Thess. 4: 16, which are held by most Christians to teach that the fact of our Lord's presence will be made known to both eye and ear at the moment of His arrival, the shout, the voice and the trump being relied on to prove this thought. How shall the Apostle's words be understood harmoniously with those of our Lord? And how shall these words of his be seen to agree with his other words in 5: 2, which are part of his explanation? He says:—

"Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."

Does a thief come with a shout, and a trumpet, and a great voice? Does not the thief enter noiselessly, and proceed very quietly about his work during his presence in the house? Manifestly, the general thought of a literal "shout," "voice" and "trump" in connection with our Lord's second advent requires to be revised, if confusion is to be avoided. No violence will be done to Truth by seeking such an interpretation of 1 Thess. 4: 16 as will allow the Apostle to agree with his own other words, and with the words of the Master. This interpretation is found by viewing the "shout," "voice" and "trump" as symbols, as consistency seems to require.

There should be no difficulty in the mind of any Christian to realise that the "trump" is a symbol. In the Book of Revelation there is a series of seven trumpets. It is generally agreed that these are to be taken as symbolic, and it is also generally understood among Bible students that five or six, at least, of these "trumpets" have "sounded." This being so, it would be right to suppose that the seventh of these "trumpets" is also symbolic, and that its "sound" would be no more literal or audible to ear of flesh than the "sounding" of the other six "trumpets" has been. But the seventh "trumpet" is the one which is associated with the presence and reign of our Lord. (Rev. 11: 15-18.) It is obviously the seventh "trumpet" that is mentioned in 1 Thess. 4: 16, so there is no doubt that the Apostle was using figurative language, which would apply to the "shout" and the "voice" equally with the "trump." The same trumpet is mentioned in Matt. 24: 31 and 1 Cor. 15: 52, and is there to be understood as a symbol, as in the passage now under consideration. It is "the trump of God," the symbol indicating that the evil one is deposed, and that the kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord (i.e., Jehovah) and of His Christ (Jesus). In connection with the deposing of the evil one, there is great wrath among the nations, and an awful time of trouble, as the present order of things, ecclesiastical, political, social and commercial, flees away from the

presence of Him Who sits upon the throne. But there is no audible sound of a trumpet of brass.

The "voice of the archangel" is used as a symbol to denote the position occupied by our Lord as the chief messenger of Jehovah, "arch" meaning chief, "angel" meaning messenger. As the chief messenger of the Almighty, the words and commands of our Lord must be respectfully heard and attended to, or serious consequences will follow. All who do not hear and obey His words, being the words of God through Him, will be "cut off from among the people."—Acts 3: 23.

The "shout" is also a symbol. The word is a translation of *kelenma*, which is defined by Strong's Concordance as meaning a "cry of incitement." This "shout" seems to be a symbol of the events mentioned in Luke's account of our Lord's words—

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."—Luke 21: 25-28.

Upon the earth there is even now the predicted distress among the nations, and perplexity at the constant "roaring" of the "sea"—the persistent demands for their rights that are rising from the masses of the people, which demands have been rising for more than a century, beginning about the time of the French Revolution. The hearts of the wise men of this world are failing them for fear and for looking after the things that are coming upon the existing social order, many of them realising the inevitableness of the impending catastrophe. And the powers of the ecclesiastical "heavens" are certainly being shaken as never before, the opinion being freely expressed in influential quarters that the institutions of Christendom are but cumberers of the ground. These things constitute a "shout" to those who have ears to hear. Our redemption draweth nigh! And as the Apostle tells us that "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout"—a signal shout, according to Dean Alford—the inference is obvious. The signal is being given; the Parousia (Presence) is begun; the Lord is here!

The Belief of the Thessalonian Church

That the Thessalonian brethren understood the "shout," "voice" and "trump" to be symbolic and not literal, and that they believed that the Lord would be present invisibly, and that the fact of His presence would be unknown to the people generally, and that they had Apostolic sanction for their belief, seems clear. They evidently thought that the day of the Lord would come stealthily and quietly, "as a thief in the night." They even believed that the day of the Lord might be upon them then, but in this they had misunderstood. The state of their mind, with the Apostle's comment on it, is shown in the following words:—

"Now, we beseech you, brethren, in behalf of the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is now present; let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed."—2 Thess. 2: 1-3, R.V. margin.

These words show that the Thessalonians believed that the day of the Lord was begun, and that they believed that the Lord was invisibly present. In this they were doubtless mistaken, but the manner of correcting their mistake is most instructive. The Apostle does not say, Dear brethren, you are evidently mistaken about the day of the Lord having begun and the Lord Himself being present; if He had come, someone would have

seen like a lightning flash—

or, someone would have seen Him standing on the Mount of Olives—or, you would have heard a tremendous blast of a trumpet, or a great shout, or a loud voice—or, you would have seen the dead rising from their graves—or, the faithful among you would have been caught up bodily and alive into the atmosphere to meet the Lord, in which case I, Paul, would not have been left behind, so you may be certain that the day of the Lord has not begun. The Apostle did not advance any of these things as reasons for believing that the day of the Lord had not begun, and it is obvious that he could not have advanced them; for if these things or any of them had occurred, the day of the Lord would not have come as a thief in the night. The Thessalonian brethren were evidently quite right in their belief that the day of the Lord (and the Lord Himself) would be present in the invisible and inaudible manner that they had in mind—"without observation," as the Lord had said—but they were wrong as to the time, and on this point, and this only, the Apostle corrects them. He shows them that the great apostasy was to come first.

The Lawless One and the Lord's Presence

The "mystery of iniquity" was even then working in the Church, and the only hindrance to its full development and manifestation was the Roman Government. When that was taken out of the way, the lawless Papacy manifested itself, and sat as the claimed vice-gerent of Christ, receiving the worship that should have been offered to God and Christ only. But of this "lawless one" the Apostle further said:—

"Whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the breath of His mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of His presence."—2 Thess. 2: 8, R.V. margin.

Of this lawless one, that considered himself superior to the divine laws, and to the times and seasons of the Lord's own arrangement, Daniel had written:—

"And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."—Dan. 7: 25, 26.

The "lawless one" had been severely wounded by the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, at the time of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century; but his great wound was healed (Rev. 13: 3), and he continued for the remainder of the time and times and dividing of time (three and a half years—forty-two months—1,260 days, fulfilled at the rate of a day for a year), until the close of the eighteenth century, when the judgment sat. One like the Son of man was brought before the Ancient of Days, and to Him was given a kingdom and dominion, that all peoples and nations should serve Him, and He was empowered to take away the Papal dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end. (Dan. 7: 9-14, 25, 26.) This the Lord Jesus has been doing, as the Apostle said He would, by the "breath of His mouth," the giving out of truth on religious and other subjects, which by the year 1870 had taken away the last of the temporal power of the Papacy, and which is still pursuing its work of consuming the entire system with all its appendages and allied systems. And the final coup, which will "bring to nought" the "lawless one," and will cast him and his ally, the "False Prophet" or teacher, i.e., Protestantism, into destruction, will be administered by the further manifestation of the Lord's presence.

The consumption of the Papacy has been in progress for more than a century, as everyone knows. Can we not open our ears of understanding, to "hear" in this great event the "shout" of 1 Thess. 4: 16, the "incitement" or encouragement to look up and lift up our heads, the "signal" that the Lord is here, the Parousia—presence—begun, the manifestation of which shall shortly bring to nought the mystery of iniquity?

It cannot be gainsaid that the Papacy is being consumed; nor can it be disputed that the consumption was to be accomplished by our Lord Jesus, according to the predictions of Daniel and Paul above referred to. If we see the work going on, can we not—yea, must we not—acknowledge the times we are living in?

When John the Baptist sent from his prison to Jesus, to ask whether He was the Messiah, or were they to look for another, the Saviour did not send back the messengers to John with a direct assertion of His Messiahship; instead of doing so, He instructed them to tell John of the works that were being done. (Matt. 11: 2-6.) So, let no one in this day expect that the Lord will tell him in so many words, "I am here." The disciples asked for a sign of His presence; and the sign of His presence, now as then, consists in the works that are being done. "And blessed is he," said the Master, "whosoever shall not be offended in Me."

The Apostle's Comforting Words

The Thessalonian brethren were in a measure of distress and perplexity over the prospects of those who had died, and the tidings of their state of mind were presumably brought to the Apostle by Timothy on his return. For their comfort, the Apostle gives them the instruction quoted at the head of this article. As Jesus died and rose again, so would God also bring with Him the believers who had fallen asleep in Jesus. And those who would remain alive unto the presence of the Lord should by no means precede them that slept. The programme of the Lord's dealings with His saints at His presence would be that "the dead in Christ" should rise first. They would not be raised to enter again into present conditions of imperfection, even for a short time, but, having laid aside the "tent," the human body, and having been "unclothed" in death for a time, they would be clothed upon with the "house from heaven," the spiritual body like that of the Lord. (2 Cor. 5: 1-4.) There is to be no resurrection of the human body, in order that it may be changed into a spiritual body, but—

"So also is the resurrection of the dead.
It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:
It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory:
It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:
It is sown a natural body; it is RAISED A SPIRITUAL BODY.

There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

—1 Cor. 15: 42-44.

"The dead shall be RAISED INCORRUPTIBLE."—v. 52.

Then (literally "afterwards") the living and remaining saints shall be caught up together with the risen ones, in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and from that time we shall ever be with the Lord. The word *hama*, translated "together with," means in the first instance, according to Strong's Concordance, "at the 'same' time." But, according to the same authority, it is also freely used to denote any close association. The only other occurrence of this word in the epistle to the Thessalonians is in 5: 10, where it denotes association, without referring particularly to time. In 4: 17 it also denotes association without special reference to time,

the time feature having been already indicated by the statement that the dead in Christ should rise "first," and that "afterwards" the living should be dealt with. "Together with" must in this instance be understood to denote that both the dead saints and the living ones should ultimately be found "together" in the same condition of glory, honor, and immortality, with the Lord. The saints raised from death will go there "first;" the living saints "afterward."

"To meet the Lord in the Air"

The "dream" already referred to mistakenly predicts that the living saints will be caught up bodily into the atmosphere, there to meet the Lord. But this seems not at all remarkable, inasmuch as in these days even natural men who do not claim to be saints can betake themselves to the air, and can ascend far beyond the range of the human eye. Moreover, if the saints were to be taken away in this manner, the people generally could not be kept in ignorance of the fact of the Lord's presence, until the day of great trouble in and by means of which His presence is to be revealed to them, according to the teaching of the Lord and the Apostle, as before cited.

Having found that the "shout," the "voice," the "trump," and the "clouds" are in this passage used in a symbolic manner, it should not be considered altogether strange if a symbolic use of "air" were also found. "Air" is used as a symbol in the New Testament, as in the following passage:—

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."—Eph. 2: 2.

The empire of the "air" is the *rulership and influence over the minds of men* which Satan is able to exercise in the children of disobedience, "according to the course of this world." But the kingdom of this world is to become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He is to reign as the prince of the power of the air, the present prince being cast out. In this "air" His saints are to meet Him, to reign with Him for the Thousand Years, instructing men in the way of righteousness, and influencing their minds for good. There is something majestic and inspiring about the thought of being caught up to meet the Lord in the region of influence over the minds of men. It is indeed a catching UP. Beside it, the erroneous "dream" of an ascent of a mile or two into the atmosphere of our planet is totally without significance.

How will the Living Saints be caught up?

This is a question of deepest personal interest to all who hope to become joint heirs with the Lord, and the interest that all such saints take in this question is greatly intensified if they can realise that the day of the Lord has begun, and that He is now present. Consideration of this most interesting question should be in the light of what has been seen in the experience of the Papacy and in the state of the world's affairs to indicate that the *Parousia* has begun, and in the light also of the Apostle's statement that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 15: 50.) If flesh and blood cannot inherit a place in the joint heirship with Christ, there must be a change from human to spiritual bodies for the saints who are alive and remain, just as there is one for the saints who were "sown a natural body," and "raised a spiritual body."—1 Cor. 15: 44; 1 John 3: 2.

The programme of this great change, as far as those

saints are concerned who should be raised from death, was that the flesh-and-blood condition should terminate at death, that the saints should be sleeping until the resurrection, and that then the spirit conditions should begin, for each one of the overcomers would be "raised a spiritual body." Of the other saints it is said that they shall not "sleep."

"Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."—1 Cor. 15: 51, 52.

Many devout Christians, interested in the Lord's Second Coming but not realising His Presence begun—indeed, rather disposed to make light of the idea—believe that "we shall not all sleep" means that we shall not all die. They also believe that at some one moment in connection with our Lord's arrival, which they believe to be still in the future, all the living saints will be taken up bodily; their bodies being forthwith altered (some of them think by substituting "spirit" for blood in the veins, though we have never heard of a Bible text which says this) to the conditions appropriate to the new estate into which they will thus be ushered. It is to be noted, however, that the Apostle does not in so many words say that all the living saints will be changed simultaneously, at some one moment of time. It is not necessary to limit the time to this extent, for the "trumpet" under which this is to take place is the "seventh trumpet," whose "sounding" covers the Thousand Years. No doubt the experience of each individual of the living saints will be accomplished in the twinkling of an eye; this is not questioned, but only the idea that all of them must be dealt with simultaneously, inasmuch as the Apostle does not say so. The supposition that the living saints are to be caught up bodily into the atmosphere is scarcely dignified enough to be compatible with the Great Event with which it is sought to be associated.

If our suggestions be accepted as Scriptural, it will also appear that during the time of our Lord's Presence, and before He shall have arisen to shut to the door of opportunity to enter into the High Calling, a saint living on earth might put off the flesh-and-blood condition by dying, and if immediately "clothed upon" with the spiritual condition, and not left "unclothed" in death (2 Cor. 5: 4) even for one moment, he would have been "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," and he would not have "slept," because no time would have elapsed between the putting off of the one condition and the being clothed upon with the other.

It is believed that the interpretations here proposed of the meeting with the Lord in the "air," the catching "up" of the saints, and the "change" in a "moment" of the saints who are on earth during the time of the Lord's presence, fully answer to all the requirements of the Apostle's statements, and that therefore these interpretations are perfectly feasible. Moreover, it is believed that these interpretations are the only ones that can harmonise 1 Thess. 4: 17 and 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52 with another passage of Scripture that well deserves to be considered in this connection.

"Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord from Henceforth"

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works follow with them."—Rev. 14: 13, R.V.

The Apostle, when imprisoned at Rome, was in a

strait betwixt two, not knowing whether to choose to continue in his life of service and tribulation, or to prefer death as a martyr, being persuaded that either of these would redound to the Lord's glory. (Phil. 1: 20-22.) In any case, he did not long for the "unclothed" condition of sleep in death. (2 Cor. 5: 4.) He had as his great desire a third thing, the departure from the death conditions and being with the Lord. This would be far better than a life of tribulation, or sleeping in death, and it would occur at the resurrection, at the Lord's presence.

But why should it be intimated to the Revelator that the dead who die in the Lord—that is the saints—are blessed? The answer is found in the words "from henceforth." Only from a certain time would it be right to say that a special blessing attaches to the dead who die in the Lord. Is there any way to determine what time that would be? Yes; it seems plainly indicated in Rev. 14: 9-12.

In the previously-mentioned book on "Everlasting Punishment," pages 66-70, it is explained that the torment of the worshippers of the beast and his image consists in that distress of mind which will come upon them as they realise that the systems to which they are devoted are really being destroyed in the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death. The smoke of their torment is the smoke of the "fire" that destroys the systems, they themselves in the meantime standing afar off, and bemoaning the fate of great "Babylon." (Rev. 18: 9, 10, 15, 17-19.) It is also suggested, in harmony with the thoughts expressed in the present discussion under the sub-title "The Lawless One and the Lord's Presence," that the consumption of the Papal "beast" and its Protestant "image" is even now in progress, while these systems are yet alive, and that this consumption is due to the fact that the Lord is present. If this be correct, Rev. 14: 9-12 refers to the time of the Lord's presence; and this is the explanation of the "henceforth" in verse 13. From a point of time in the period thus indicated, those would be blessed who died in the Lord. Their blessing would be twofold—(1) rest from their labours; (2) their works would follow them. Having passed away from the laborious conditions and unfavorable environment of the present life, they would still be active in the Lord's service; their works would not cease, but would accompany them. That is to say, they would have been "changed" in a moment from the present imperfect flesh-and-blood conditions to those of the divine estate like that of our Lord, and there would not have been a moment's interval of sleep in death.

If the foregoing interpretations are correct, and if the signs of the times have been correctly read (examination of time prophecies being reserved for a future occasion), we are now living in the "henceforth" time. Can we believe it? What a privilege is ours, to contemplate with joy the putting off of this our tabernacle, in full faith and anticipation that there will not only be the blessed rest from labour but also an entrance forthwith into far greater opportunities and activities in the Lord's service, Who did so much for us! The Master has not yet risen to shut to the door to the High Calling, but the time when He will do so cannot now be far distant. Shall we not, while He permits, be imitators of the ardent, loving brethren at Thessalonica, who SERVED God, while "waiting" for His Son to take them to Himself? Shall not we also with joy and gladness sound out the Word of the Lord in every place? Amen.

Peace or War?

DURING the last three months the political and ecclesiastical "heavens" have been agitated by a variety of questions. The region of control over the minds of men is at present a scene of conflict between two opposing forces. In times of stress, men often act wildly, without reason or set purpose; especially the hooligan element, which is always ready to take advantage of any occasion to riot and plunder. But there is always a period of preparation of the minds of men before ever the climax of overwrought emotion arrives. And those who occupy positions of prominence and influence have ever to consider not only the effect of their theories and legislation upon the average responsible and well-meaning citizen, but as well their effect upon the lawless element, and also that large class of irresponsible youth which in time of excitement is generally drawn into association with the baser sort. Failure of legislators and political economists to reason out their theories to their full length, and to foresee the effect they will have upon the people, is largely the cause of the zig-zag, backward and forward, course of modern legislation. The desire of the majority of men is for peace and happiness and business prosperity, in which they shall have their due share. As to how these are to be attained and maintained, the details are left to others (often mere self-seeking politicians) to work out, and they fall in line with any theory which for the time being seems to promise the desired result. It is only, therefore, as the events of our day are classified and recognised as belonging to one or another theory or set of ideas, that their study gives a true grasp of the situation. Several of these sets of ideas may be tabulated as follows:—

The Imperial Idea

otherwise, "world power," requiring immense standing armies and large armaments. In ancient times these were frankly confessed to be for conquest, and were so used; in modern times the Peace Idea has so far prevailed among many peoples that these armaments are ostensibly for defence purposes only, but whenever the Imperial Idea finds its position strong enough, it does not hesitate at aggression.

The Colonial Settlement Idea

is linked with the Imperial Idea. Instead of allowing the overplus of population to emigrate to foreign lands, there to build up an alien power, it is desired that they people crown colonies, and thus perpetuate the traditions and enlarge the prestige of the home land.

The Commercial Expansion Idea

is intimately associated with the previous two. The conquests of trade are represented as more desirable than those of territory; yet it is observable that the commercial activities are often only the prelude to peaceful occupation and ultimate absorption—peacefully, if possible; violently, if required.

To the credit of these three Ideas may be placed the four largest wars of recent years—as well as the majority of all previous wars—Chino-Japanese; Russo-Japanese; Spanish-American; South African; the establishment of spheres of influence in China by the great powers; the rivalry in Tibet between China and Great Britain; the present trouble in Morocco, which threatens to prove the basis of another war, but will probably be settled by diplomacy and mutual concessions, with the result of

opening up fresh territory for Imperial Power, Colonial Settlement, and Commercial Expansion. Indirectly, all Europe and America, as well as Australia, will be benefitted.

The War Idea

is as old as Cain, who, through envy and hate, slew his brother. It is, in fact, even older—for enmity was put between the woman and her seed and the serpent and his seed. There is, and must be, war between good and evil, between the doers of good and the doers of evil. We have then the phrase "justifiable war." Civilization has taken out of the hand of the individual the right to kill his neighbour, but, as represented in the political powers of the world to-day, she maintains her own right to slaughter. Recognizing the universal and necessary conflict between good and evil, each party to a conflict gives out (whether the highest officials believe it or not) that he is fighting "for the right;" "to defend the innocent;" "to overturn oppression;" or for the *blessing* (?) of the conquered nation or tribe. Those who favor the War Idea have many arguments to bring forward in its defence, most of which are threadbare through long use. The latest vindicator of War, Lieut.-Gen. Sir Reg. Hart, recently said, in "The Nineteenth Century":—

"In defence of our warlike virtues, I would point out that for some wise, but inscrutable reason, it has pleased the Almighty to constitute all life in this world on a war, and not on a peace, basis; and is it wise of the creature to dispute the wisdom of the Creator!"

Here, again, God and religion are brought in as justification for war. Here is a bait to those timid or peace-loving souls who prefer arbitration, but who would not wish to oppose their preferences to the Almighty's. The General has yet to prove, however, that human society, the relation of man to man, was organized by God on a brute-basis; or that, as in the case of the lion and the lamb, "Might make Right."

The Peace Idea

is also a very old one—older than the War Idea; for the Garden of Eden was the home of harmony, peace, and good will. The Peace Idea has many good arguments, and many ardent supporters. It has finally succeeded in convincing millions of the best element in Europe, America, and Australia that the victories of peace are no less glorious than those of war; but its propaganda has been largely hindered hitherto by the nature of its appeals, which have been usually along Christian and moral lines; doing good to others, following the example of Christ, etc.; whereas the only argument that effectively reaches the ears of the upholders of the already entrenched military system is that of Self Interest. This argument, Self Interest, has been now advanced by a recently published book by Mr. Angell, "The Great Illusion." In this volume, it is shown that the fruits of conquest are wholly illusory; that small countries, such as Belgium and Norway, are more prosperous than large empires; and that for Germany to gain Holland would add nothing to the prosperity of Germany, but rather diminish the prosperity of Holland. War enriches some adventurers and speculators; it does not enrich any people as a whole.

Could the mass of men be convinced that they have been deluding themselves into the continued worship of

the War-God, and working against their own best interests, financial as well as social and otherwise, a great step forward would be made in the Peace direction.

The Sinews of Peace

Carnegie's recent gift of \$10,000,000 as a fund to place the Peace Movement on a war footing is undoubtedly a move in the right direction. Money is called the "sinews of war." Without it, no war could be carried on for a day. A country's interest in Peace or War is not always reflected in legislation, for the war party often makes larger appropriations for military and naval purposes than the people, were they consulted, would approve. The latter are coming to realize that war is not a necessity, but a blot on civilization, and that peaceful pursuits call for as much courage and manliness as the excitements of battle.

When capitalists, whose battles have always been fought by the poor, use their wealth to discourage war, to promote enterprise, and to teach men how to help rather than to destroy one another, then a new era of civilization will have dawned.

The advocates of peace are grieved at the way in which the war spirit is being cultivated among the youth of all civilized countries by the organization of Boy's Brigades, Boy Scouts, Naval Cadets, etc.; and it is hoped that by the agency of Carnegie's Peace Millions many will be taught the better conquests over self and selfishness, sin and disease, and the nobler arts of industry and progressive civilization. A substitute for military training, which will give youth all the benefits of its discipline without its appeal to feelings of revenge and murder was suggested sometime ago by the late Prof. Wm. James,* but the Peace Idea will need to become much stronger before his plan will be universally put into effect. In the meantime, the Peace Idea is receiving considerable impetus from—

The Socialistic Idea

This idea is also not as new as is generally supposed, having been discussed in ancient Greece and Rome; it has been practised on a small scale here and there by theorists of various nationalities ever since. It has, however, gained great headway since the introduction of the franchise into modern states. It has not, as yet, been tried on a large scale, and it is unlikely that a large number of people will ever be found willing to put themselves for any length of time under the conditions of semi-servitude required by extreme Socialism. Nevertheless, the dominant idea of Socialism, that the bounties of nature were designed for the benefit of *all* the people, and not for the enrichment of a few, is now generally accepted by all fair-minded people—at least theoretically; practically, the old method, "every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost," is still very much in evidence.

The Individualistic Idea

is that under which, in a crude state of society, every man does "that which is right in his own eyes," regardless of the welfare of his neighbour. Anarchists are extreme individualists of a sort, but they are not rightly so named, because they do not give their members the liberty which they wish Society to grant. Every anarchist thinks himself free, yet he is very much a slave to his leaders. The more refined modern Individualistic Idea is that Individual Welfare should be conserved by a Government sufficiently socialistic and paternal to pro-

tect and assist, and yet sufficiently aloof not to needlessly interfere with private life and enterprise. Thus, in the recent Liverpool riots, the intervention of police and militia, while resented by some, as interference with the rights of "labor," was recognized by others as necessary protection against hooligans, and as much in the interest of the strikers as of any other class.

The Arbitration Idea

has been much in evidence in recent years in the settlement of industrial disputes. Now it has become popular as an international institution for the prevention of war. Whether the idea of arbitration with Britain originated with President Taft, or whether it was the outcome of British diplomacy for the sake of an understanding with the United States, which should enhance her own prestige in Europe and the East, that America might be exhibited as a long-lost son now received back into the family, there is no doubt that the lovers of peace welcome it as a guarantee of the stability of society, and the postponement of war in Europe. The Arbitration Treaty being extended to France, and in prospect with Japan, both allies of England, undoubtedly further strengthens Britain's position. The Arbitration Idea between nations discountenances the old idea that the only satisfaction for "honor" between nations lies in war; this being the logical sequence to the earlier triumphs of arbitration in settling disputes of "honor" between individuals, which have largely done away with the duel and the vendetta.

"It is generally believed that Japan will be the next nation to undertake the negotiation of a general arbitration treaty with the United States. The revised Anglo-Japanese treaty, with the modification that neither England nor Japan shall be bound to assist the other in a war with a nation with which the assisting country has a treaty of arbitration, removed the one obstacle to the conclusion of a treaty between America and Japan. That modification was, of course, necessary before general arbitration could be effectuated between Great Britain and America. It means that in no circumstances would Great Britain be bound by its treaty obligations with Japan to assist Japan in a war against the United States."

General Progress

Each of these sets of ideas has its partisans, its stock phrases, its methods of appeal to popular fears or prejudice, etc. First one party and then another is in the ascendancy; the defeated party plans and works to regain its lost position; new ideas and parties to represent them arise, and strive for place and power; and so the conflict goes on. It is noticeable, however, that, *on the whole*, certain ideas have been gradually becoming influential during the last twenty years, being accepted by an increasing number of people, and being reflected more and more widely in legislation; e.g., "arbitration" and social uplift legislation. But, a turn of the wheel, and, human nature being what it is, the very opposite set of ideas may any day gain the ascendancy, and undo the work of previous years. Just now, compulsory military training of youth is being inaugurated in Australia; but a few more years may alter public sentiment on this subject, as it altered after the South African war, and as it has altered in Germany and other countries where compulsory service is now a burden many of the people are anxious to be rid of. Australia is bound to discourage war during the next few years while her defences are being put in order, just as Germany is bound to discourage it because the Socialistic agitation and the growth of the Peace Idea in her army renders it unlikely the men would serve against fellow laborites of white nations.

* See "The Advocate," Nov., 1910, p. 126.

Agitation for disarmament in France is now progressing, notwithstanding the occasional arrest of its propagandists.

The Co-Operative Idea

is another constantly gaining headway—between individuals, between States, between nations—for the betterment of social conditions, and the uplift of the race. Co-operation is also being applied as between states and individuals, to assist in settlement, building homes, the care of the sick, the aged, the weak-minded or "unfit," and the poor. Two of the most striking instances of this latter are in connection with the bread riots in France, and the opium crusade in China. In the former, starving women seized food for their famished children, thus forcibly calling the attention of the Government to the high price of food, and their inability to purchase it. The result was the compulsory reduction of prices. This example may be followed in other countries, where the authorities may prefer to regulate the prices of food-stuffs *before* riots rather than after; it may also give a fresh impetus to trust regulation.

In China, the co-operation between the Government and the people in doing away with the cultivation and use of opium, and substituting grain and other more useful crops, has been most remarkable. Opium pipes and other paraphernalia of the "den" have been publicly burned under the auspices of leading citizens, after the manner in which the people of Ephesus burned their books of magic art under the influence of apostolic preaching. A late report from one of the largest provinces, showing the thoroughness of the reform, is as follows:—

China Winning the Opium Fight

"Since the Viceroy of Yunnan interdicted the cultivation of the poppy in that rich and flourishing province of 12,000,000 population, the new law has been strictly enforced, and pulse and cereals have taken the place of the deadly drug which, according to the recently published report of Sir Alexander Hosie, is now really becoming eradicated from the land. Sir Alexander, we are told, is intimately acquainted with the opium-producing provinces, and spent the period between May and September, 1910, and January and April, 1911, in going over the districts where the poppy was in days gone by extensively cultivated. 'The poppy,' he tells us, 'has ceased to be grown' in certain districts which formerly lived on the opium trade. In others, we learn, there has been a diminution of from 60 to 80 per cent. in the amount raised. In more backward districts the Commissioner found a reduction of at least 25 per cent., and he speaks most hopefully of the outlook. According to the 'London Daily News,' which summarizes this Government Commissioner's report, we are witnessing 'a miracle in China,' and we read:

"It was already known that China had reduced her home production 60 to 70 per cent. during the three years since the issue of the anti-opium edict. Sir A. Hosie's report confirms the belief that the poppy will have entirely disappeared from Chinese soil within two years. In that event the export from India will by virtue of the new treaty cease automatically within the same period. To appreciate the extent of the miracle, one must resort to analogy. It is as if the tobacco habit had come to an end in Europe a few years after a decision to that effect by the Hague Conference. The population of the Chinese Empire is nearly that of Europe; the central Government has but little power of enforcing its will. Moreover, the opium crop was worth £23,000,000 annually. Only a vast moral revolution affecting over 300,000,000 of people could have effected this wonderful result."

"The most important of the five opium-producing provinces was Szechuen, and next to it was Yunnan, and 'The Daily News' continues:

"The former was for many years the greatest opium-producing province in China, the production exceeding 200,000 piculs (a picul equalling 134 pounds weight) per annum, and Yunnan always ranked next to Szechuen in

point of quantity, and first throughout the Empire in point of the quality of its opium. The conclusions arrived at by Sir A. Hosie with regard to these two provinces can be formulated in his own words.

"Szechuen.—As the result of my personal investigation, extending over 34 days' travel overland, and of the testimony of others, I am satisfied that poppy cultivation has . . . been suppressed in Szechuen.

"Yunnan.—Taking the province of Yunnan as a whole . . . it may, I think, be fairly assumed that the estimated production of 60,000 piculs, . . . prior to the introduction of the measures of suppression, has been very materially reduced, and I venture to hazard the opinion that the output of 1910-11 will not exceed 15,000 piculs; in other words, that there has been a reduction of about 75 per cent."

"This condition of things is amply confirmed by the testimony of a French traveller, who writes in the 'Semaine Medicale' (Paris) to the effect that every measure is being taken to make the public familiar with the shocking results of opium-smoking by discrediting the practice in the press and placarding the street walls with ghastly pictures of skeletonized victims of the abuse."—"Literary Digest."

There must be character and "grit" in a people capable of such a wonderful movement, and their progress in the future will be watched with interest, both as regards moral reform and Christian conversion. Their example should stimulate western nations to similar zeal in the eradication of evil by the peaceful methods of moral suasion and Governmental co-operation. As to whether Englishmen, Americans, etc., would be willing to make so great sacrifices in the interest of their countrymen's moral welfare is another question.

Co-operation between other bodies is also "in the air"—between the different denominations of Christendom, largely due to questions of finance and economical management, between Labor Unions of various trades, between secret societies of various kinds, etc. When one trade is on strike, another must provide the money to carry it on. A universal strike would soon collapse through lack of means unless the latter were obtained by violence. Co-operation between working men individually and through their unions is the only hope of Labor from their standpoint. Co-operation as between

Capital and Labor

is still a dream. When both are convinced of the lack of good sense in the present constant bickering and strife they may open their minds more fully to the Ideas which make for peace and goodwill.

It is not to be expected, however, that Peace and Goodwill will become universal and permanent until the great time of trouble has concluded. In the meantime, the people are being enlightened by various Progressive Ideas and will later on be glad to forsake the old arguments of Sin, Selfishness, War, and Aggression. They will adopt in full the best Imperialism, Socialism, and Co-operation as represented in the Kingdom of God; and will direct their energies to the welfare of mankind and to the subduing and beautifying of the earth as their everlasting home.

Varying Opinions

The part of the Christian, according to the Scriptures, is to look on, but to take no part in the management of this world's affairs, because his citizenship is in Heaven, and the Lord's command is that he shall, for the present, be subject to the powers that be. A Christian may sympathize with all movements that appear to him as beneficial, but he cannot say positively what political movement is part of God's operation to accomplish His purposes, or what is Satan's work to hinder the fulfilment

of God's purposes. One might be thoroughly convinced, for example, that Scripture lessons in the public schools are a good thing, and yet were they used, he might, after the lapse of a few years, see so many abuses that he would wish they had not been introduced. Contrariwise, one who opposed their introduction might subsequently find many reasons for considering them a good thing. Many Christians are opposed to compulsory military service for their boys, because of the injury they fear to their characters; yet, on submitting for the Lord's sake to every ordinance of man, they may see how their boys, being at the same time carefully instructed at home in Christianity and morals, may withstand all temptations and possibly be even the better for the discipline.

The Christian whose God is the God of heaven, and whose Lord is Jesus Christ, upholding all things by the word of His power and working all things after the counsel of His own will, needs to learn to take a large view of things, and also to view events in their *due proportion*. He must learn to judge the relative importance of a local strike or bread riot, and an arbitration treaty between two or more great powers; not to exaggerate the meaning of one nor to belittle the far-reaching consequences of the other. By grouping the various happenings under their respective heads, as suggested in this paper, or under other well-defined heads which may occur to him, the Christian will not be like the unreflecting world, in constant terror for the things

that are coming on the earth (Luke 21: 26; Psa. 46: 1-11), nor yet like those who sleep in fancied security, because they think there is nothing wrong, and that all things will continue as they were from the foundation of the world. (2 Pet. 3: 4.) No; he will be the interested spectator of a world-wide Conflict of Ideas, like a non-combatant on a hill overlooking a field of battle; he will be able to note the success or failure of this or that division; the encouragement of this or that battalion by the timely arrival of ammunition and reinforcements; the decimation of one or another line of defences; the effective fire of sharpshooters and machine guns. And when there is a *lull in the fight*, when Imperialism, Democracy, Colonization, Commercialism, Arbitration, Social Uplift Movements, Universal Labor Unions, have each found their seemingly proper level, when all other devices for "Peace and Safety" seem to have won the day, and all men are fairly convinced that after all Peace is preferable to War—then remember the Scriptures, which say that wars and rumours of wars are not the sign of the end, for they have always been, but—"When they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh."—Matt. 24: 6-8; 1 Thess. 5: 3.

Until then, the Christian's duty is plain, to live soberly and honestly in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation, and to attend to his special commission to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom.

—Q. O.

VICTORY

When tempted to discouragement you raise a note of praise;
When everything goes wrong and you are patient and trustful;
When danger or ruin stare you in the face and you encourage yourself in God;
When in success in Christian work you keep dead, giving all glory to God,
Or in apparently fruitless labour you stand loyally with a believing, hopeful, cheerful heart;
When weary and perplexed you sit at Jesus' feet and tell Him all, and get rest, wisdom, comfort from Him direct;
When another's work prospers more than your own and you not only avoid sadness and envy, but rejoice truly, and pray for it;
When you put yourself and your burdens in the Lord's hands and dismiss them from your thoughts and go forth to lighten other's burdens;
When forgotten, neglected, purposely set at naught and you do not feel hurt but glory in the oversight;

When your good is evil spoken of, your wishes crossed, opinions ridiculed or misunderstood and you take it in patience without wearing a sad countenance or talking of persecutions;
When content with any food, clothing, climate, society, any solitude, any interruption without murmuring;
This is Victory.

When you can face folly, waste, spiritual deadness, enmity and opposition of those trying to help and endure as Jesus endured;
When you yield prompt, cheerful obedience, yet do not care to refer to your deeds or yearn after commendation;
When God calls you to stand before friends and foes as a failure and a reproach and you do not draw back nor seek for vindication, but despise shame and glory in the cross;
When tribulations and infirmities come upon you and you not only bear them but through God rise higher and glory in them.

This is Victory

Anon.

"Texts" not in the Bible

THE following are often quoted, especially in conversation, as though they were passages of Scripture, and they are thus given an authority they do not deserve. The first example is seen to be a combination of two texts.

"Be not wise above what is written." The nearest approach to this are:—

"Lest you should be wise in your own conceits."—Rom. 11: 25.

"Be not wise in your own conceits."—Rom. 12: 16.

"The Scriptures are able to make thee wise."—2 Tim. 3: 15.

"That ye might learn in us not to think of men above that

which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another."—1 Cor. 4: 6.

"He tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb." There is a humane thought in this quotation from a secular writer, though it is not true in nature, as has been shown in Australia and other sheep-rearing countries, when icy winds sometimes cause the death of thousands of newly-shorn flocks. Neither is it always true in a spiritual sense; for the experience of God's people is one of suffering and trial, and they are often strengthened to endure their afflictions rather than that the afflictions are "tempered." In many cases the

severity of a trial is no doubt lessened by the providence of God, but it would not be wise to consider that this is always the case, lest our hearts fail when the Lord permits long and severe chastening.

"In the resurrection the body will be joined to the soul." This was recently given in conversation as a Scripture text, though no one could find it. Many have searched in vain for such expressions as "immortal soul," "never-dying soul," etc. A beneficial exercise for an inquirer is to look up, with the aid of a Concordance, all the passages in which the word "soul" occurs.

"The world, the flesh, and the devil," is also frequently used as though it were a Scripture quotation. There is not even a near approach to it.

Note also the frequency with which passages of

Scripture are quoted with the addition, alteration or omission of a word which completely alters the sense of the passage. One such is Phil. 3: 9, to which the word "on" is added after "having." The text reads—

"And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

It will be seen that the Apostle was not speaking of righteousness as something to put "on," but, in harmony with other Scriptures, of righteousness which was reckoned to him on account of his faith.

Heb. 13: 13 is another passage often misquoted. Note the A.V. reading as follows:—

"Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."—Heb. 13: 13, 14.

R. B. H.

A Group of Similitudes

(Continued from last issue.)

The Strong Man Armed

—Mark 3: 22-27. —

(To the Scribes from Jerusalem.)

22. And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils [R.V. margin "demons"] casteth he out devils ["demons"]...

23. And He called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

24. And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

25. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

26. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

Compare Matt. 9: 32-34; 10: 25; Luke 11: 14-23; John 7: 20; 8: 48-52; 10: 19-21.

BEELZEBUB, or Baal-zebub, whom the scribes called "the prince of the demons," was one of the forms under which the Baal of Old Testament times was worshipped by the Philistines, and also by the children of Israel when they were seduced from the worship of the true God. (2 Kings 1: 2, 3, 16; 1 Sam. 7: 3, 4; 1 Kings 22: 51-53.) The proper form of the word is thought by some scholars to be Baal-zebul, and its meaning is variously given, according to the supposed origin of the word; whether *zebul*, meaning "habitation"; *zebel*, meaning "dung," or in a secondary sense, "idol," or "idolatry." Thus Baal-zebub becomes, "the lord of the dwelling"; or, "the lord of dung, or of the dunghill"; or, "the lord of idols," prince of false gods.

Another suggestion is that the form *zebul* is correct, and has reference to the fly, as in Eccl. 10: 1 and Isa. 7: 18, and may include a variety of insects. Baal-zebub would therefore mean, "the Lord of the fly."* Baal-zebub was represented in the Egyptian and Canaanitish mythologies under the form of a fly or beetle, which some associate with the *Scarabaeus pillularius* or dunghill beetle. Exodus 8: 21-31 does not define the sort of insects which plagued the Egyptians, neither does the Psalmist (Psa. 78: 45; 105: 31), but

*Further see *Smith's Bible Dictionary*, under "Baal," "Beelzebub," and "Fly."

as these "swarms" are said to have filled the houses of the Egyptians, it is possible that the common house-fly (a product of the dung-hill) was the pest. In the prophecy of Isa. 7: 18 the fly was used to represent Egypt—symbolizing that Egypt was to be used by God in the punishment of Israel. In this case the mosquito seems to be referred to; for it breeds in creeks and gullies. Egypt is to this day a land of various pests—houseflies, mosquitos, gnats, beetles, etc.; it is not surprising then that in ancient times the "Lord of flies" was an important deity to be propitiated by numerous sacrificial offerings and valuable gifts.

In ancient Egypt the scarab was sacred to the sun-god, and has been found mummified. A colossal scarabaeus of granite in the British Museum probably came from Heliopolis. Scarabs of hard stone of fine workmanship were placed about the bodies of deceased persons. Amethyst scarabs were common in the Middle Kingdom; scarabs were also much used as seals. Egyptian scarabs were carried by trade to most of the islands and shores of the Mediterranean, and to Mesopotamia.*

Insulting the Lord

The insult offered our Lord, by the intimation that He, the holy and just One, was associated with the god of the dunghill, of flies and other pests, was most shameful. It also showed that His persecutors, although nominally scribes from Jerusalem, whose office it was to instruct the people out of the law, were willing for the purposes of persecution to take the old Egyptian standpoint, and to look upon the Lord as one who had succeeded in propitiating Baal-zebub, and thereupon secured authority to release his victims. Thus they placed Him on a level with Ahaziah, the wicked King of Israel, who, instead of inquiring of the God of Israel, sent messages to Ekron to inquire of Baal-zebub.

Further, their statement, that He cast out demons by the authority of the prince of the demons, shows that they associated Baal-zebub with powers of the air more detrimental to man than the insects which can be seen by the natural eye; namely, the "demons," or evil spirit beings which took possession of men. The scribes accused Jesus of having received authority from the master or prince of the demons; consequently they

**Encyclopedia Britannica*, eleventh edition.

accused Him of being in league with Satan, the greatest evil being; for the scribes were not so ignorant as to suppose that a non-existent "deity" could bestow such power. They recognised that authority over evil spirits could come only from some one able to bestow that power; namely, Satan as their acknowledged chief, or God as the supreme and all-powerful God, whom Satan himself can resist for a short time only, and that because allowed to serve a purpose in the divine plan.

God or Satan

The issue was plainly set before the people. What stand would they take? Would they acknowledge Jesus as the Sent of God? or would they condemn Him as the agent of Satan? That they (and we also) might the better decide the question, our Lord graciously gave the above similitudes, the answers to which are obvious. How can Satan cast out Satan? The principle is the same, whether it be the personal spirit-being called Satan, or any other adversary. It is not characteristic of Satan, or of any other evil being, to cast out himself, in order that others may come in and occupy their place. Any casting out of his emissaries done by Satan would be with the object of ultimately attaining for himself still greater power over the individual seemingly set free, so that after all Satan would not be really deprived of an atom of his power. So thoroughly evil a tree cannot bring forth good fruit. Hence the absurdity of supposing that "the prince of the demons" would commission Jesus to do a really good work. Some of the spectators well said, "Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?"—John 10: 21.

Furthermore, had Jesus at any time been an agent of the Evil One, and now began casting out demons as a good and permanent work, a division would be manifest in the kingdom or house of the prince of the demons. A conflict of authority would be exhibited. How then could his kingdom or house stand? It would be only a question of time until the insurgents would succeed in overturning the evil kingdom. Hence, again, the absurdity of supposing that the prince of the demons would authorise Jesus to cast out demons, thus to bring about his own end.—Verse 26.

The accusation of the scribes was neatly turned against themselves by our Lord's retort, "By whom do your sons cast them out?" (Luke 11: 19.) If the power of one were of the devil, why not the power of the other? The scribes were caught as easily as were the chief priests and elders, of whom our Lord inquired, "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" If they said, Of heaven, the Lord could have replied, Why then did you not believe his teaching? but if they said, Of men, they feared the indignation of the people, "for all hold John as a prophet." They crawled out of the difficulty as best they could by professing ignorance—"We cannot tell." So in the present case. Did their sons cast out demons by the power of God? Then it was a simple matter to admit that Jesus also operated by the power of God. But did they insist that Jesus was animated by the prince of the demons, then to be consistent they must likewise insult their own children.

Thus were the scribes judged out of their own mouths; their children also would rise in judgment against them for having so foolishly compromised their reputations. (Luke 11: 19.) The scribes also brought upon themselves the condemnation expressed in John

12: 44-50, because they rejected not Jesus only, but the Father also, by Whose Spirit this work was done. They should have hearkened to his voice even without the confirmation of miracles; but they hard-heartedly despised both.—John 5: 36-38; 10: 25; 15: 22-24.

The Strong Man Armed

The similitude of Mark 3: 27 and Luke 11: 21 exactly expresses the situation. Satan was firmly intrenched in his kingdom; as the Apostles John and Paul later expressed it, the whole world lies in the evil one; he is the god of this world who has blinded the minds of them that believe not; he is the prince of the power of the air, which now works in the children of disobedience.—1 John 5: 19, R.V.; 2 Cor. 4: 4; Eph. 2: 2.

Satan's power was evidenced, not only by the corrupt condition of the world in general, but by the hypocrisy and corruption among the professed people of God, and by the fact that they were usually helpless in the face of demoniacal possession. (Mark 5: 2-5; Matt. 17: 15-18, 21.) Satan, far from wishing to "cast out Satan," was a "strong man armed," intent on retaining possession of his house, his kingdom and his goods. Before any one could "spoil his goods," the strong man himself must be overcome. (Luke 11: 22.) The fact that Jesus as the Son of God was "spoiling" the preserves of the Evil One by releasing his victims from their chains was proof positive that

Satan Had Met His Match

The Almighty Himself undertook to wrest his kingdom from him, and to give it to His dear Son. So the prophets had foretold; the Seed of the woman was to bruise the serpent's head; He was to bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 3: 15; 12: 1-3.) And the New Testament corroborates the Old—

"The Lord said unto my Lord, 'Sit thou on my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.'—Acts 2: 34-36; Psa. 110.

"That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2: 11.

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin: forever, sat down on the right hand of God: from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool."—Heb. 10: 12-13; also Psa. 2: 1-12; Acts 4: 24-30; 1 Cor. 15: 24-28; Rev. 21: 1-8.

The ultimate triumph of the saints over the Adversary, even though he often transforms himself into an angel of light, and through his agents would if it were possible deceive the very elect (2 Cor. 11: 13-15; Mark 13: 22), is also announced as a part of God's purpose.

"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."—Rom. 16: 20.

The Binding and Spoiling Process

The preliminary step to that great campaign which is to result in the Adversary's complete undoing, was to empower the Son with the Holy Spirit, and to demonstrate to the people by a number of wonderful miracles that the Conqueror was at hand. Our Lord's miracles were His credentials, fulfilling prophecies concerning Himself, and attesting that He was what He claimed to be, the Son of God. The Son honoured the Father always, both in speech and act—another evidence that He was of God. The scribes and Pharisees, on the contrary, showed that they were not of God, because they were indifferent to God's messages and hated His messengers. (John 8: 46-55.) They were truly of their father, the devil.—John 8: 41-44.

The next step was for the Son to purchase the race by the sacrifice of Himself, and to receive all power in Heaven and in earth, and all dominion ("from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth"—Zech. 9: 10), that He might successfully wage the warfare against the Evil One. So says the Apostle—"... that through death he may bring to naught him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."—Heb. 2: 14, R.V. margin.

A measure of deliverance comes to believers now, but complete deliverance from the power of sin and death and the machinations of the evil one and his angels or messengers (spirit or human) is still in the future.—John 8: 31-36; 2 Pet. 1: 4; Rom. 6: 11-22; 8: 1-30.

The fact that our Lord was able to "spoil" some of the Adversary's "goods" by driving out the demons from their entrenched position showed—not as the scribes claimed, that Jesus was in league with the prince of the demons—but that Jesus was driving in his pickets, that ultimately the Strong Man personally would be enchained, when the spoiling of his goods would proceed more rapidly. Our Lord's work meant much more than the work of others (the sons or children of the scribes and Pharisees already referred to), who attempted whether successfully or unsuccessfully to "cast out demons." It meant that the Kingdom of God had come near unto them; for He was the long promised Messiah, heir of David's throne, and King of the Jews—

"If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you."—Luke 11: 26.

(To be continued)

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E. C. HENNINGES, EDITOR

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The Fellowship of the Saints

MANY TIMES I have been minded to write you, being ever interested in the work which leads to the haven of eternal rest. This is a period when specially we are called upon to be men, and strong ones. Hitherto, during a period of twenty-three years' fighting the good fight of faith, one has never known so keenly what it means to endure—seeing the unseen, and grasping with firmer hand the Eternal Grace.

It is indeed a "strange work" that is proceeding amongst the people of God. In a very close and intimate sense the wisdom of the wise is perishing and the understanding of the prudent is hid.

I am glad that the position taken up by yourself and others forms good ground for common and continued fellowship, apart from human pride and folly as seen in sectarian uniformity. If we seek to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, the proper level will be found for both strength and weakness, even as He that had much had nothing over, and he that had little had no lack.

The few of us in ——— are scattered over a big area, and at present we have no public hall for meetings. In this district I have three friends interested enough to attend meetings at my house once a week.

Lamentations 3: 16 has been a comfort lately—"It is good for a man that he both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God."

I like your recent article on the "Resurrection of Jesus." ["Advocate," May, '11.] One needs to be careful not to go beyond what the Scriptures say. It is clear that our Lord, who was put to death flesh, was made by resurrection a "life-giving spirit." Personally, I am just as unable to explain how He was changed from flesh to Spirit, as I am unable to say how He was changed from Spirit to flesh, or what became of the spirit body which belonged to His previous glory. I am satisfied to say, with the Apostle Paul, "For now we know in part, and we prophesy in part." Let me say, with one of the past.

"Oh, for a closer walk with God,
A calm, serener frame!"

— England.

[Our issue of August was just off the press when the above letter arrived, and our readers will be pleased to see by comparison with that issue, page 74, that our conclusions agree. The promise still holds good that the saints who stand firmly on the foundations of the faith are led by study of the Scriptures and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit into the same mind on related truths.

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No. 8

The Time is Fulfilled

EVERY ACTION takes place in and is measurable by Time. The swiftest flight, the slowest progress, the wink of the eye, the toilsome climb up the mountain, all require time for their accomplishment. As a rule, time is an important consideration in the making of arrangements, and it is often the very essence of the contract. A certain period of time is agreed upon for the performance of work, and penalties are imposed if the time be exceeded; and rightly so, because it generally happens that other arrangements are made in view of the one to be accomplished in the specified time, and much inconvenience—perhaps loss—might result from delay. Who does not appreciate the virtue of punctuality in the fulfilment of engagements? Who that has to do with oversea mails of infrequent arrival does not appreciate their promptness, and feel himself put out by even a day's delay? So generally recognised is the value of time, that the sentiment has passed into the proverb—"Time is Money."

If punctuality be so highly esteemed among men, it should not be surprising to find that the divine arrangements are made with due regard to time, and that they are all carried on with the greatest precision. The Scriptures give us clearly to understand that this is so. They tell us that by or for Jesus God formed the ages (Heb 1:2, R V margin); that these ages are arranged in order according to a set purpose (Eph 3:11, R V margin); that the Father, by His own authority, has appointed certain times and seasons (Acts 1:7, R V margin); that when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son into the world (Gal 4:4, R V). Whose first advent was to occur at the end of a foretold period of time (Dan 9:25), and which was announced as having so occurred when at the beginning of His ministry the Saviour came preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God, saying, "THE TIME IS FULFILLED, and the Kingdom of God is at hand." (Mark 1: 14, 15.) Moreover, it is stated that at the time of our Lord's first advent, the day and hour of His second coming were known to the Father, but at that time to Him alone, for He had not yet given that information to any one on earth or in heaven, not even to the well-beloved Son.—Mark 13: 32.

Besides the above intimations in regard to the divine carefulness as to time, there were certain predictions made

and fulfilled in which time was involved. The Israelites were condemned to forty years of wandering in the wilderness because they believed not God, but believed the slanderous report of the promised land brought by their spies. This was so fulfilled upon them. (Num 14: 33,34.) When they had further provoked the Lord by their apostasies, they were condemned to seventy years' service of the king of Babylon, which also was fulfilled. (Jer 25:8-13; 2 Chron 36:17-23.) When this time of captivity was about expired, Daniel the prophet was permitted to understand the prophecy of Jeremiah, whereupon he immediately set his face to the Lord in prayer, in confession of the sins of the people, and in supplication of divine mercy and forgiveness.—Dan 9:1-5.

In the fact that Daniel was permitted to understand the prophecy concerning the seventy years of captivity at about the time of its fulfilment, and in the further fact that he was not permitted to understand certain other prophetic times and seasons (although commanded to write them), because the time for their understanding had not yet arrived, there is a hint in regard to the divine methods which must not go unheeded. For the glory of God, and in order to exhibit His foreknowledge, the token of Divinity according to His own word on the subject (Isa 41:22,23), prophecies have been given through the holy men of old in such manner as to be beyond the comprehension of the prophets. When Daniel desired to know the meaning of some of the things which he had been shown in vision, and particularly when he desired to know about the end of these wonderful things (Dan 12:8), he was told—

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." "And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."—Dan. 12: 4, 9, 13.

Just as Daniel was permitted to understand the prophecy of the seventy years at about the time they were fulfilled, so the promise was that although Daniel was not permitted to understand these other prophecies, God's people at the time of their fulfilment—"the time of the end"—would be given the necessary information. And even among the professed people of God certain dis-

Whoever receives this paper, not having ordered it, is requested to accept and read it, and to consider it an invitation to become a regular reader. Subscriptions may begin with any number.

tinctions need to be recognised. Some are trying to be friends with both God and the world, which is an impossibility, for the friendship of the world is enmity against God, and one cannot serve both God and Mammon. While these wicked ones do wickedly, those who are rightly exercised by their experiences are being purified, made white, and tried. Of these two classes among God's professed people, only the one would be allowed to understand the prophecies at the right time.

"None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand"—Dan. 12: 10.

In a previous article reasons were given, by referring to the signs of the times, without regard to measurements of time, for believing that we are now living in "the time of the end." It was alleged that the present order of things is drawing to its close, and that the new order is making a beginning by smiting the old one to its overthrow; and current events were given as reasons for this belief. In making this allegation and citing in its support the events of current and recent history, the example of our Lord at His first advent is followed. He referred the messengers from John the Baptist to current events in answer to their question. (Matt. 11:2-6.) And to the Pharisees He said—

"But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you."—Matt. 12: 28.

Notwithstanding this, one can well fancy some of the Pharisees and others saying to themselves and to the people that there had been miracles done before, so that to refer to these wonders as proof that the time was fulfilled and the Kingdom of God was come upon them was nothing to them. All these things were as they had been from ancient times. In this they would of course be blinding themselves to the fact that the miracles wrought by the Holy Spirit through Jesus were on a much larger scale and in vastly greater abundance than those wrought by the same Spirit through the ancient prophets. Similarly, and as predicted by the Apostle, some are now disposed to say—

"Where is the promise of His presence (parousia)? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."—2 Peter 3: 4.

Have there not always been revolutions in the world? Have not governments, political and ecclesiastical, always been more or less in trouble, and have not many of them been overturned? Why then do you refer to current and recent events as proofs of His Presence (Parousia), inasmuch as things are going on as they have done from the beginning of the creation? The answer to this is that *things are not going on in quite the same way as they have done from the beginning of creation.* Just as the miracles of Jesus at the end of the Jewish age were on a greater scale than those of previous times, and so were to be cited as proof that the Kingdom of God had come upon that people, for its then purpose, so are the revolutionary tendencies of recent and present times on a vastly greater scale than those that have occurred before. Previous revolutions were local and their effects were limited to the people, countries and times in which they occurred. But the revolutionary tendencies that began to manifest themselves a little over a hundred years ago have not been limited to the countries, peoples and times in which first they manifested themselves. Their influence has been marching on until now the tendency is worldwide, and must soon come to a climax in such a time of trouble and overthrow as has never been known in the world. The grand scope of the present revolutionary tendencies dif-

ferentiates them from every thing of the sort that has happened before now. Instead of watching the overthrow of the government of one country, we are eye witnesses of the overthrowing of the whole world, the present evil world and all of its arrangements, so that room may be made for the glorious operations of the Kingdom of God, which is to cause the will of God to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Another particular in which the present revolutionary tendencies differ from those that have gone before is in that all restraint of religion and reverence for authority of every sort are being cast off. It is not a change from one religion to another, but the absolute casting off by the multitudes of all religion.

The worldwide smiting of empires, kingdoms, republics, and ecclesiastical systems is being done by the "little stone" kingdom of God "in the days of these kings" (Dan 2:44,45), and present events are thus seen to be a token that the King of kings and Lord of lords is here in person to take unto Himself His great power and to reign over the whole earth. These manifestations of the anger of the nations and of the divine wrath against them are precisely the proofs that "The Kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." Hallelujah!—Rev 11:15,18.

How carefully we should heed the words of the Apostle which intimate that careless walking after our own desires is but the prelude to scoffing on this subject, and how we should stir up our pure minds by way of remembrance.—2 Peter 3:1-4.

Having considered in a previous article the weighty evidences of the "signs of the times" as to the days in which we are living, it is now desired to see how the definitely stated prophetic periods agree with what can be seen transpiring about us and with the deductions drawn from these events. The special subjects of this inquiry will be the "time, times and an half," the "thousand two hundred and ninety days," and the "thousand three hundred and five and thirty days" mentioned in Dan 12:7,11,12.

Literal v. Year-Day Interpretation.

Some students of the prophecies are disposed to interpret all of the times and seasons therein mentioned in a most literal manner, and there has always been more or less controversy between these and those others who see that some at least of the prophecies involving time measurement are to be interpreted on a larger scale, at the rate of a day of the prophecy for a year of fulfilment. Doubtless the prophecies already mentioned, of the wandering in the wilderness and the captivity in Babylon, were fulfilled in literal measure of the time stated. Nevertheless, when condemning the people to forty years of wandering in the wilderness, the Lord stated that this measure of time was based upon the time spent in searching the land.

"After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years."—Num. 14: 34.

When Ezekiel lay upon his left side three hundred and ninety days, and upon his right side forty days, in picturing the iniquities of Israel and Judah, he was told that each of these days would represent a year in actual fulfilment. (Ezek 4:1-6.) And the seventy sevens, or weeks, of Dan 9:24-26 could never have reached from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince, unless each

day of the prophecy had been counted as a year in the fulfilment. The fact that some at least of the prophecies of time are to be reckoned at the rate of a day for a year is thus established. But it is not stated that all of the time prophecies are to be so reckoned; therefore the student will consider each of the prophecies for itself in endeavoring to understand whether it does or does not fall under the year-day principle of interpretation.

The "Lunar" Year

The study of the time prophecies of the Scripture has been unfortunately and unnecessarily complicated by the introduction by some students of the "lunar" year, an invention wholly without scriptural or other sanction. The year, being the measure of time from one equinox to the next corresponding equinox—that is, from vernal to vernal or from autumnal to autumnal equinox—is governed by the sun, and the moon has nothing to do with it. Hence, there is and can be no such thing as a "lunar" or moon year.

In the Jewish and some other ancient calendars, the lunation, or period of time from one new moon to the next, was made to be the measure of the month, and new moon day was the first day of the month. The time from one new moon to the next is generally 29 days, 12 hours and about 45 minutes. The Jewish calendar has its months alternately of 29 and 30 days. Twelve of these moon months make 354 days, and this is the so-called "lunar" year which has been introduced to no purpose and without warrant by some students of the time prophecies. But as the time from one new moon to the next is not exactly 29½ days, it becomes necessary occasionally to introduce an extra day, or to omit one, so that the new moon may be made to fall on the first day of the month. In such a case, the twelve months make 353 or 355 days. Moreover, as the 354 days that ordinarily make up the twelve months in the Jewish calendar are eleven days less than the measure of the time from vernal to vernal equinox, and as the Jewish Passover feast must be held in the first month of the year, and this first month must be so regulated that a sheaf of the first fruits of the harvest would be available at the middle of the month, it becomes necessary to introduce an extra month about every third year in the Jewish calendar, that is, seven times in nineteen years. These thirteen months may make up 383, 384, or 385 days. Thus there are six different lengths of the year recognised by the Jewish calendar, all in the endeavor to secure proper coincidence between the sun and the moon, which is possible only every nineteen years, covering 235 lunations. This nineteen year period is called a lunar cycle, because in that time the sun and the moon come again to occupy the same relative positions in the heavens that they occupied 235 lunations before. That is to say, if the new moon occurs on the day of the vernal equinox in any given year, nineteen years or vernal equinoxes must elapse before the new moon will again occur on the same day as the vernal equinox, and in that length of time there will have been 235 new moons. As the equinoxes measure the year, and as coincidence between the equinox and the moon occurs only once in nineteen years, the fallacy of supposing that there could be such a thing as a "lunar" year is evident. Its unwarranted and unjustifiable introduction into the study of the prophetic time periods has served only to becloud and make difficult the questions which should be simplified if possible, rather than made more

complex. Therefore, in our consideration of the time prophecies, when interpreting them at a day for a year we shall adhere to the year as ordinarily understood; viz., the period from vernal to vernal or from autumnal to autumnal equinox. And as we study the prophetic periods, let us pray that He Who constituted them by His own authority, and would not allow them to be understood by His inquiring people because the time had not come when it was intended that they should be understood, may give us power by His Holy Spirit to understand these things, the time having come for that purpose. This is the promise; may we not pray for and expect its fulfilment to us?

"It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father hath appointed by his own authority. BUT YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER, WHEN THE HOLY GHOST IS COME UPON YOU."—Acts 1: 7, 8, R.V. margin.

"Time, Times and an Half"

"And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end."—Dan. 12: 7-9.

Whatever the significance of this prophecy, it is clear that it was given a long time before its fulfilment was to be expected, and that in the meantime the words were closed up and sealed. It was a vision of a great, abominable, desolating power, which should be opposed to the saints of God, and should be allowed to prosper against them for the predicted period. The same desolating power is spoken of in Dan 7:25, and the period of his prosperity is similarly measured. It is again mentioned in Dan 8:24-26, and it is there stated that the vision was to be for many days. The same power is mentioned in Rev 13:1,5,6, and the period of its persecuting and blaspheming is said to be "forty and two months." The time during which God's people should be in the wilderness condition of persecution is described in Rev 12:14, in exactly the same terms as those used in Daniel's prophecies; but in Rev 12:6 the same period is more definitely stated as "a thousand two hundred and threescore days." This period of time, if literally fulfilled, would not be for the "many" days spoken of to Daniel, for it would amount to but three years and six months. It is therefore concluded that this time prophecy is numbered among those that were to be fulfilled at the rate of a day for a year, in which case the "thousand two hundred and threescore days" would amount in their fulfilment to 1260 years. This would indeed be a vision "for many days," at the end of which the judgment on the terrible "beast" would sit, and the power of the persecutor should be broken without hand by the presence of Him Who would be empowered by the Almighty to do the work.—Dan 8:25; 7:26, 9-14.

Inasmuch as this vision is referred to in the book of Revelation, which was a prophecy of "things which must shortly come to pass," the fulfilment of the 1260 years must not be sought at any time prior to the giving of the Revelation; they would not begin until after the Revelation had been given to John. The prophecy of the 1260 years is therefore a prophecy belonging to the Gospel age, and the desolating abomination, or persecuting power, should be looked for within the limits of the Gospel age. It is not difficult to see in the Papacy—with its doctrine of the Mass, which professes to sacrifice Christ

afresh as often as required (and paid for), its engine of persecution, the Inquisition, and its blasphemous claims and pretensions on behalf of its head, the Pope—the “little horn,” “speaking great things” (Dan 7:8), “great words against the Most High,” and wearing out “the saints of the Most High” (v 25), the “beast,” or politico-religious system mentioned in Rev 13:4-6. This view has been so often and so well set forth by so many writers from the time of the Protestant Reformation onward that it seems unnecessary now to go into all the details of it. Many books on the subject are available in public libraries. Our present task is to find, if possible, when the desolating abomination was “set up,” so that we may know when the 1260 years began, and the time of their ending.

The Setting Up of the Desolating Abomination

The Bishop of Rome early began to occupy a prominent and influential position in the Christian Church. The emperors Gratian and Valentinian conferred upon the Bishop of Rome the right of jurisdiction over all the churches of Gaul and Italy; this was in the end of the year 378 or the beginning of 379. Under this right, the Bishop of Rome issued edicts, nominated vicars as his representatives and acted in the capacity of governor over all the metropolitans of the other provinces of the Western empire. The edict of Gratian and Valentinian was confirmed and renewed in more authoritative terms in the year 445 by Theodosius and Valentinian III. But these edicts referred only to the western portion of the Roman Empire; the bishop of Constantinople, the capital of the eastern portion of the empire, was not ready at this time to acknowledge the supremacy of Rome in the affairs of the church, neither were he and the eastern priests required to do so, until 150 years after Gratian's edict.

In the year 529, the Justinian code was published. The preamble of the ninth edict of this code states “that as the elder Rome was the founder of the laws, so it was not to be questioned that in her was the supremacy of the pontificate.” The 131st, on ecclesiastical titles and privileges, states—“We therefore decree that the most holy pope of the elder Rome is the first of all the priesthood, and that the most blessed archbishop of Constantinople, the new Rome, shall hold the second rank, after the holy apostolic chair of the elder Rome.” Although this decree was questioned by the bishop of Constantinople after the death of the emperor Justinian, it was never rescinded, but was renewed by Phocas in the year 606. As the Rev. Alexander Keith says, in his book on “The Signs of the Times,” published in 1847, “No earthly code of laws was ever more extensive or permanent than his [Justinian's]; it was published A D 529; it continued to be the base of European legislation till it began to be shaken by the revolution of France and the code of Napoleon.” By these decrees the pope of Rome was declared to be the supreme priest of the Christian church.

In the year 533, Justinian took a further step in the direction of establishing the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, in that he addressed the following letter to Pope John—

“Rendering honor to the apostolic see and to your holiness (as always was and is our desire), and as it becomes us honoring your blessedness as a father, we have laid without delay before the notice of your holiness all things pertaining to the state of the church; since it has always been our earnest study to

preserve the unity of your holy see, and the state of the holy churches of God, which has hitherto obtained and will remain without any interfering opposition. Therefore we hasten to **SUBJECT AND TO UNITE TO YOUR HOLINESS ALL THE PRIESTS OF THE WHOLE EAST.** As to the matters which are at present agitated, although clear and undoubted, and according to the doctrine of your apostolic see held assuredly resolved and decided by all priests, we have yet deemed it necessary to lay them before your holiness. Nor do we suffer anything which belongs to the state of the church, however manifest and undoubted, that is agitated, to pass without the knowledge of your holiness, *who are the head of all the holy churches.* For in all things (as has been said or resolved) we are prompt to increase the honor and authority of your see.”

In his constitution to Epiphanius, bishop of Constantinople, dated March 25, 533, Justinian acknowledges his epistle to the Pope, and maintains that he is the head of all the bishops, and that “by the decision and right judgment of his venerable see, heretics are corrected.” The Pope, in his answer to this letter from Justinian, commends the zeal of the emperor, approves his doctrine, denounces all who reject it as separate from the church, adopts the titles conferred upon him by the emperor, and commends above all his virtues his reverence for the holy see, to which, as truly the head, he had subjected and united all the churches. At this time the bishop of Constantinople acquiesced in the decision of the emperor, and expressed to the Pope his desire to follow the apostolic authority of his holiness. The dates 529 and 533 mark two very important points in the process of setting up the desolating abomination. Yet the setting up was not accomplished by the decree of the emperor nor fully by the subjection of the eastern priests; a further step required to be taken before the Roman corruption of Christianity was “set up” in the meaning of those words as used by the prophet.

The rise of the papal power was represented in Daniel's vision by the coming up of “another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots.” (Dan 7:8,20,24.) If our understanding be correct, the Papacy should be considered as “set up” only after the plucking up of the three “horns,” or powers. The three “horns” that were plucked up in order that papal domination in Rome and ultimately in all Italy and western Europe might be assured were (1) the western Roman Empire, with its seat at Ravenna, where the western emperors ruled for a time in conjunction with the eastern emperors, who resided at Constantinople; (2) the Heruli, who overthrew the western empire in the year 476; (3) the Ostrogothic power, which “plucked up” the Heruli in 489. The Ostrogothic “horn” was “plucked up” by Justinian himself in the year 539, which we take to be the time when the papal “horn” was “set up” as the “abomination of desolation” mentioned in Dan 12:7,11, the power which would make war against the saints of the Most High, and would be allowed to prevail against them for 1260 years. From the time of the plucking up of the Ostrogothic “horn,” the supremacy of the Popes in the city of Rome was acknowledged, although for a while the emperors ruled the remainder of Italy, being represented by Exarchs at Ravenna, the imperial rule being later rebelled against by the plucked up Goths, who, though they sacked the city of Rome, never re-established their rule there. The imperial rule in Italy was overthrown by the Lombards, but these recognised the rule of the church in Rome and environs, making no great attempt at overturning it until near the end of the eighth century, their attempt then made being unsuccessful, the Papacy being sustained by the arms of France, under Pepin and Charlemagne.

The dates 529, 533 and 539 are important points of time in the setting up of the desolating abomination, and it is most significant that each of these dates, marking points in the uprearing of the Papacy, has its corresponding date in the tearing down of the system.

The year 529 witnessed the publication of the Justinian code, in which the primacy of the bishop of Rome was decreed. The year 1789 (1260 years later) marked the beginning of the French Revolution, which aimed at the overthrow of religion as well as of aristocracy.

In the year 533, the Pope was formally recognised in his position of supremacy over the affairs of the church, by the emperor and by the archbishop of Constantinople. In the year 1793 (1260 years later), the French Revolution was completed, and the career of Napoleon began.

In the year 538-539, the emperor Justinian "plucked up" the Ostrogothic "horn," in order that the papal "horn" might have room to grow. In the year 1798-1799 (1260 years later), Napoleon "plucked up" the Pope and carried him across the Alps a prisoner to France; since then, the papal power has been declining; in 1870, the last vestige of temporal power was shorn from the Papacy, never more to be recovered, we believe; and the determined consumption is going on and shall continue until at last the system shall be utterly destroyed by the *manifestation* of the Lord's presence (parousia).

What Is Implied

It has before been seen that if the Papacy is being consumed, as is now the case, this fact is to be recognised as proof that the presence of the Lord has begun, in the manner of which the people generally—including many that profess to be His—are ignorant; that the Kingdom has come "without observation," as the Lord said to the Pharisees it would; that the rulership of this world is changing hands, the "strong man" of the house being in process of binding by a Stronger than he; that the prince of the power of the air (Satan) is being made to give place to the new Ruler of the "air" (region of influence over the minds of men). A perfect agreement exists between all this and what has just been seen in regard to the 1260 days.

If the judgment was to be set, and the Son of man was to be given a glorious kingdom, that all peoples, nations and languages should serve Him, and if this was done before the destruction of the "little horn" or Papal power (Dan. 7: 9-11, 13, 14, 21, 22, 25, 26); if He Who is called "The Word of God," "Faithful and True," was to lead the armies of heaven in war against the Papal "beast," the nations of the earth and all false systems of the present evil world (Rev. 19: 11, 13, 19-21); if the Lord Jesus was to *consume* "that Wicked" with the spirit of His mouth (His Word), and at last *destroy* him with the *manifestation* of His hitherto unrevealed presence—parousia (2 Thes. 2: 8); if it be found that the period of the Papal supremacy has been predicted in the prophets and accurately fulfilled in history, as above shown, must it not be concluded that our Lord's presence (parousia) began no later than in 1799? We believe so, and we fully believe that the day of visitation is upon Christendom, having come upon them unawares, as it came unawares upon Judaism, the reason for it coming unawares being in each case wrong ideas about the manner and purpose of the Lord's coming.

The 1290 Days

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days."—Dan. 12: 11.

The taking away of the daily or continual sacrifice of our Redeemer and Mediator constituted Papacy the "abomination." This was done by instituting the sacrifice of the Mass, which claims to offer the body and blood of our Redeemer afresh and as often as required, under the forms of bread and wine, which it is claimed are changed into the body and blood of our Saviour, by the words of consecration, which are lawful only for the priest to utter with a view to the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the (it is claimed) veritable body and blood of our Lord. To intimate that the sacrifice of our Lord, offered on Calvary, is not sufficient is most abominable in the Lord's sight. The Apostle said that Jesus Christ offered Himself "once for all." (Heb. 7: 27, 10: 10.) The message of the Gospel is that repentance and *remission of sins* should be preached in His name among all nations. (Luke 24: 47.) "Now where remission of these is," says the Apostle, "there is no more offering for sin." (Heb. 10: 18.) Anything, therefore, purporting to be additional or supplementary to the sacrifice offered once for all on Calvary, for the sins of the whole world, is in the Lord's sight an abomination. The Papacy was an abomination of this sort before it was set up; how long before is not definitely ascertainable, but the Mass is mentioned in connection with the proceedings of the council of Constantinople, which was held in the year 381. But the "setting up" of the abomination came, as already seen, about a century and a half later, in the year 539.

The prophecy does not state what was to be looked for at the termination of the 1290 days from the setting up. At the rate of a day for a year, this period would reach from the year 539 to 1829. Perhaps no single event of outstanding significance can be pointed to as having occurred in that year; yet it was at about that time that a movement began which in a few years had aroused great interest in the subject of our Lord's Second Coming. The movement had adherents in both Europe and America, and in some portions of the latter country the interest was very great indeed. Owing to wrong ideas on the subject of the manner and the purpose and the time of the Lord's return, that movement collapsed in a great disappointment in 1844-46; nevertheless, that movement may be regarded as the parent of modern movements which since then have sought to arouse interest in the great subject which was its inspiration. In the absence of direct intimation by the prophet, we take it that the reference in this time prophecy is to that pioneer of modern movements which have for their object the increase of interest in the King and the Kingdom.

The 1335 Days

"Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."—Dan. 12: 12, 13.

This period, at the rate of a day for a year, would reach from the year 539 to 1874, at which time a certain special blessing was to come to the waiting and faithful people of God. The nature of this special blessing seems to be intimated in the fact that a contrast is made between it and the experience that Daniel should have. "Blessed is he that waiteth, . . . but go thou thy way; . . . thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Daniel was to rest for a long time in death, until in the resurrection he should be called forth from the grave to his reward,

his lot being to become one of the "princes in all the earth." (Psa. 45: 16.) The force of the contrast would seem to be that if Daniel was to rest in death for a long time before receiving his reward, he who would be alive and faithful after the year 1874 would be granted his reward forthwith upon the finishing of his course, and without the rest in death. Rest from his labours no doubt he shall have, while at the same time his works would follow with him. In a word, we understand that the year 1874 is the "henceforth" time mentioned in Rev. 14: 13. If this be correct, all those who have made their calling and election sure to a place in the glorious Kingdom since that time have not remained one moment in death, but have forthwith continued their activities in the Lord's service, changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. A further deduction, if this understanding be correct, is that the saints who fell asleep in Jesus, from apostolic times down to the year 1874, are no longer sleeping, but have been called forth from their sleep and made like the Lord, glorious spirit beings. The Apostle said that "the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 4: 16); if we are assured from the prophecy of Daniel that the time has come, since 1874, that the faithful should at once enter into their lot without the long time of resting in the grave that Daniel was to experience, the inevitable conclusion is that the dead in Christ entered into their reward in or before the year 1874; because "we which are alive and remain unto the presence of the Lord shall not precede them which are asleep."—1 Thess. 4: 15.

Has any one seen the dead saints rise from their long sleep? No; no human being has seen that, nor does the Scripture say that any human being should witness that event. Neither could a human being witness it, because the saints were not to be raised as earthly beings, but as heavenly, in the likeness of their Lord and Master, "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting." (1 Tim. 6: 16.) The saints were not to be raised natural bodies, but spiritual bodies (1 Cor. 15: 14, 49), and this sort of body is invisible to eyes of flesh. The angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear Him. All Christians believe this, though not one of us has ever seen the angel of the Lord. If we can believe that the angel of the Lord is invisibly present for the protection of God's people, it is not one whit more difficult to believe that the Lord Himself is invisibly present and that the sleeping saints have been raised, and are invisibly present with Him, and that those who have finished their course since 1874 have been made like Him without a moment of "sleep," and that these also are present invisibly with the Lord and the faithful, who fell asleep in Jesus since Pentecost. No doubt it requires faith to believe these things, but to the watchful one with open eyes there is evidence for sight, even as there was evidence for sight while a good deal of faith was required at the time of our Lord's first advent or presence. At the first advent the wonderful works were done publicly, and all the people of Palestine saw them; but it required faith to believe that these works were being done by the Messiah. The consumption of the Papacy and the smiting of the nations are things that can be seen by every one, and many do see them; but faith is required to believe that our invisibly present Lord is doing this consuming and smiting, as the Scriptures said He was to do. Let us not be hin-

dered by any consideration from believing the united testimony of Scripture and current events.

The Uniqueness of this Position

In times past there have been more than a few attempts made to expound the time prophecies, but more or less misfortune seems to have attended the efforts thus made, in that the expectations of those who made them have failed of realization. It has usually been the case that some point of time in the near future has been fixed upon and predictions have been made concerning events that were to be expected at such time. Invariably these attempted forecasts have been mistaken, and so the study of time prophecies has fallen into great disrepute. This we must regret, however much we sympathize with those who have sought to elucidate these things and have had to bear the brunt of the failures of their predictions.

But the position set forth in the foregoing is probably unique, in that it makes no appeal to a future date; *all the dates referred to are in the past*, and they are not dependent upon any theories in regard to the age of the world or the lengths of any ages. All the historical information referred to is within the reach of anyone in the public libraries; the historical events are fairly recent, and not difficult to substantiate. In this it has at least the merit—if it be a merit—of imitating the Lord and the apostles, who went about preaching "The Time is FULFILLED;" "The Time IS fulfilled." If we realize that the time is indeed fulfilled, let us preach it with all our power, and let us declare the Kingdom at hand, and the overthrow of the nations imminent because of the presence (parousia) of the King of kings and Lord of lords making war with the "beast" and with the kings of the earth.—Rev. 19: 19.

If we be asked to say when in our opinion the overthrow of the present order of things will be consummated, we can only say that we see nothing in Scripture to indicate a date for that. Various dates have been surmised. Some of them are in the recent past, such as 1899 and 1906; but there was no Scriptural authority for any of them, as far as we can understand. Some now predict 1914; others 1925; others, again, 1934; but there is no evidence for such prognostications. As for ourselves, we should say, the sooner the better; for then will be fulfilled the promise of the new heavens and the new earth, for which we look and long and pray—"Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as in heaven." But this much is certain; the time is short, it daily becomes shorter; what manner of persons then should we be!

Our Duty in the Circumstances

"Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."—Luke 21: 36.

These are serious times in which we live, and it is most appropriate that all of God's people reflect seriously on the situation, and seek to know what is the course that will conduce most to the Lord's glory (1 Cor. 6: 19, 20) and therefore to their own greatest advantage here and hereafter. (1 Tim. 4: 8, 9.) Some, not sufficiently impressed with the gravity of the times, may innocently or wilfully say that there have always been revolutionary tendencies in the world, and that the existence of something of the sort at the present time is therefore nothing new or unusual. To those who raise this point in the

scoffing spirit mentioned by the Apostle Peter (2 Peter 3: 3-5) we fear we could say nothing that would satisfy, because they are not in the mood to be satisfied by anything that could be presented. But to all others we would mention again that the circumstances of the present are not of the sort common to revolutions of the past. Former upheavals have been limited in their sphere of action and influence, but the present revolutionary influences are nothing less than world-wide; even China is stirred by the prevalent spirit of unrest. It is precisely this *world-wide* demonstration among the nations that in the prophecies is associated with the seventh trumpet, and the Kingdom of God taking its great power in the earth, causing a time of trouble and smiting the nations to their overthrow. (Rev. 11: 15-18; Luke 21: 25-27; Dan. 2: 44, 45; 12: 1.) If, then, we see these things coming to pass, with the predicted consumption of the Papacy well on the way, which consumption was to be accomplished by the presence of the Lord (2 Thess. 2: 8), it behoves us to recognize the day of visitation, lest that befall us which befell the Jews who did not recognise their day of visitation, when the Messiah was among them.

In view of the calamities that were to befall the people of Palestine on account of their rejection of the prophets and finally of God's Son, our Lord, as He was being led to crucifixion, uttered some weighty words of warning. (Luke 23: 27-29.) It seems certain that, in view of the calamity impending over Christendom on account of their rejection of the testimony of God's Word, similar sentiments to those uttered by our Lord would be no less entitled to consideration by those who have faith at the present time than they were then.

The world goes on with its planting and building, its marrying and giving in marriage, knowing not the time of the Presence. (Matt. 24: 37-39.) Doubtless the Lord's people must also take some part in the affairs of this life, at least as far as the planting and building are concerned; they must work with their hands in order that they may provide things honest and have somewhat to give to the necessities of others. (2 Thess. 3: 10-12; Eph. 4: 28.) This, however, will not be done as by the world and sleeping Christendom, in ignorance of the times we are living in, but in full view of the times and the special circumstances that should influence our activities. Those who are free to give themselves entirely to the Lord in service of the Truth with which He has blessed us, will not, in view of the shortness of the time and the evident call for special self-sacrifice and self-denial, enter into arrangements

that would interfere with the privilege of service, but will rather seek by every means in their power to take a larger part in the work of disseminating the Good Tidings. (1 Cor. 7: 27-35.) All, whatever their circumstances in life, who have in their hearts the desire for greater activity and usefulness in the service of the Lord are invited to correspond with us on the subject, as well as to make it a matter of special prayer. It may be that the Lord will permit us to point out some way in which your heart's desire might be accomplished, and you be made an instrument in His hands for the blessing of others.

By the great favor of God, we, dear Brethren, are not of the night but of the day (1 Thess. 5: 4-8); it behooves us therefore to live as children of the day and not as rioters of the night. We see the predicted distress of nations—all nations—with perplexity, not altogether on account of other nations, but more on account of their own internal perplexities; we hear the roaring of the waves of the "sea," the masses of the people voicing their discontent on every conceivable subject; we know that men's hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after those things that are coming upon the earth, because they realize that the powers of the ecclesiastical heavens (nominal Christendom) have been and are being so severely shaken that they cannot control the masses of the people as once they did. We realize the presence of the Son of man with power and great glory in this "cloud" of trouble that now is nearly covering the whole earth. We see all these things coming to pass. "When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." When uttering the solemn words of warning to the weeping daughters of Jerusalem, the Lord did not say just how many years would elapse before the calamity would fall upon them. And now neither can we venture to mention a future date for the consummation of the troubles upon Christendom; but since we see these things, and realize the presence (parousia) of the Lord as the cause of them, we have this word of cheer for us of "this generation," doubtless the one beginning since the last of the prophetic dates, when "the time was fulfilled."—"This generation shall not pass away till ALL be fulfilled."—Luke 21: 25-33.

"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. WATCH YE therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."—Luke 21: 34-36.

God and Men's Hearts



WE ARE ASKED to explain Psalm 33: 15; in what way does God fashion the hearts of men alike? The Revised Version (Am.) reads:

"Jehovah looketh from heaven;
He beholdeth all the sons of men;
From the place of His habitation He looketh forth
Upon all the inhabitants of the earth,
He that fashioneth the hearts of them all,
That considereth all their works."—Psa. 33: 13-15.

At first glance there might seem a touch of fatalism in the words under consideration. If God made every man's heart either good or bad, the real responsibility for the man's acts would rest with God. But we know

from other Scriptures that God is good, and that He cannot either tempt any man or be tempted himself to do evil. To make God in any sense the author of sin is to discredit Him. (Jas. 1: 13-17; 1 John 1: 5.) Concerning such passages as Amos 3: 6 where evil is ascribed to God, see the "Advocate," April, '11, page 2.

A reading of the entire Psalm shows that Jehovah is reminding Israel that His choice of them for His people was not on account of their superiority over other peoples; and that the prosperity and peace they enjoyed under their Judges and Kings were not due to their own prowess in overcoming the nations around them.

If Jeroboam could "fashion the hearts," or mould the thoughts, of the children of Israel in this way, by simply giving them something to gratify their religious feelings, it is not surprising to learn that God can do it by providential overrulings or the placing before men of various incentives to action. When Elijah had his great contest with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, he cried unto Jehovah—

"Hear me, O Lord, hear me; that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again."—1 Kings 18: 37.

And, sure enough, when the people saw the fire of the Lord consuming the sacrifice, and licking up the water in the trenches, they fell on their faces, and cried, "Jehovah, He is the God! Jehovah, He is the God!"

Another instance: The thought of Shishak, King of Egypt, in coming up against Rehoboam, was probably conquest, but in God's providence he came up to punish Rehoboam for his wickedness in forsaking the law of the Lord. (2 Chron. 12: 1, 2.) He was not allowed to overturn the kingdom, because Rehoboam repented and humbled himself before the Lord; but as a punishment on Rehoboam he was allowed to take much treasure from Jerusalem. Thus the heart of Shishak was fashioned by favorable circumstances and the hope of plunder to carry out a purpose of God, while himself in complete ignorance of being so used, and the hearts of Rehoboam and the people were in a measure restrained from evil by the invasion.

Having regard to the form of Hebrew poetry, by which the second clause is a refrain or repetition of the idea of the first clause in slightly different language, as in the two parts of verse 16, we conclude that the Psalmist's meaning is that no nation or individual in a

nation is entirely independent of God. He considers all their works, that they are evil, and he moulds their destinies in spite of their pride in their horses and chariots and armies. All their secret things, their thoughts and ambitious plans, are open before Him, and He frustrates them all. (Verse 10; Psalm 10: 1-15; Hosea 7: 12-16.) Only those who put their trust in Him need not fear his watchful eye; for in their case his eye is upon them to deliver and bless them.—Verses 18, 19.

"Our soul hath waited for Jehovah;
He is our help and shield.
For our heart shall rejoice in Him,
Because we have trusted in His holy name.
Let thy loving kindness, O Jehovah, be upon us,
According as we have hoped in thee."—Vss. 20-22.

In the present age the blessing of Jehovah comes only to those who come to Him in the name of His dear Son; He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Those who come in any other way, or who trust in their own strength, will be brought to nought. The fashioning power for good or ill of the same truth is referred to by the Apostle in 2 Cor. 2: 15-17. To those who submit to it, it is a savour of life unto life; to those who resist it, it is a savour of death unto death. Of those who accept and obey the truth, we read further—"Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." (Heb. 12: 6.) The prize of the high calling set before them is the incentive to holiness, and their hearts are fashioned, their innermost thoughts moulded, by the transforming power of divine truth and the contemplation of the beauty of the Lord.—Phil. 3: 8-14; John 17: 17; 2 Cor. 3: 3, 17, 18.

—R. B. H.

What is Faith?

IT IS SURELY desirable to have a correct conception of this important matter, when we note what great mistakes are evidently being made all around us. We read of the Christian faith, the Roman Catholic faith, the Mohammedan faith, etc., etc., and of some who "concerning the faith have made shipwreck." "Without faith it is impossible to please Him," in whose favor is life, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.—Heb. 11: 6.

During the last fifteen years I have often reviewed this matter, and have always reached the same conclusion. FAITH is a compound article, consisting of three ingredients or elements; and if any one of them is lacking, it is not the faith spoken of commendably in the Bible. Often one of these ingredients is named, and the others understood, as may be seen from parallel cases; and there are instances of each one in turn being lacking, and these furnish proof that such is not faith.

These three ingredients are *truth* (or knowledge), *belief* and *obedience*. The amount of truth may be either small or large; in fact, must be small at the beginning; for God unfolds His purposes gradually, as some appreciation is manifested, but the knowledge granted, even though small, is true or accurate. *Belief* is not an affair of the will: it is the result of the reasoning faculties being exercised upon the evidence until conviction is produced upon the mind that the thing is true; and then, if acted upon (obeyed), it becomes *faith*. Tested by

this definition how the faiths (?) of Christendom would vanish! How much *truth* have they for a basis? How much of their work has God authorised or directed to be done? How many have examined the evidences (?) of the immortality of the heathen before undertaking to save them from eternal torment?

But to return: this definition seems to meet all the requirements of the case, while some other definitions seem to fall short. I will now try to prove it. Speaking of his countrymen Paul writes, "I bear them record that they have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge." These Jews believed certain things would be pleasing to God, and acted upon their belief so vigorously that they persecuted the early Church, and yet this was not "faith" because in the same epistle (Rom. 15: 31) Paul refers to them as *unbelievers*. Then we have Paul's own case:—"I verily believed I ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth." He not only believed it, but he also did it: "entering into houses, haling men and women and committing them to prison." Was this faith? "But I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly and in *unbelief*." Therefore, in these instances the first element of faith was lacking, although *belief* and *action* were there. In the 14th chap. of Romans we have a possible case brought to our attention of a strong brother and a weak one, and the danger of each one despising or condemning the other. Near the end of the chapter we are indirectly told that if the

weak brother should be told that meat offered to an idol was as proper as any other food for a Christian, and should *NOT believe* this, but should nevertheless *eat* it—in *his* case it would be sin. He had been told the *truth*—he had *acted upon* it; but he had *not believed* the truth told him. Thus the *second* element of faith was lacking, and its absence constituted his action, upon truth not believed, a sin.

Faith and Work

Abraham stands so high in the matter of faith that to cite him seems in Scripture to be the end of all controversy. We read, "Abraham believed God," and if he *did*, God, who is truth, must have brought some truth (the first element) to his attention. Was this then faith—truth and belief? In James 2 we read, "Abraham was justified by works *when* he had offered Isaac." "Faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect (or complete—Diaglott). Abraham's faith was *imperfect, incomplete, until belief produced action.*

While this is an indirect proof, the direct ones are numerous. "To him that *knoweth* to do right, and doth it *not*, to him it is sin." "If ye *know* these things, happy are ye if ye *do* them." "Why call ye me Lord, and do *not* the things which I say?" "Whoso heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them *not*, shall be likened to a foolish man, that built upon the sand."

If we examine all the illustrations given us in Hebrews 11, and other portions of the Word where instances of saving faith are portrayed, and look up the indirect evidence in other places as well, we shall find that in every instance some *truth* was presented to the mind, it was *believed*, and it was *acted upon*. I will cite one

Scripture on each of these three elements where *one* is mentioned and the other two *implied*—

"Whom I love, and not I only, but also all they that have *known* the truth."—2 John 1.

"*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."—Acts 16: 31.

"The author of eternal salvation to all them that *obey* him."—Heb. 5: 9.

With this conception of faith we should be able to obey the injunction of 2 Cor. 13: 5, "Examine yourselves, *whether* ye be *in* the faith." Has God said, or promised, or ordered this? Have I examined the proofs or evidences of it, until I am convinced that it *is* the truth? Am I *obeying* or *acting* upon it? An affirmative or negative answer to each of these questions should show us exactly where we stand.

Abstract and Concrete Faith

What we have defined may be called "abstract" faith. What then is "concrete" faith; the kind we should "*earnestly contend for*;" the kind that will be somewhat scarce "when the Son of Man cometh"? In the narrowest sense it is that, "Christ died for our sins." In the widest sense it includes everything that God has caused to be written for our learning. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Between these two extremes there is abundant room for the babe in Christ to *grow*. We cannot suppose that God would have caused a large book to be written, if a smaller one would have been equally efficient.

"Whom shall he teach knowledge?"

"And whom shall he make to understand doctrine?"

"Lord, *increase* our faith."

S. W.

Adversaries and the Adversary

(Continued from August issue.)

Divination by Clairvoyance

Another form of divination by a familiar spirit is clairvoyance, meaning the ability to see things not discernible by the ordinary sight of the eye. Here again is found the temptation to be wise, to be "as gods"; and the temptation is the more insidious because this clairvoyant power is always advertised as a beneficent institution—to heal the sick, to re-unite long separated friends, to give warning of impending disaster. Many innocent victims are drawn into the net by these means, particularly by the advertisements to diagnose disease and prescribe remedies at a low fee. The industrious circulation of tales derogatory to medical practitioners helps to increase the number of victims, by causing them to lose confidence in the ordinary methods of diagnosis and cure.

The advantages of consulting a clairvoyant are set forth in this way: The ordinary doctor cannot see inside of you; can he? No. He can judge of what is wrong only by your symptoms? Yes. By what you tell him of your symptoms? Yes. He may be mistaken in his conclusion as to the cause of your trouble? Yes. Would you not like to know exactly what is wrong with you? Yes. Then you will know better what to do to cure yourself? Yes. Well, then, consult Mr.—, magnetic healer; he can tell exactly what is wrong with you by merely looking at your finger nails; or send him a lock of your hair or a small article of clothing. He will see a vision of your internal organs, and locate any

tumors or other growths. Or, consult Madame ——. She will go into a trance, and likewise see your inside as plainly as the skin of your face. Or, if you cannot go yourself, send a friend with an article of your clothing, and she will accurately describe your disease. The cost is small. Consultation, usually free, sometimes 6d. or 1s., perhaps one dollar, and the herbs she gives you cost a little extra. In a few weeks at most you will be quite well, and the expense is very slight indeed. Mr. — or Madame — is doing this only for the good of humanity; there is nothing in it for himself (or herself).

There is a mixture of falsehood with truth in the above which the credulous do not always discern; *e.g.*, the statement that doctors judge of the nature of a disease only by what the patient tells of the symptoms. In all severe or peculiar cases a conscientious doctor makes a careful examination, and treats the case according to actual findings. However, many are fascinated by the air of mystery surrounding the clairvoyant; to others the particular charm about the latter is the cheapness. The victim does not stop to consider that it pays Satan and his agents to make the initial cost very low, in order to attract the unwary, knowing that many cured, or believing themselves cured, become ardent disciples of spiritualism in one or another of its forms, and bring many other customers to the "healer." The Christian, before consulting such a "healer," should consider whether he can afford to of-

fend God, and become associated with demons, for the sake of better health or the saving of a few shillings.

Some of these "healers" manifest almost no desire to gain influence over the minds of their victims, while others frankly acknowledge it; indeed, stipulate for it before they will undertake the case. A friend of ours consulted a healer, under the impression that he was an ordinary herbalist; but when he required as a first preliminary, before he would undertake a cure, that she give up her will to his and agree to keep it subject to him for three months, and that she continually repeat to herself her belief that she was being cured, she took alarm and fled—rightly so.

A similar class of advertisements is that which claims to cure by post, regardless of the nature of the disease, by the exercise of the "healer's" mind over the patient. This necessitates, of course, the complete subjection of the will of the patient to the absent "healer." Being entirely ignorant of the personality and character of the "healer," those who seek help on such terms are running great risks. Is it safe to give up the will entirely to a stranger? In sickness, when all the powers of resistance are weakened, what can be better than the care of an honest physician of good character and the loving ministrations of home friends? Much to be preferred are they to the services of such "healers," however wonderful their claims. Any man who claims, without seeing you, to know more about your disease and how to cure it than your physician knows after a careful examination, cannot possibly have knowledge of your case by the exercise of purely human ability, for a man can know nothing except what he acquires by the exercise of his five senses—seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting. If then the "healer" has genuine knowledge of your case, and has not acquired it by connivance with human beings acquainted with it, the only other source from which he could obtain it would be his "familiar spirit" or "control." And, logically, anyone willing to accept a cure at the hands of such a person places himself under the influence of the "demon," and will suffer the consequences later on if not at once.

Trance Lectures

Another spiritualistic manifestation which can be explained only on the ground of spirit-demon control is the giving of lectures by mediums while in a trance. The medium yields his or her body to the spirit, which takes possession and uses the vocal organs. In this way mediums of known illiteracy give lectures on abstruse subjects or in foreign languages, and often in a voice quite different to their own. When the spirit has departed, they remember nothing of what has transpired. The claim is often made that some dead scientist or writer or politician returns from the spirit world to give the lecture, but those who know from the Scriptures that the dead cannot communicate with the living are not deceived by such false pretensions.

Written Messages

Ordinary messages from the spirits are received by table rapping, or by means of an alphabetically arranged board, the words being laboriously spelt out. Simpler is the written message, inscribed frequently on the inside of two slates fastened together, or received on a specially prepared tablet. Trickery is often charged in connection with the latter writings, as that the medium has previously prepared the slate, or that the slates only appeared to be secure, but were really not so, allowing the medium to write on the slates under the table. But while many investigators have claimed to expose various tricks, and there may be many so-called spiritualists who are adepts at sleight-of-hand, merely deceiving their audiences, the fact remains that other investigators believe the phenomena to be genuine. But the Christian's attitude to all this is perfectly simple: whatever is mere trickery can be of no interest to him; whatever is not trickery, but due to the activity of evil spirits, he will avoid having anything to do with. The nature of the messages, whether silly (as many are said to be) or otherwise, matters little when their true source is recognised.

(To be continued.)

A Group of Similitudes

(Continued from last issue.)

Turned from Satan to God

During the present age the call has gone forth to men to repent and believe the gospel (Mark 1: 15; Acts 26: 20; 17: 30), that they might be delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. 1: 13); that they might *escape* the corruption that is in the world (2 Pet. 1: 4), and be turned "from . . . the power of Satan unto God." (Acts 26: 18.) Notwithstanding that our Lord Jesus has the power to cut short all Satan's evil work, He is not exercising that power to the full; thus Satan is allowed to continue to deceive the majority of mankind. This fact causes uninformed sceptics to mock, and to say, "Where is the promise of His presence?" In this

delay there is a purpose served, which has been referred to elsewhere in these pages. But soon the Lord's power will be more fully exerted; He will forcibly take complete possession of the Strong Man's house, liberate the captives, and destroy all who after full light, knowledge, and opportunity, prefer the evil to the good, the bondage of Satan to the liberty of Christ.

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord [that is, Jehovah], and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever. . . . And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name small and great; and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth."—Rev. 11: 15-18,

Some of the great Satanic systems of evil which have deceived the whole earth during this age are to be destroyed at the end of the age (Rev. 18: 21; 19: 20), while others are to be only restrained until the end of the thousand years (Rev. 20: 2, 3), but at the end of the Kingdom age the final harvest of evil will be reaped, and thereafter the perfect earth will be the habitation of those only who have learned to delight in the will of God and who desire to serve Him evermore. "There shall be no more curse."

Thank God for the victorious, all-conquering King of kings and Lord of lords, in Whom is life, and hope, and every blessing, and in Whose triumph the saints, his joint-heirs, are promised a share. (Rom. 8: 37-39; 17, 18; 1 John 3: 2; 1 Pet. 1: 4). But in the meantime we have to remember, that if His revilers called our beloved and holy Master Beel-zebub, their successors will not hesitate similarly to revile and misrepresent His disciples. (Matt. 10: 24-28.) Be not surprised therefore, dearly Beloved, if your best efforts to serve and glorify God are misunderstood, and your names cast out as evil. (Matt. 5: 11, 12.) Rejoice always in the Lord; He understands and sympathizes, and will one day bring to nought your present accusers.

The Chief Seats at a Feast

(To the guests of one of the chief Pharisees.)

—Luke 14: 7-11.—

THE PARABLE.

7. And He put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when He marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8. When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9. And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher; then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

THE INTERPRETATION.

12. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

THE JEWS WERE a very hospitable people, as are the Arabs of the present day, ever ready to entertain strangers; they also frequently gave entertainments to which the whole neighbourhood, as well as personal friends, were invited. The latter was particularly the case in the event of a wedding, as may be seen by Gen. 29: 22; Matt. 22: 1-10.

Even on ordinary occasions the poor were allowed entrance to the court, and to the room where the guests dined, that they might receive a gratuity or gather some of the crumbs which fell from the table. (Luke 7: 37; 5: 29; Matt. 9: 10; Luke 16: 21.) So on the occasion of the utterance of the present parable, a dropsical person found his way into the Lord's presence, before the guests were seated, who was evidently not a guest, for upon being healed he was "dismissed." To the lawyers and Pharisees standing near, the Lord

then propounded the similitude of the Ox or the Ass in a Pit, followed by the parable we are now considering.

At a marriage feast, when the company was large, special tables were reserved for relatives and intimate friends, others for persons of social standing, while the servants and poor were served in the court. The festivities at a marriage usually lasted seven days. At the special tables there were often places reserved for guests of honor, and it was these honorable positions which the scribes and Pharisees loved, and for which they contended. On this occasion our Lord made their contention the basis of the parable.

It was the custom for guests to recline upon couches, the body resting upon one elbow, and each guest lying "in the bosom" of the one next above him; the disciple John often lay "in the bosom" of Jesus, thus indicating their mutual relations and sympathy.

Two different words occur in the Greek, both translated "room"; but the thought is not that of separate apartments, but rather of positions at the tables. The Revised Version notes the distinction, the "chief seats" being places reserved for honorable guests, while the "lowest place" may mean any unreserved position. The truly humble minded would hesitate to seat themselves until the honorable guests were placed, and then would occupy any convenient vacancy remaining, by preference among those of least social standing, that they might if possible assist to their enjoyment. Thus occupied in friendly intercourse with the humble, the invitation from the master of the house to come up higher would be a genuine surprise, and not an expected honor secretly waited for or striven after. Thus called upon to leave the lowest place, and to be conducted to the chief seat, he would be honored before all, and those to whom he had shown himself friendly would rejoice in his exaltation. On the other hand, the one boldly and conceitedly occupying the chief seat would be shamed before all.

It is customary to draw from this parable a lesson as to the proper degree of modesty which should be displayed by an aspirant for honors. As our Lord gave the parable when he saw the guests striving among themselves for the most honorable seats at the feast, no doubt it is right to take warning, and on any occasion when we may be invited to a function to conduct ourselves with seemly reserve. But the parable was not intended by our Lord as a lesson in manners; rather as instruction in spiritual things, and as indicating the method of the Heavenly Father who has spread a feast of fat things and invites both Jew and Gentile to partake of His bounty.*

An assumed modesty before men might gain undeserved praise of men, even while the heart is proud and conceited; whereas some uninformed but really humble-minded guest might unconsciously occupy a prominent place and require to be corrected. But no such mistakes can occur among the guests at God's table, for He can read the heart, and He will unerringly carry out the principle referred to in verse 11—

"Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

No mere outward semblance of humility will deceive the Lord, and secure an invitation to an honorable seat; no truly humble heart, associating with the lowly

*See explanation of "The Parable of the Marriage of the King's Son," in "Advocate," June, 1910.

through love of doing good, will miss the reward of the Lord's approval, but will in due time receive an honorable position in the Kingdom.

Of those who receive honor one of another and strive for place and position our Lord said—"How can ye believe?" (John 5: 44.) Their hearts are in no condition for the entrance of the grace and love of God. Those who consider themselves better than their neigh-

bors and therefore treat them rudely, or who crush the weak and poor that they may rise over their prostrate bodies (literally or figuratively), will sooner or later be abased. The spirit of Christ is humility, kindness and love; and it is written that—

"If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."
—Rom. 8: 9.

Let us all who read our blessed Saviour's words take the lesson well to heart!



Prophetic Parables

OF THE PARABLES already examined many contained prophetic hints, to the effect that those who exalt themselves shall be abased, and those who lay up treasure upon earth shall lose it, while those who seek heavenly treasure shall be rewarded. These predictions will undoubtedly be fulfilled. Other parables, such as those of Matthew 13, were prophetic of the special work of an entire age; the scattering of the truth concerning the Kingdom, and the gathering in of the resultant faithful believers to shine forth in the Kingdom.

Our Lord's great prophecy, in reply to the question of the disciples concerning "the sign of thy presence and of the end of the age," as recorded in Matthew, Chapters 24 and 25, was enriched with several remarkable parables, which deserve the most prayerful attention and study by all His disciples, from the original twelve down to the least inquirer of our own day. The parable of the fig-tree points an important moral, that we do well to heed: The "signs" which the Lord gives are like the leaves on the trees—nothing illusive, but facts to be understood by all who pass by and take the trouble to observe, and who heed the import of what they see. We know it is Spring or Summer, not by hearsay, or by our own imaginative fancies, but by what we see transpiring all around us, the change of temperature, the timely rains, the upspringing of vegetation, and, most glorious of all, the blossoming and leafing of all variety of trees. These signs are observable everywhere—in the forest, in the orchard, by the wayside, and even in the tiny box on window-sill or in narrow alley or court. Thoughts on these lines help us to realize the large and universal scale upon which the "signs" of His presence and of the end of the age are given. Truly the Lord is generous. Let us not fail to watch for the signs, and so understand the day of our visitation.

The Man Making a Far Journey

—Mark 13: 32-37.—

(To the Disciples.)

THE PARABLE.

34. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

THE INTERPRETATION.

32. But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. [The words "and pray" are not found in the Vatican MSS. 1209.]

35. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning.

36. Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.

37. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

WHILE THE parable proper is contained in verse 34, further details are given in verses 35 and 36, and the application made by our Lord to Himself as the Master and to the disciples as the servants. This parable divides the present High Calling Age into three parts.

(1) The beginning of the age. During this time the disciples were instructed, the Apostles were appointed to their special work, and arrangements were completed for the sending forth of the message to all nations beginning at Jerusalem.—Luke 24: 44-48.

(2) The long interval between the first and the second advents—represented in the parable by the time that would be occupied by the man travelling a long distance.

(3) The end of the age; marked by the return of the Master to His house and His servants.

The Day and the Hour

The curiosity of the disciples as to the day and hour of their Lord's return was most natural; indeed, not to have been interested in it would have indicated a most reprehensible lack of love for and interest in His person. Our Lord did not reprove them, but it was not God's will to inform the disciples in advance; hence the Lord was under the necessity of explaining the matter, and giving the disciples such hints as would be valuable to them in the circumstances. These hints were embodied in several parables which would leave no doubt in the minds of the disciples as to what the Lord expected of them, seeing that His requirements were only such as were common as between other masters and their servants.

It has surprised some Bible readers that our Lord should make the confession of verse 32, that He knew not the day nor the hour of His own return. It must be remembered, however, that He spoke these words "in the days of His flesh," while He was yet as a Son learning obedience by the things He suffered. (Heb. 5: 7, 8.) And while He had the promise of the Father that faithfulness unto death would bring Him a crown of life and glory, these words give us to understand that all the details of the future purposes of God had not as yet been confided to Him. But we may well believe that after His resurrection, when all power in heaven and in earth was given unto

Him. He was fully informed concerning these and many other details of the future.—Rev. 1: 1.

Some Christians believe that the exact date of the Lord's second advent depends upon the degree of progress made by His people in the conversion of the world; and that it may be earlier or later according as they are energetic or lax in their efforts. "Looking for and hasting unto the day of God" (2 Pet. 3: 12) is given as proof, particularly the marginal reading. But such an understanding of this text brings it into unnecessary conflict with a number of other passages which show that God has fixed definite periods for the outworking of His glorious purposes. Our Lord's words in connection with this very parable show that the Father knew both the day and the hour, although Jesus and the angels did not know it. The same lesson was given just prior to the Day of Pentecost, when the disciples asked, "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" Our Lord's reply was—

"It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath appointed by His own authority."—Acts 1: 7.

The thought here is, not that the Father has no set time; on the contrary, it is plainly stated that He has by His own authority appointed certain times and seasons; but it was not His will to reveal at that time certain details of "day" and "hour." Subsequently, when the Holy Spirit was poured out, they were given "power" to understand many things concerning times and seasons, which they explained to the Church. (Acts 1: 8; 1 Thes. 5: 1-3.) But while there is no record of a precise "day and hour" for the Lord's arrival, the Scriptures contain a number of prophecies by which His people might approximate the time of His "presence." Of these may be mentioned Dan. 2: 31-45; 7: 15-27; 12: 7-12; Matt. 24: 14; Luke 21: 24; Rev. 11: 2; 11: 15; 12: 14; etc. Another reason for considering the probability of a fixed date for the Second Advent is found in the definiteness with which the date of the first advent was announced over four hundred years in advance. (Dan. 9: 24-27.) On this point we have the following positive statements—

"And it was revealed unto him [Simeon] by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ."—Luke 2: 26.

"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son."—Gal. 4: 4.

"Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Matt. 3: 2.

"In due time Christ died for the ungodly."—Rom. 5: 6.

It will be observed that in these passages neither the "day" nor the "hour," either of our Lord's birth or of the beginning or end of His ministry, was foretold plainly, though we, looking back, and comparing the facts with the prophecies and types of the Old Testament, can see reasons why He was crucified at the Pass-over season, and probably began His ministry about the Atonement Day.*

*See BIBLE TALKS, page 201.

From these considerations we gather that the ignorance of the early disciples in regard to definite dates was no indication of indefiniteness on God's part. He knows the end from the beginning; and all His purposes are accomplished, not only in the way He proposes, but also according to the specific times and seasons He arranges.—Acts 15: 18; Dan. 12: 1, 13.

Hastening the Day

It remains then to find an explanation for 2 Pet. 3: 12, in harmony with the fixity of God's dates, as He has reserved them in His own purpose, now sharing His confidence we may presume with His beloved Son, the Lord of Glory, at His right hand. The Lord is pleased to use His people in the spread of "the gospel of the kingdom," but He is not at their mercy, as a modern householder is powerless in the hands of dilatory servants. Every detail of the work of the age has been accomplished; where any servant has proved unfaithful there are always others available for the despised tasks. So we find, in the parable of the Tares of the Field, that when the harvest time came the Master Himself directed the gathering in of the wheat and the burning of the tares. (Matt. 13: 29, 30, 41.) Harvest time for wheat is a definitely fixed period of the year, and is often very limited. The parable shows that the harvest came as expected, and that the required number of servants was on hand to do the work.

There are several ways in which the saints can be said to "hasten" the "day of God" without in any wise altering its set chronological date.

1. It is to be noted, first, that the day of God mentioned is the day when the present ecclesiastical heavens and social earth are to be completely dissolved. That complete demolishing of present systems of evil is necessary before the "new heavens and new earth" can prevail. (Dan. 2: 35; Rev. 21: 1; 2 Pet. 3: 7, 10, 13.) Everyone, therefore, who succeeds now, by the preaching of the truth, in turning sinners to God, and overturning strongholds of error and deception (1 Cor. 1: 27, 28; 2 Cor. 10: 4, 5), is doing in a very small way what God will do on an immense scale shortly. The date of the Lord's Second Advent is not thus brought any nearer, but the work of dissolution of evil is hastened or to an extent anticipated by such small overturnings of evil as may be accomplished by the activities of God's people.

2. That day may be said to be "hastened" when the servants by reason of their zeal in the service in a measure forget the lapse of time. No day drags so slowly as that which is idled away while waiting for an expected event. The common proverb expresses it thus: "The watched pot never boils." But get busy at something, and it is "boiling in no time," as another familiar phrase has it. The time required in either case is the same, but in the latter the apparent time has been

shortened by the activity of the watcher. It is the busy people who find the time flying by: they have no time to count the days and the hours. They just keep right on with what they have to do, and before they know it another year is gone. This seems to be Peter's intimation when verses 11, 12 and 14 are read together—**BE DILIGENT** in the important work of cultivating holiness; find always some fresh detail in which the character can be improved; be diligent also in helping others to grow in grace and in knowledge, and the day of God will appear to come (one might almost say) too soon; there is so much to do and so little time in which to do it. And even at the last God's children will find themselves reflecting on all they left undone that they might have done.

"Looking For and Hastening Unto"

But the fact that some translators use the phrase "hastening unto" indicates that they consider the thought of the original to be thus properly expressed. A child who is looking for its father to come home hastens his coming, not by quickening the father's pace, but by running out to meet him. We cannot bring the day of God nearer chronologically, but we can be so earnestly desiring it (compare R.V. Am.) that we will, as it were, meet it half way. How can we do this? By casting down and out all those traits of character which we see by God's Word to be of a piece with the evil which is to be destroyed in that day, and by cultivating the righteousness and holiness which the Lord requires. Thus we may get ourselves ready for the Kingdom. Would it not be foolish to talk of the coming of a Kingdom of righteousness, and to profess to be looking for and expecting it, and yet sit down in "filthy rags" until that day is just upon us, and *then* have to be cleansed and made fit for salvation? In such a case we would not indeed be able to retard the Kingdom chronologically, but we could postpone its blessings to ourselves, and thus lose twenty to sixty years of righteous life, which had we been more diligent we might have entered into at once. Let us more and more look for and *earnestly desire* the coming of the day of God!

Another passage sometimes used to teach that our Lord's return can be brought chronologically nearer by the activities of the saints in the present age is Acts 3: 19, 20, which more literally reads, according to the Revised and many other modern versions—

"Repent ye therefore, and turn again, *that* your sins may be blotted out, *that* so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and *that* he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus."

What is here conditioned as dependent upon the conversion of the Jews addressed was not the Second Advent, but their own blessing. Verse 26 shows that after His resurrection the mission of Jesus was *first* to the Jews—

"Unto you first God, having raised up His Servant, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."

And verses 19, 20 show the further blessing which would come to them if they would heed His message, repent and be converted, etc.

Everyone repenting, and becoming converted to Jesus Christ, has his sins "blotted out"; that is, they are completely and everlastingly forgiven. God remembers them no more. (Eph. 4: 32; Heb. 8: 6-12; 10: 14-18.) He receives seasons of refreshing from the presence of Jehovah, primarily by means of the Holy Spirit and the instruction of Scripture; he also receives Jesus, the great Prophet like unto Moses, the Seed of Abraham in whom all are to be blest. Both the Father and the Son love him, and take up their abode with him. (John 14: 23, 24; Rev. 3: 20.) Those who have this blessed experience need not fear the day of retribution coming upon evil doers. The Lord is their portion now, they have cultivated His character of love, and they know that in His presence such characters will have approval. (1 John 4: 6-17.) God Who is love will not condemn His people who obey Him, who are also love. They are God's representatives in the world of what true love is—imperfect representatives to be sure, but nevertheless the only visible representation of God's character, and the only witnesses of the truth.—1 Tim. 3: 15, 16.

The Position of the Servants

But to return to the parable of Mark 13: 32-37. Several details stand out prominently concerning the position of the servants during their Master's absence, and what is expected of them. (1) Each servant receives his authority as a servant direct from the Master; (2) to every man is given his particular work—including the porter, whose special duty it is to keep the door and protect the household from intruders; nevertheless (3) *all* the servants are told to "watch."

The reason all must watch is distinctly stated—"Ye *know not* when the Master of the house cometh," and should He come suddenly you would be very much ashamed to be found unprepared. The reference to night time and its four divisions must not be considered as marking four points in the age, but as a detail adding emphasis to the parable, because at night the vigilance of servants is usually relaxed—especially was that the case in antiquity. The gates of the cities were closed at sundown, any travellers being obliged to camp outside until the gates were opened next morning. No guests from afar would be expected during the night seeking admittance. The lesson of the parable, then, is that the Lord's servants, to whom He has given authority and work to do, must so conduct themselves as to be prepared for his advent and scrutiny of their work *at any moment*. They must not have the rooms in disorder, or the larder empty, at any hour of the

day or night; nor must they in fancied security become drunken or leave the premises on pleasure excursions. The porter must be always on duty to answer the expected summons.

The best way to "watch" is not to gaze at the sky in expectation of seeing a manifestation in the literal clouds, nor yet to spend *overmuch* time and attention upon the symbolical signs in the ecclesiastical heavens and social earth; but to let the mind be centred upon the Lord, and to be as diligent and faithful as possible in *performing the duties* which He left for us to do—

"Blessed that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing."—Matt. 24: 46.

Not only were the disciples to "watch," they were also to *pray*; thus keeping up communion with God, and receiving daily help in time of need. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."—Matt. 26: 41; Heb. 4: 14-16.

Those who think that "waiting," and "watching," and praying for the Lord's return mean idleness during His absence make a great mistake. When the Master comes He will want an accounting. The general principles upon which He will reckon with His servants are shown in the Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25: 1-13) and the Parable of the Pounds (Luke 19: 11-27), which will now be examined.

(To be continued)

The Cheerful Givers

"The God of Heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build." "Through God we shall do valiantly."—Neh. 2: 20; Psa. 60: 12.

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully; every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9: 6, 7.

"Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."—1 Cor. 16: 2.

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No. 9

Sufferings and Joy

THE Seventh Annual Hampton Conference was held at Hampton-on-Sea, November 7, and as usual, was an occasion of much pleasure as well as profit. The weather was perfect, the little ones received their portion on the Gospel, or good tidings, and what it means, and afterward enjoyed recreation on the beach, while their elders continued the spiritual part of the programme. The following condensation of the addresses on the topic of the day, "Sufferings and Joy," we trust will give as much pleasure to "Advocate" readers as the addresses gave to those who were privileged to hear them; for while no doubt it is painful to suffer, even when it is for righteousness' sake, still we receive a blessing when we turn aside in this way and consider quietly and lovingly all that suffering means to our race, to the Old Testament peoples, to our blessed Lord who gave up his all of life and glory to redeem us, and to one another, our fellow-pilgrims following in His footsteps; and finally when we look for the joy in the suffering, and in spite of it, and anticipate the glory to follow if we are faithful in it. God grant to each of us to suffer patiently, to rejoice exceedingly, and to love and help one another always!

The Problem of Pain

Jehovah is my portion, saith my soul: therefore will I hope in him.
Jehovah is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.
It is good that a man should hope and quietly wait for the salvation of Jehovah.
It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.
Let him sit alone and keep silence, because he hath laid it upon him.
Let him put his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope.
Let him give his cheek to him that smiteth him; let him be filled full with reproach.
For the Lord will not cast off forever.
For though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses.
For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.

—Lam. 3: 24-33, Am. R.V.

THE questions arising out of the existence of pain are among the most persistent as well as the most acute that we have to consider. Probably every being in the universe is concerned one way or another in the solution of these questions, because a perpetual "why" attends all experience of suffering, and has done so from the beginning of human history. Sometimes this "why" can be answered very conclusively by pointing out that negligence and carelessness or wrong-doing, more or less wilful, have led to suffering and pain which were entirely avoidable, so that the sufferer has only himself to blame for his experience. No doubt, a very considerable proportion of our painful experiences must be explained in this way if we would be truthful, however little we may relish the implied reflection upon ourselves. Wrong words or actions, or even wrong thoughts within ourselves, may have led to the derangement of our relations with our Creator or with our fellows; indiscretions in diet for the pleasure of the palate may have led to physical derangements; and the mental and physical sufferings consequent upon all of these can be blamed only upon the one who has transgressed. But making due allowance for all the sufferings brought on by one's own carelessness, negligence and wilful wrong-doing, a great deal of pain not so occasioned remains to be accounted for, and it is concerning this that we would now inquire. Inasmuch as everything is judged by the result (not necessarily the immediately apparent, but eventually by the ultimate result) of its action or influence, it is necessary that we have a right view of pain in perspective as well as a correct apprehension of the function of pain.

Pain in Perspective

When one is very near to an object, that object is the most prominent thing in the scope of one's vision. Retiring from the object, as the scope of the vision broadens, one perceives that there are other objects as well as the one first mentioned, and that some of these are larger and more imposing than it. One begins to

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get a true appreciation of the relation of the first object to some of the others, and feels that its importance—due in the first instance to the close proximity that prevented a view of the other objects—diminishes as the others come into view. Receding still further, the importance of the first object continues to diminish as more and yet more objects enter the ever-widening horizon. At last, the first object—once the most prominent, perhaps the only, thing in the sight—vanishes in the distance.

So it is with our painful experiences. While actually enduring the pain, whether physical or mental, it obtrudes itself upon the attention to the exclusion of everything else, so that it seems to be almost the only fact of one's existence. But as one recedes from the illness or other painful circumstance, and as a proper view of it in perspective is obtained, showing its relation to other facts of experience, its inherent importance diminishes, and one realises that there are other things well worth consideration. As still more time elapses, the painful experience becomes less and less prominent, and presently there comes a time when one ceases to think about it, or if recalled to memory it does not have that bitterness which it had while it was a real experience; while the actual pain, as such, is forgotten. If this be the experience of individuals, as we know it is, should we not expect that it will be the experience of our race as a whole, when they realise the favour of God in and through Jesus who died for us? The Scriptures seem to intimate as much, for they not only say that there shall be no more pain, but also tell us that the present evil conditions shall not be remembered or come into mind.—Rev. 21: 1, 4; Isa. 65: 17.

A due consideration of pain in its proper perspective will perhaps guard us against the mistake of attaching too much importance to pain as such. We shall be able to realise that there are other things than pain that enter into our experiences, and, distinguishing things that differ, we shall be better able to assign to pain its proper place, as well as to arrive at a just estimate of its value and importance to us.—Phil. 1: 10, margin.

The Function of Pain

Inasmuch as God, though He cause grief to the children of men, does not do so willingly, it is not to be supposed that He is vindictive in regard to any of the pains that He allows or causes us to have. The function of pain is, therefore, educational—to correct us where we are wrong, to assist us to a better understanding of what is right, and to demonstrate the desirability of the right rather than the wrong. By enduring the pain of a burn, the hitherto inexperienced child learns to dread the fire; by getting his fingers pinched in the door, he learns that there are places where his fingers ought not to be; by these and other pains, including that of the parental rod judiciously administered, he learns that he is not the owner of the universe and all that therein is, and realises that there are certain just limitations that he is bound to recognise and within which he must permit himself to be circumscribed. If he goes beyond these proper metes and bounds, he is likely to acquire more painful experiences on account of his intrusion into places and conditions which are not suited to him. Entry into conditions not intended for us is probably, in one way or another, the cause of all our pains from the time

when Adam and Eve trespassed, down to the busy-bodies of present times.

Well realised, the grand fact that the function of pain is educational thoroughly disposes of the teaching that it is part of God's purpose to torment for ever some of His creatures, because pain that would never end, even if the culprit reformed, could have no beneficial effect; it would be an exhibition of vindictiveness on God's part, and a demonstration of cruel pleasure in the sufferings willingly inflicted by Himself upon helpless creatures. God would thus be an unspeakable monster, and not the God of loving kindness and tender mercies that we know Him to be. We know from His Word that the time is coming when there shall be no more pain, and that His purpose in respect to the wilfully wicked, who will not reform under any of the experiences sent them, is that they shall be punished with "everlasting destruction," which will blot them out for ever as being unworthy to live in any state or condition.—2 Thess. 1: 9; Rev. 21: 4.

The Saints in Pain

One of the special prerogatives of the saint, one of the peculiar privileges to which he is invited, is suffering. The suffering to which he is invited is not, of course, that which is common to men; that he would have in any case, and could scarcely avoid. It is in addition to the common lot of suffering that the saint is invited to suffer with Christ, by following in His footsteps of doing well and suffering for it, which suffering may be mental, or physical, or both. (1 Peter 2: 19-23.) Besides this suffering, the saint is the object of special divine care, and receives as tokens of his sonship and acceptance with the Father certain corrections in righteousness, which are not pleasant but grievous. (Heb. 12: 5-9.) If it be asked, Why should they specially be called upon to suffer, who have the witness of the Spirit with their spirits that they are the sons of God, the answer is that God chastens and corrects in order that His saints might be profited thereby, and made partakers of His holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. (Heb. 12: 10-14.) But, having profited by these corrections, and having faithfully followed in the footsteps of Him who trod the way before us and left us an example, the saint is being changed into the likeness of the Lord even now, as far as his mind is concerned (2 Cor. 3: 18); ultimately he shall be made like the Lord in body (1 Cor. 15: 49), shall see Him as He is (1 John 3: 2), and shall reign with Him for the thousand years. (Rom. 8: 17; 2 Tim. 2: 12; Rev. 20: 4.) The experience of and the promises to the saints fully corroborate the thought that the function of pain is educational.

The Groaning Creation

The entire race is suffering the pains of death and "sheol" on account of the wrong-doing of Adam and Eve, and in this trouble, which none can escape, we have been involved, without our knowledge or consent, by divine decree. (Rom. 5: 12; 8: 20.) Is there an adequate explanation for this wholesale infliction of pain upon infants and aged and all between, and this without first seeing whether they would sin or not? No doubt we all add unnecessarily to our original heritage of suffering; but apart from this, the fact remains that we were born into the conditions in which we

find our race, and that we could not avoid being born into these conditions. Would it not have been better and more equitable to all concerned, had God given each one of us a trial on his own merits, not subjecting us to the evil results of the sin of our first parents?

The answer to this is that God has taken the most economical way to accomplish His purpose. By causing us all to share the condemnation of the one sin, not condemning us separately on our own individual accounts, God is able to permit us to share—through the exercise of our faith—in the benefits of the righteousness of His Son, Who gave Himself as our ransom, and has thereby become the Mediator between God and all who come unto the divine throne. Had each of us been tried separately under the same conditions as those under which Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden, the probability is that no two of all our race would have done differently than they did. The consequence would have been that each would have needed a separate sacrifice to be offered for him, if he was to be redeemed, which would have meant thousands of millions of Redeemers and Calvaries. Is not God's way of condemning all through one and redeeming all through another One much better than the other way would be which would have required sacrifices innumerable? We must all agree that God's way is the very best from His standpoint, and that we are in no wise disadvantaged by being made to inherit Father Adam's condemnation and the penalty of death.

But further consideration shows us that God's way is the very best from our standpoint as well as from His, and that His mode of procedure is a master stroke of economy for us as well as for Himself. If it be admitted that the probabilities are all in favour of the statement that every one of us would have done the same as Adam did, had we been placed in his circumstances, it must also be admitted that the probabilities would be in favour of the assumption that we should all have lived approximately as long as he did after sinning, since we are now supposing that we should have started with a perfect organism such as he had at the first. We should thus have had to go through 930 years of imperfection, weakness and pain, instead of the three score and ten, more or less, which are allotted to us. It is no small mercy to have been spared—each of us—some eight and a half centuries of pain, and this thought alone should make us very thankful to God that He caused the whole of the groaning creation to be made subject to vanity (death) through one man's disobedience, instead of being put through the experience separately at such tremendous expense as would have been involved.—Rom. 8: 20-22.

Another brother will be telling us about the joyful prospect of deliverance from the bondage of corruption that awaits the groaning creation when the sons of God shall be manifested; I shall, therefore, not touch upon that, but shall conclude this portion of my talk by saying that since it is God's purpose to have the earth inhabited by a race of intelligent beings, living in voluntary and happy subjection to His holy will, and since it is manifest that such intelligent, voluntary and happy obedience to His will could not be rendered except by those who had a knowledge of both good and evil, it seems perfectly clear that God has chosen the best and most kindly manner in which to accomplish His glorious purpose. Those who have faith in His promises can look forward with confidence to the time

in the long perspective of eternity when pain and its memories shall have reached the vanishing point, while the benefits of its salutary lessons remain, being fixed in the characters of those who have been educated in obedience through suffering.

The Animals in Pain

This phase of the Problem of Pain is perhaps the most perplexing of all. The animals are not promised a future life in which the inequalities of the present existence might be remedied; yet they are allowed to suffer pain and sometimes the most cruel treatment without redress, at the hands of men to whom a resurrection from death is promised. How shall these things be seen to harmonise with God's character for loving kindness and justice?

I confess that I am not as fully informed as I should like to be on this part of the subject, and I do not expect to be able to give you an answer that will be conclusive in every respect; but we may, perhaps, be able at least to start on the right way, and for the rest that we cannot now ascertain we must trust in God, Who will doubtless make it all very plain in due time. One of the great hindrances to our acquisition of this knowledge is in the limitations of our being, which hinder us from entering fully into the state of the animals, and another great hindrance is in the limitations of the animals which prevent them from expressing themselves to us in language that we can thoroughly understand. As long as these hindrances continue, we need not expect to understand as much as we might like to know about these things, unless the Almighty shall Himself inform us.

No doubt the animals, although made to be taken and destroyed (2 Peter 2: 12), learn some things by the experience of pains. Within their limits, they are subject to correction and training through discipline and chastisement, as are human beings. It is certain also that they appear to have an advantage over men in that they know by instinct a good many things that are useful to them. They do not have to go through a long apprenticeship as men must do, before they can take part in the activities of their lives. We are told also that all flesh is not the same flesh, and that there are differences between the human race, the beasts, the fishes and the birds. (1 Cor. 15: 39.) The animals have nerves, but as their flesh is not of the same sort as that of men, we cannot say just how sensitive they are to pain, though it is clear that they can and do suffer somewhat. It may be also, that the limited mental capacity of the animals, if we knew just what value to attach to it, having regard to their general condition, would have some bearing on our opinions concerning their sufferings. As for the needless cruelty which some of them suffer in helplessness at the hands of some men, it may be some consolation, if not altogether an adequate explanation, to know that the man who shows the spirit of vindictiveness is thus making marks on his character that will render his reform all the more difficult in the next age, and that his cruelty is preparing him for the experience of stripes which he might have saved himself had he been more considerate in the present life.

The Sufferings of God

The whole problem of pain is much simplified when we remember that the Almighty has not inflicted upon us pain and Himself never suffered. God has certainly

not suffered in the way of worry or anxiety over the outcome of His affairs and arrangements, because He knows the end from the beginning. But if it is an affliction for a loving parent to chastise the erring child, how much more would the loving Heavenly Father be afflicted when it is necessary for Him to discipline His sons? "In all their affliction He was afflicted," is written of Jehovah's dealings with the children of Israel. (Isa. 63: 9.) But how much more must the Father have suffered in the afflictions and sufferings and death of His beloved and always obedient Son? Into this we cannot enter; we can merely with the greatest reverence make mention of it as showing us that without doubt God Himself has suffered, and is no stranger to pain. Yet love for us prompted Him to give His Son.—John 3: 16.

The condescension of the Almighty in voluntarily taking upon Himself to suffer, whereas He would not have needed to do so, is emphasised by the fact that it cannot be said that in His case the function of pain is educational. He knows all things, and does not require to be educated. It must, then, be true, as the Scripture says, that it was because of love for us that God has entered into the experience of suffering as He has done. Shall not this thought cause us to love Him more, and to try to serve Him better?

Dearly beloved, as we go on our way through life, and as we further experience sufferings, whether those that are common to the groaning creation or those that come to us specially because we are sons of God and followers in the footsteps of Jesus, let us take all these things patiently, endeavouring to learn from them the lessons that are intended for us. Let us view pain in its proper perspective, and let us have a right appreciation of the function of pain. So shall many of its problems be solved for us. In this we shall be much assisted by remembering the words of the Psalmist:—

"Teach me good judgment and knowledge;
For I have believed in thy commandments.
Before I was afflicted I went astray;
But now I observe thy word.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted;
That I may learn thy statutes.

I know, O Jehovah, that thy judgments are righteous,
And that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me.
Let, I pray thee, thy loving kindness be for my comfort,
According to thy word unto thy servant.
Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live;
For thy law is my delight."—Psalm 119: 66-77, Am. R.V.

E. C. H.

The Sufferings of God's People before the First Advent

THERE are different reasons why this subject should interest all Christians: One reason is because we love God's people, whether those around us, or those in distant lands, or in ages gone by. We love them because they are God's people. Another reason why this subject should interest us is from the standpoint of Rom. 15: 4. Although the Apostle Paul was not here speaking of the suffering of God's people, but rather of a prophecy concerning our Lord, still I think we can take it to apply to all the Old Testament writings, and it is from this standpoint that we intend to approach this subject, that—

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

Therefore, if we can profit by the experience of others, it will be cheaper than experience bought at our own cost.

The subject of suffering might be divided into different heads: (1) Suffering on account of transgression; (2) suffering on account of righteousness, and (3) suffering as a trial or test of faith. We will look at a few examples under each of these divisions.

Suffering on Account of Transgression

The first instance we have is that of our first parents, as already referred to. All are familiar with the Bible statement: How they were created in God's image, and placed in a position where they had everything they required for their sustenance, with but one prohibition—that they should not eat of the fruit of one tree, which command they broke and brought upon themselves and upon all their posterity the penalty

pronounced; and thus we see it even unto the present day, suffering and the extremity, death.

The second instance of suffering on account of transgression is that of Cain. (Gen. 4: 11, 12.) We remember that both Cain and Abel brought an offering unto the Lord. Abel's offering, a lamb, was accepted, because offered in accordance with God's instructions, while that of Cain, the fruit of the ground, was rejected, being his own choice of what to offer. The rejection of his offering and the acceptance of Abel's caused Cain's anger to arise, so that he slew his brother and brought upon himself a special penalty, "cursed from the earth."

We have also the sufferings of the Children of Israel on account of transgression; how often they murmured and were punished for it! For example, see Exodus 32: 1-6. They desired Aaron to make something visible for them to worship; as for this Moses, they said, we wot not what has become of him. So Aaron made a molten calf, and the people worshipped it, and brought upon themselves just suffering. (Vers. 19, 20.) Moses ground their idol to powder and cast it upon the water, and made them drink it. Verses 27-29, 35, show the further suffering they had to endure, as punishment for their transgression—three thousand put to death by the children of Levi, besides others "plagued" by the Lord.

Yet they forgot the lesson they had learned, for soon they murmured again; this time on account of the journey and the bread; and the Lord sent fiery serpents among them, which bit the people, and much of the people of Israel died. (Num. 21: 4-6.) In this case again we see that the sufferings they endured were on account of their transgression. We remember also that

for their unbelief they were kept wandering about in the wilderness until all that came out of Egypt had died, except Caleb and Joshua. The sufferings of Nadab and Abihu were also on account of disobedience, inasmuch as they offered strange fire unto the Lord, which he commanded them not; and they suffered at once for their rashness, being devoured in a fire that went out from the Lord. (Lev. 10: 1, 2.) In many cases the punishment, with its accompanying suffering, which came upon the transgressors was for their correction; in other cases that their evil influence might be removed, and that others might be warned to avoid wrong-doing. Says the proverb, "The way of transgressors is hard."—Prov. 13: 15.

The experience of Jonah is a good illustration of suffering for correction. The whole book needs to be read to get the full account, but you remember how God wished him to deliver a message to the people of Nineveh. From this duty he sought to escape by taking ship to Tarshish. But he could not get away from God, and God caused such conditions to arise as to bring his disobedience home to him.

Now we will turn to a part of the subject which I hope will stimulate us all, for this is the more honourable kind of suffering; namely,

Suffering for Righteousness' Sake

The first example we will look at is that of Moses. We read in Heb. 11: 24-26, that he refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God. This he was afterwards called upon to do, and that from those whom he loved and sought to help. Such suffering was harder to bear than if it had come from the enemies of the people of God. When we think of the number of times Moses was grieved, how careful it should make us that we should not cause any suffering to God's dear ones! (See Exodus 14: 11, 12.) The children of Israel murmured at the first obstacle; how soon they forgot the high hand with which they had been delivered, and the miracles which the Lord performed by the hand of the same Moses. Their murmurings against Moses must have caused him great grief and suffering.

Again in Exodus 16: 2, 3, we find them murmuring for bread, saying:

"Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full! for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness; to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

This unthankfulness from the very ones he was endeavouring to help must have caused Moses great mental suffering; for he whom the Scriptures declare (Num. 12: 3) to be the meekest man in all the earth would far rather have forfeited his own prospects that they might be forgiven and brought safely through to the promised land. But the people were too engrossed in their own selfish pleasures to appreciate the loving, self-sacrificing disposition of their Leader.—Num. 14: 12.

David also suffered for righteousness' sake—at the hand of King Saul. Although we read that he was a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13: 14), and was favoured of the Lord in subduing the enemies of God's people, yet because he was so favoured Saul became jealous, and sought to persecute him. In 1 Samuel, Chapters 20 to 24, we see David had to hide himself, and became as an outcast.

See also the Prophet Jeremiah; he was a prophet of God who feared not to speak exactly what God told him; his faithfulness caused the people to become very angry. Some who profess to be God's people at the present time ill-treat God's messengers in a similar manner. When the word of the Lord is told them, if it does not fall in with their own ideas, they soon fulfil the words which our Lord spoke to His disciples; namely, that they should be put out of the Synagogues. So it was with Jeremiah. The people said, Thou shalt surely die; also we read in Jer. 32: 2 that he was imprisoned, and in Jer. 38: 6 that he was cast into a miry dungeon.

We have also Daniel, the one who purposed in his heart to serve God. We read in Dan. 1: 8 how Daniel made his stand in the first place. When Nebuchadnezzar required him to be fed with a portion of the King's meat, he refused, and proposed a diet of pulse, which he was permitted to have; and after the time of testing Daniel and his friends were fairer than the other young men. Daniel found favour with the King because he interpreted the dream which none of the wise men were able to do.

Daniel and his companions were exalted to very high and honourable positions in the Kingdom of Babylon, but that did not relieve them of the tests of faithfulness to their God; they still had the privilege of suffering for righteousness' sake. God's people are severely tested, whether their outward circumstances be apparently prosperous or the reverse. It is encouraging to find that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego endured the test of the fiery furnace with the same unflinching devotion to God as was shown by Daniel himself in his sufferings for the truth's sake.

And when they had proved their loyalty to the last God graciously delivered them.—Dan. 3: 8-30.

The captains and governors under Darius were envious of the honours bestowed upon Daniel; but, they said, we cannot find occasion against Daniel except it be concerning the Law of his God. So they desired the King to make a decree, that none should present a petition to any but the King for thirty days. This decree Daniel did not hesitate to break, by continuing his regular practice of praying three times daily with his windows open toward Jerusalem. Here again was suffering for righteousness' sake; for, according to the decree, he was cast into a den of lions; and when he had thus demonstrated his fidelity, God graciously delivered him by shutting the mouths of the lions.

Sufferings a Test of Faith

In all these instances of suffering for righteousness' sake a test of faith was involved. Moses esteemed the reproaches of the people of God greater riches than the treasures of Egypt because he had "respect unto the recompense of the reward"; he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of Pharaoh, because he "endured as seeing Him who is invisible." (Heb. 11: 24-27.) Without faith in God and in His promises he would have fainted under the burden of the continual murmuring and bickering of the Children of Israel in the wilderness; but their rebellion and unbelief only increased his own faith and confidence in the God of Israel, and his desire that God might be glorified even at the loss of his own name and posterity. David's faith was tested while suffering at the hands of Saul, for God had anointed him king in Saul's stead, and

yet did not give him possession of the kingdom. So strong was David's faith that God would give him the kingdom at the right time that he would not slay Saul when at different times he could easily have done so.

Job's sufferings were of a different nature to those of either Moses or David, but they also were a severe test of faith.

Satan sought to make him turn from God, and was permitted to try him; and this he did very severely. First we read that in one series of calamities his children were all slain; his oxen and asses and camels taken; his sheep burned with fire, his servants slain with the sword; in fact, all that he had was taken from him; and lastly, he himself was stricken with boils from the crown of his head to the soles of his

feet. Yet in all this he "sinned not nor charged God foolishly," although tempted to do so by his supposed comforters, and also by his wife, who said, Curse God and die. But Job did not give way, and in the last chapter of the book we find that he was rewarded double for his faithfulness.

So we see that God's people in Old Testament times were called upon to suffer for different reasons—for sin, for righteousness, and for a test of faith. May we profit by their experience, as recorded for our learning. May we seek to avoid the necessity of suffering for sin, take patiently the suffering for righteousness, and remember that the trial of our faith is more precious than that of gold which perisheth.—Rom. 15: 4; 1 Cor. 10: 6; 1 Pet. 3: 16, 17; 1: 7.

H.S.



The Sufferings of Christ

1 Pet. 1: 11.

IN looking into the great question of the sufferings of Christ we find that they were for two purposes; first, as an atonement for sin, the innocent victim suffering for the guilty; and, second, that He might learn obedience by the things He suffered.

When we consider our Lord's sufferings as an atonement for sin, it comes naturally to us to ask, What is this sin which has created such havoc in the human family, men living for only a few years more or less, and then passing away? Death is continually before our eyes, and we all know by indications in ourselves and each other it is only a question of a few years, and we will also go likewise.

Doubtless you have all heard various suggestions as to what this sin was that brought the sentence of death upon our first parents; and as it concerns us very much let us turn to-day to the Divine Records of Truth in the endeavour to find out exactly what it is; and we might also ascertain whether there is any hope of escape from the effects of sin, and how it may be accomplished. From the account given in Gen. 2: 15, 16, 17, as already explained to-day, we see that the man was given charge of the garden, with liberty to eat of all the fruit therein, only one tree being held in reserve; he was not to eat of that, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 3 gives the account of their disobedience, and of the sentence being passed upon the serpent, and upon the man and the woman. The latter were then driven from the garden, out into the wilderness, to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, till they went back to the dust from whence they were taken.

Disobedience and Rebellion

Disobedience is defined as neglecting or refusing to obey lawful commands; not obedient to authority. To be disobedient is to rebel against or to resist lawful authority. To rebel is to fight or make war against a lawful sovereign. Disobedience is self-will or selfishness.

The immediate result of this action of our first parents was to depose the true King from His position as Ruler in the heart of man, and to raise up another, who usurped that position, and by false repre-

sentations won them over to the act of disobedience. As man himself is not an independent creature, he naturally became subject to him whom he obeyed. He was the servant of him whose word he accepted as truth, and who became to him his master.

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness."—Rom. 6: 16.

To have a wrong thought enter into the mind is not of itself sinful; yet when it is presented, to receive it, then to entertain or consider it, and finally to act upon it—that is wrong, that is sin. Disobedience, therefore, is not a simple act, such as taking some forbidden fruit; that is only the outward indication of the decision of the will. The real act is the determination to disobey lawful authority, and to throw off allegiance thereto; neither is it negative, as of something done by misadventure, but it is absolute and positive, resulting finally in the taking of definite action.

To disobey is to rebel against. Our first parents accepted, believed and acted upon the lie presented to them. They dared even to question the truths of the statements made to them by their Creator regarding the necessity of absolute obedience, and to cast reflections upon the honour, justice, goodness and truth of the Almighty God Himself. This was the sin committed in the garden—disobedience to God's most just commands; rebellion against Him, and charging the Almighty with deceit (Gen. 3: 1-7), which brought the race forever under bondage to Sin as a great taskmaster. God, as Creator, has sovereign rights over the created; He could not share His sovereignty with another; and he had just right to pass the capital sentence of death upon the criminals who had violated His command and rebelled against Him.

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," etc.—Rom. 5: 12-18.

All the descendants of Adam have shown by their proneness to disobedience that, as already stated, they would have transgressed in the same way, had they been tried individually in Eden. It was therefore in our interest that we were involved in that original sin, in order that one redemption price might redeem us all.

What Is a Sin Offering?

That which can take away the sin, and also remove the penalty against that sin, for which the offering is made. The fulfilment of the sentence passed on the criminal would satisfy Justice, but Mercy is here revealed to us, in that a hope of future deliverance was given, even in the passing of the sentence. There was to be enmity between the serpent and the woman, "between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Kindness was shown to the disobedient pair in clothing them before sending them out into the wilderness to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, till they went back to the dust from whence they were taken. (Gen. 3: 15, 21.) Kindness was shown also in that they were allowed to approach unto the Lord, in the acknowledgment of their sin, and in that provision was made through the blood of the sacrifice which clothed them whereby they might obtain a standing before the Lord.

Abel offered an acceptable sacrifice unto the Lord; so did Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; there were all the offerings for sin according to the Law, with Aaron as High Priest, the great atonement Day sacrifices for the priests and then for the people, and then again sacrifices as need would require for any who committed trespass at any time during the year, so that with a nation of imperfect and impulsive people a continual stream of sin offerings would be on the way to the door of the tent of the Tabernacle.—Heb. 11; Lev. 16; 17: 1-5.

The reason for the sacrifice of animals as offerings for sin is stated in Lev. 17: 11—

"For the life of the flesh is the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

In all those sacrifices according to the Law, we may surely note this: that whether for the priests, the congregation, or for individuals, each and all of these sacrifices were for personal transgressions only. As touching the great original transgression in Eden, and Sin the great taskmaster, none ever could venture there. Each one being fully engaged with his own shortcomings, how could any man redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him? (Psa. 49: 7.) But even the sins of the offerers could not be fully atoned for by such means; for we are told that had the blood of bulls and of goats been able to take away sins the worshippers would have been purged and no repetition of the offerings would have been required.—Heb. 10: 1-4.

The True Sacrifice

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do Thy will, O God."—Heb. 10: 5, 6.

"By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all."—Heb. 10: 10; comp. vs. 14.

Of the efficacy of the blood of Jesus to take away sin, the Holy Spirit is a witness unto us, for the Holy Spirit is not given except to those who have accepted the sacrifice of our Saviour as for themselves, and upon doing so they have the testimony of the Holy Spirit that their sins are forgiven fully and freely. (Heb. 10: 15-22; Acts 2: 37, 38; 1 John 1: 9 to 2: 2.) Here is the true Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world, "the Lamb of God, which beareth away the sin of the world," the blood of the sacrifice which

speaketh better things than that of Abel, the blood that maketh an ever-efficacious atonement for the soul. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins; but the glory of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, the MAN CHRIST JESUS, is that the one sacrifice for sins, holy and without blemish, is full and complete, a perfect offering, needing never again to be repeated. (1 Tim. 2: 4-6; Heb. 10: 12, 14; 7: 26, 27; 9: 14; Rom. 4: 24, 25; 1 Cor. 15: 1-4; John 1: 29; Rev. 13: 8; Matt. 26: 28; Lev. 17: 11; Isaiah 53: 10.) Through this sacrifice there is remission of sins, to be no more remembered against us for ever. (Matt. 26: 28; Acts 2: 38; Rom. 5: 1; 8: 1; Heb. 8: 12, 13; 10: 17.) Where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.—Heb. 10: 18.

Jesus also redeemed Israel from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, for it is written, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree"; "cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them." (Gal. 3: 13, 10; Deut. 21: 23.) All Israel were under these curses of the Law, and because He hung on the tree, our Lord was the sacrifice for the sins of the people of Israel, as well as for those of the Gentile world. Its efficacy covers all the sins of the past, and the present, and of the future also, for there is not any need of additional sacrifices for sins still to be committed by our fallen race now living or as yet unborn. The offering for sin is complete, the great work is finished. "This he did once, when He offered up Himself." (Heb. 7: 27.) He tasted death for every man.—Heb. 2: 9, 10.

Whoever, therefore, would make an offering of atonement for their sin and their transgression, acknowledging their sin unto the Lord, can bring no other sacrifice than to plead the blood of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ long ago offered on Calvary. Whoever comes to the Father in the name of Jesus will be heard, his sins will be forgiven for His name's sake, and they will be remembered not any more against him for ever.

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity."—Psa. 32: 1, 2; Rom. 4: 8.

All who accept Christ as their surety have this assurance, that they are no more enemies of God, but reconciled and at peace with Him. "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus."—Rom. 8: 1.

"Not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain Could give the guilty conscience peace or wash away the stain; But Christ, the heavenly Lamb, takes all our sins away, A sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than they."

Learning Obedience

Even a son, dear and loved, may need to learn something in the school of experience. Theory may be good, but practical experience proves the nature of our professions. It is not prosperity that tests the professions of affection. When everything is well, when health is good, business prospering, wealth increasing, then we may have many friends. But let times of difficulties, trials, want of wealth and health, with hardship and distress, surround us on every hand, then we shall see and learn who amongst all our professed friends still remain with us, to help us in our trouble and to comfort in the hour of trial. These are the things which try and test professions of friendship, and which show us whom we may truly hold as friends. The test of the heart is trouble, and those who stand loyal and true

in dark days we may surely rely upon in brighter days.

It is with a thought like this that I ask you to look at the first chapter of Genesis, and the great account of the wonderful works of creation—how each epoch developed and prospered; and, at last, behold, it was all very good. Will you look also please at John's Gospel, and see therein a revealing of the mighty actors in all that wondrous creative work—

"In the Beginning was the Word, and the word was with God, and a God was the word (Gr. MSS.). The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that hath been made." "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."—John 1: 1-3, 14.

Here is given to us the grand statement, that the Word, who was made flesh (our Lord Jesus), and dwelt amongst us, was with the Almighty away back in the beginning; it was He who received all the commands of the Almighty and straightway carried them into execution in all the large and small details of creation. And now there are other works on hand. The Great Almighty God Himself is engaged in this, and he employs and commissions as His chief Messenger and representative, the Word who was with Him at the beginning. And He came, *as willing here as there*, either to create worlds by the power of God, or to come as a humble messenger to sinful men.

Let us notice the contrast: In creation's work, *there was no opposition*; everything answered to the will and power of the Almighty workers; therefore it was a joyful work, it was a work that prospered, it was a work of great magnificence. The stars of heaven sang the praises of the Most High, the earth, the trees and the hills resounded with joy, the beasts of the fields praised the Lord; yea, all living creatures bore witness of His power, His glory, His wisdom and His love. How different was it when He came to earth! He came not as a mighty angel, but in form as a man (albeit perfect and separate from sinners), to endure ignominy and shame, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2: 6-8.) Not only did He leave the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, but He left a condition of honour and power for one of dishonour and suffering. He came to declare what the Father is, and what grace and truth mean, and to work out the great plan of salvation purposed in our Lord Jesus according to His eternal purpose.—Eph. 3: 11.

A grand mission it truly was—not to do His own will, but the will of the Father who sent him, to "finish His work," and that work was, not that the world should be condemned afresh for the sins of the past, but that the world through Him might be saved. (John 6: 38; 4: 34; 5: 30; 17: 4; 3: 17.) And how was He received? Did men respond to His voice as readily as did the atoms of matter in creation? Ah, no! He was met with scornful unbelief; He was rejected and despised of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

"We hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised and we esteemed Him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put Him to grief. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities."—Isaiah 53.

How keen must have been His sufferings when thus despised and humiliated by the very people He came to save, and misunderstood even by His own disciples. Yet in these sufferings He learned obedience; He learned to fulfil the will of God under adverse conditions as cheerfully and joyfully as He had previously executed it under favourable conditions; but the severity of the trial was shown by the agony in the garden, not because of unwillingness to carry the work through, but because He felt the lack of sympathy and appreciation on the part of His disciples and the final anguish of complete separation from His Father in death. In the days of creation He was glorious and powerful; in the days of His flesh, He offered up strong crying and tears to the One alone who understood and sympathised with Him; and He was heard because of His piety. He had borne the tests.

And there at Calvary, having given His life, there was nothing more to give; He gave everything; and so He exclaimed, "It is finished."—John 19: 30.

Weakness and Strength in Temptation

Adam in the garden, specially prepared, planted with all trees and in full bearing of all manner of fruits necessary for the sustenance of life, and all given into his hand, and King over all the animal creation (Gen. 2: 15-20): and with the very first word of temptation that comes to him, he lays down all his privileges and duties, and accepts the lies presented. Not so our Lord Jesus. Not in a garden of plenty, but in the wilderness did the temptation come to Him. (Matt. 4: 1-10.) After forty days' fasting Jesus hungered. Then at that moment of greatest extremity came the tempter, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." He replied, "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The tempter tried Him by daring and rashness, to show Himself indeed God's Son, and was answered, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Nor could the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them tempt him from his allegiance—"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Everything in the world, the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes and the pomp of life came before Him, and He resisted them all. He would abide by the arrangements which God had made; first the cross, afterward the glory, honour and immortality. The cup which the Father had prepared. He was willing to drink. At the mock trial before Pilate, there was no attempt at defence, and when Pilate asked, whence art thou, he answered nothing. Then said Pilate, speakest thou not to me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above. (John 19: 9-11.) Here surely was obedience being learned and practised in times of greatest need and darkest hour! Then delivered he him therefore to be crucified, and they took Jesus and led Him away.—John 19: 16.

Our Lord's submission to the Heavenly Father in His creative work, acting as His agent, was a testimony to His fidelity and loyalty to God. But those works were all external to Himself; they did not involve Him in the loss of honour or prestige; they did not cause Him physical pain or mental anguish. In those days He was not made perfect through suffering. But when

the Father altered the field of action, and said, Come and be thyself tested and tried as a man despised and rejected, till it be proven that thou art all that thou dost profess to be; that thou wilt be true to me in adversity as well as in prosperity; then came the keenest of internal conflicts.

"For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering."—Heb. 2: 10.

Jesus engaged in open combat with the great tempter, the accuser, and by loyal obedience to the will of God in every time and circumstance, even to death itself, He redeemed all of Adam's race (1 Cor. 15: 22), and He is now the Owner of the race, with full authority from the Father, to give to all of the family of Adam an offer of life and salvation.

And so, though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and having been Himself thus perfected or established in obedience, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all those who obey Him. (Heb. 5: 8, 9.) The original sin of disobedience and rebellion was atoned for by Him who practised both obedience and submission, and knowing what suffering is involved in learning the lesson of obedience, He is able to sympathise with and to help all those who are willing to be taught the same great lessons.—Heb. 4: 15, 16; Matt. 11: 28-30.

"Glory to God on high; let earth and heaven reply—

Praise ye His Name!

Angels His name adore, who all our sorrows bore,

Saints sing for evermore,

Worthy the Lamb!"

T. V. S.



A Spiritualist's Experience

IN THE series of articles on "Adversaries and the Adversary," now appearing in the "Advocate," we explained that we could not speak from personal experience of Spiritualism, having been preserved from dabbling in it by the warnings of the Scriptures and the advice of other Christians. For this preservation we thank God, and we trust that others may take similar warning and thus avoid the difficulties which ensue to those who allow themselves to come under the control of evil spirits even to a slight extent. The Apostle Paul was never a spiritualist, and yet he could speak with authority of the Evil One, saying, We are not ignorant of his devices, even though he transform himself into an angel of light, and appear as a harbinger of light. Underneath he is the same prince of darkness.—2 Cor. 11: 13-15; Eph. 6: 11-13; Acts 26: 18.

We do, however, recognise a value in what any one may say who has had personal experience of anything, and therefore we have felt a lack in not being able to present to our readers facts concerning Spiritualism seen by our own eyes, and heard with our own ears. This lack has now been supplied by a brother who comes forward and voluntarily presents his personal experience for what it is worth. In our opinion it is worth a great deal—not that he or we advise anyone to seek a similar experience, but rather that his inside knowledge of what Spiritualism really is may serve as an additional trustworthy testimony against it. The brother's hope also is that some who have been like himself drawn into it without fully realising what they were getting into may be enabled to grasp the fact that there is hope for them also. The spirits have much power, but they have not all power; they may annoy in various ways the one seeking to break away from their influence, but they cannot hold anyone against his will when backed by the all-powerful name of Jesus. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth this brother stands before you whole, represented in his letter, but preferring to remain *incognito*; let us unite in prayer that he may be preserved in his liberty, and that others now in bondage may be made free. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—John 8: 36.

From Darkness to Light

Dear Brother Hennings:—

Seeing the great progress which Spiritualism is making in these days all over the earth, I feel led to write you an account of my experiences in that direction, with the earnest hope that I may be used by God in helping some one from being led astray by this fearful deception. Being born in a country town of Victoria, I knew absolutely nothing about Spiritualism in my youth, as it was not followed by anyone except an odd one or two whom we looked upon as "cranks." But without any teaching on the subject I found myself at a very early age possessed of peculiar gifts. I could influence the minds of persons and in some cases hypnotize them without saying a word, and also could read thoughts, etc. I had visions, and saw some of my future unfolded, but met with very little encouragement in this from others, as what I saw seemed very unlikely to transpire (although it did come true afterwards). I could tell people things of which no one knew except themselves, causing astonishment to myself as well as to them, as I did not understand what the power I possessed was. I then developed the gift of writing poems and short stories under inspiration for a popular religious paper. Sometimes I would awaken in the night, being compelled to get up and write a poem as fast as I could put the words down. When it was finished I would return to bed and sleep again.

All this time I was a professing Christian, but was quite ignorant of what awful power was gaining control of me. In fact, some Christians, on experiencing some evidence of my gifts, would tell me it was the power of God. Later on I came to Melbourne to live, and gained quite a name in my circle of friends, mostly Christians, for the powers I possessed, which I thought were natural gifts. I may say that all this time if Spiritualism was mentioned to me I denied any knowledge of it. But one evening I accompanied a few friends to a Spiritualistic meeting, more from curiosity than anything else, not expecting to enjoy it much, but it was a complete surprise to me. I found the same things said and done under the name of Spiritualism

which I had been doing nearly all my life, and the society of others with the same powers as myself proved to me a great attraction. Hymns and prayers were indulged in, my prejudice vanished, and I thought that Spiritualists were after all quite as religious and quite as good a crowd as those who cried them down. This was the beginning of many visits. I soon became a regular attendant at a Spiritualist Church; the spirits told me I would be capable of becoming a good medium, inspirational speaker, mental and magnetic healer, etc.

I therefore joined a developing class, and sat with a select circle weekly in a class. The supposed spirits of my mother and my father visited me, giving their names and also addressing me by my Christian name, which was not known to any person present at the time. My mother, who was in life very fond of the Bible, held one in her hand, and both parents expressed pleasure at my progress. Gradually, so gradually that I did not notice it going on, *I found the same spirits who at first professed faith in the Bible and prayer and God undermining all my faith in these things.* I found they taught that God is only the name for "good," and Devil another name for "evil," and that these are principles, not persons. Prayer is not made really to God, but is the means of calling into play the hidden forces within the persons' own minds, or sometimes gaining the help of sympathetic spirits.

Amongst other things a closer knowledge revealed the following as some of the teachings of Spiritualism which were new to me, viz., that Jesus was a Son of God only in the sense that we all are, and that His death on the cross is only a myth, as far as its being of any value to us. They say we must not look to anyone outside ourselves for salvation, but by our own efforts gradually progress unto perfection; but as there is no death our opportunities in this direction have no time limit, so they do not urge any haste in the matter. Hence, beyond some vague teaching of love to all, spirits have never in my experience condemned sin in any way, and seem quite willing to work through persons who are far from moral, and never trouble to remind them of their sins.

In this regard I may mention that a spirit professing to be Mrs. General Booth, who, I believe, was a good woman in life, frequently gave trance addresses through a medium who I was informed had been in jail for imposing by false pretences on a lady. I found also that the tendency of spirit teaching was towards following affinities regardless of marriage vows. It is a well-known fact that many of the leading mediums who are married are far from being happy or contented with their lot; in fact, Spiritualism tends to ruin home life.

I believe that the cause of many people becoming mixed up with Spiritualism is the wrong teaching of so-called Christendom. Many people—some really good-hearted and honest folks—are driven away from the Churches by the doctrine of eternal torment, etc., and find the Spiritualist teachings more merciful. Many of their ideas are on the lines of the higher criticism. I found some things in Spiritualism which puzzled me, and some disgusted me also. Some spirits acted very peculiarly. I have seen persons in a weak state of health taken hold of by spirits and injured by their want of consideration. I may mention also one special instance which for a time turned me against the spirits. A

gentleman of refinement, occupying a good position in the city, invited me to his house one evening for the purpose of holding a seance. I accepted the invitation with pleasure, and after some time spent in table rapping, etc., the spirits requested us to form a circle. We did so, and my host went off in a trance quite against his will, and under the influence of a spirit behaved himself very unlike a gentleman, and also used bad language to his wife. After a great deal of trouble we got rid of the spirit, and on regaining his senses my friend seemed unaware of his bad conduct, and again behaved as usually a gentleman does. Of course all Spiritualists admit that there are bad spirits; they say that death does not change the disposition of persons, so they say that this accounts for the evil spirits who they all admit often do a great deal of mischief, lying and deceiving the mediums by giving false messages.

I have been often, while a Spiritualist, very much annoyed by spirits, by great noises in my home, knockings, etc. Although they teach love as the ruling force in the spirit world, and express great anxiety that it should be so on earth, writings, hymns and trance addresses being in this strain, yet if the desires of the spirits are opposed in any way the spirits show their love in a very peculiar fashion by vulgar, spiteful actions. I have known them to appear to the children of mediums in the form of a man holding an axe over their heads, etc., and nearly scare the poor children out of their wits. One of the leading mediums of Melbourne told me this was her experience, and it was mine too.

I found also that spirits did not always keep their word; sometimes at our weekly circle they would promise to materialise at the following class, but did not do so; also the spirit of some well-known person would appear and tell us things which at a later appearance he would deny, and explain that he had not been present before but had been impersonated by a bad spirit.

I found the teachings of spirits by no means uniform, but on the contrary very confused. Some described the spirit world as bright and happy (the "Summerland," they called it); others said they were not at all happy, and professed to suffer remorse, etc. They also continually worry those on earth whom they profess to love with prophecies of coming sickness, deaths and various other things which often do not take place, but give their friends a lot of unnecessary trouble. Although spirits profess to cure disease, and often do cure people, yet nearly every medium of any experience is a nervous wreck, and requires frequent holidays to recuperate strength. The practice of communicating with spirits ruins the nervous system, because spirits work largely through the emotions. I have also been taught that if a bright light is introduced into a room while a medium is in trance, it will cause serious heart weakness. I know that spirits cannot work nearly so well in a bright light; a subdued light or almost total darkness suits best.

In spite of all these drawbacks the spirits gained a great influence over me. Although I did not like every phase of it, yet I became convinced that Spiritualism was the most advanced of all religions, and the more I followed its teachings the greater became my powers. Sometimes by the knowledge I obtained of the inner life of persons, I was able to do some good acts, and this seemed to show Spiritualism in a good light. Yet

the teachings of the spirits being so mixed up and obscure as to the future I might look forward to after death, I was not altogether satisfied. However, my deliverance was at hand from an unexpected quarter. In my constant travels about the city and suburbs, I quite casually picked up some literature which interested me very much, as it taught probation beyond the grave, and held it as a Bible truth. As this was quite new to me, I became interested and was introduced to a small booklet on Spiritualism showing its Satanic origin.

Then began a most powerful opposition on the part of the spirits, who (I believe) possessed me. I was quite determined to thoroughly search the matter out in spite of them, but they opposed me in a most violent manner. I could hardly read at all; my state was fearful, more especially if asking help against them; they would convulse my whole body in a terrible manner, but being now thoroughly convinced of the errors of Spiritualism, I was determined to get freedom. I could not pray, and did not know hardly to whom to go for help, as I did not expect to find many who understood my case, for so many Christian people look on Spiritualism as so much imagination. Frequently I would have to get a firm grip on something solid to steady myself as the spirits shook me up. At last one Saturday, feeling too ill to work, and having eaten no food all day, I called on a gentleman, and was in the act of asking him to request prayers on the following Sunday for my deliverance, when the spirits seized me and I fell backwards on the floor like a dead man. After being for some time unconscious, I slowly came

round, and although it was some hours later before I could walk, I was delivered from that hour. Since then the spirits have no control over me in any way, although they try to.

After gaining my freedom I found my mind much clearer to study further truths; and praise God I very soon afterwards obtained peace though believing on Jesus Christ. The spirits told my wife that while in a certain town I would take ill, complain of my heart, and that she would be a widow before Christmas, 1910. I did take ill in the town they mentioned with nervous breakdown, caused by all I had passed through, and it affected by heart principally, as they had predicted. I was given up by quite a number of doctors, who said I would die very soon; in fact, they said just what the spirits had foretold, that I would not last till Christmas, 1910.

Doubtless the spirits would have been pleased to witness my death, but God preserved me through it all, and still preserves me from their evil powers. I may say that I have now no power to see the future of anyone, nor do I know anyone's thoughts, nor can I do any of the wonderful things I once did. I am still far from strong in body, but my determination is growing stronger to make my calling and election sure. If there is anyone whom I can help by my experiences of Spiritualism I shall be so glad to do so, as I want to do something for Jesus Christ and His Kingdom.

I am, yours in Him,
EX-SPIRITUALIST.



Adversaries and the Adversary

(Continued from November Issue.)

Divination by the Oracle

THE ENGLISH word "oracle" is derived from the Latin *oraculum*, from *orare*, to pray; but the word which in the New Testament is rendered "oracle" is the Greek *logion*, meaning "an utterance," from *logos*, a "word." The word "oracle" in the Old Testament is applied to the Most Holy of the temple, which contained the ark, wherein were the "ten words" and the books of the Law; that being the place from which God's utterances were made to the High Priest, and through the priest to the people. Stephen referred to the Law received at Sinai as the "living oracles" or word (Acts 7: 38, R.V.); Paul said the chief advantage of the Jew over the Gentile was that they had committed to them "the oracles of God," by which he no doubt included both the Law and the Prophets; and Heb. 5: 12 calls the gospel which the apostles taught "the oracles of God." Any authoritative word or utterance of God is therefore an oracle, and to be received by the believer with humility and reverence. We in our day are favoured in having the written Word ever at hand to refer to. "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh." (Heb. 12: 25.) Access to a knowledge of God's will was not always so simple a matter.

Before the giving of the written Law through Moses, with Moses as Mediator between God and the people, God communicated His will to men in four ways—

1. By a Voice. Whether the messenger were seen or unseen, whether it were the voice of God himself or of an angel, whether the voice were audible to the ear, or merely apprehended in a dream or vision, the recipient recognised the communication as from God. (Gen. 1: 28; 2: 16; 7: 1; 12: 1, 7; 15: 1; 18: 13, 14; Exod. 3: 2-10.) These messages were direct commands or promises, and were given only to special persons for specific reasons.

2. By special human agents or prophets, as Noah, who spoke in the name of the Lord.

3. By figurative dreams, interpreted by analogy; as Jacob's dream of the ladder (Gen. 28: 12; John 1: 51), and Joseph's dream of the sheaves, or of the sun, moon and stars doing obeisance to him. (Gen. 37: 7-10.) These revelations by dreams and visions were likewise given to only a few chosen persons; occasionally unbelievers in contact with his people, as Abimelech (Gen. 20: 3), and as the two officers of Pharaoh. The giving of the latter is shown to have been for a special purpose; namely, to give Joseph a reputation as an interpreter and thus cause him to be called to Pharaoh's attention at the proper time.—Gen. 40: 1-23; 41: 9-16.

4. By special providential intervention, as when Abimelech was plagued on account of Sarah, and as when Joseph was carried by the traders to Pharaoh's

court.—Gen. 12: 17; 39: 1, 2. Compare 2 Chron. 33: 11-13.

After the giving of the Law, and up to the close of the Jewish age, these four methods of revelation were continued with some modification. (1) The Voice communicated in the first instance with Moses only; when the people had opportunity to hear it at Sinai, they requested that it be withheld from them. (Exod. 20: 18, 19; 19: 7-9.) The inauguration of the Urim and the Thummim for the use of the High Priest only, rendered unnecessary the constant use of an audible voice, although occasionally used afterward, as when God spoke to Elijah in Horeb (1 Ki. 19: 12), and when He called upon Israel to hear His Son. (Matt. 3: 17.) (2) When the priesthood failed of its duty in guiding the children of Israel in accordance with the decisions of the Urim and the Thummim, God raised up special prophets, to whom His messages were given for delivery to people, rulers and priesthood. These were "holy men of old," who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (2 Pet. 1: 21.) (3) Dreams and visions and visitations of angels were employed for the conveyance of messages as before to a limited number of persons, including the prophets. (4) Providential intervention also continued, having been arranged for in the Law. (Lev. 26.) There was no nation so great as Israel, that had statutes and judgments so righteous and a God so wonderful and powerful.

Three of these methods are mentioned in 1 Sam. 28: 6; God showed his disapproval of Saul by refusing to answer by dreams, by Urim or by prophets.

It was only to be expected then that the Adversary, observing these operations of God for the guidance and protection of His people, should endeavour to thwart God's purposes by imitating His methods and misleading as many as possible by subtlety. Among the nations outside of Israel the Adversary was allowed a free hand. These nations had early forsaken the light of nature, and whatever of revelation they were acquainted with in the days of Noah, and given themselves over to a reprobate mind, becoming the slaves of the grossest superstitions and practises. (Rom. 1: 21-32.) Being without God, no argument is needed to show that their oracles and their visions and dreams were not of God, any more than were their idols and fetishes.—Acts 17: 24-29; Isa. 44: 9-20; Jer. 10: 14, 15.

Voices, Dreams, Providences

Each of these had their imitations among the disobedient of the children of Israel, as well as among the surrounding idolatrous nations. As the magicians of Egypt imitated the miracles of Moses and Aaron to discredit them (Exod. 7: 11, 22; 8: 7), and as the lying spies brought back an evil report concerning the pro-

mised land, for the purpose of inducing the people to rebel against God (Num. 13: 31-33; 14: 1-4), so there were false prophets among Israel after they became established in their land. These false prophets heard voices, dreamed dreams and saw visions not of God; they gave the people a false feeling of prosperity and security in order to seduce them from God to the worship of the Baal and other gods.—2 Pet. 2: 1, 15.

Every message from the false prophets was represented as the voice of God, thus giving the people His apparent approval of their wickedness. (Jer. 5: 25-31; 14: 14.) Jehoshaphat knew that the King of Israel was in rebellion against God, yet he asked him to inquire of the Lord, and willingly listened to the prophesyings of four hundred prophets of Baal. They said, "Thus saith the Lord," with as much assurance as any true prophet could have in saying it. But when Micaiah, the genuine prophet of the Lord, apparently agreed with the false prophets, Jehoshaphat discerned (perhaps from Micaiah's manner and tone) that he was speaking ironically. What Jehoshaphat wanted was, that Micaiah should agree with the false prophets. He had already made up his mind to do wrong, and he wanted some one to justify him in his wrong course. (1 Ki. 22: 5-18.) For his faithfulness in delivering the true message Micaiah subsequently suffered (Vs. 27); it remained for following events to prove its genuineness.—Vss. 28-37.

Jehoshaphat's action was representative of the conduct of many others among both rulers and ruled in Israel, and finds its counterpart to-day among Christians, who set their hearts on having their own way and then seek far and wide for a prophet of some sort to bolster them up in the fancy that they are doing God's will. Having "itching ears" they search for a preacher to tickle them with sophistries. Such must sooner or later come to grief. (2 Tim. 4: 3, 4; 2 Pet. 2: 1-3; Jude 5, 15.) Likewise there are teachers to-day, as there were prophets in olden times, ready to sell God's people for a consideration.—2 Pet. 2: 3, 14-19.

The Oracle of the Hebrews

The following are all the references to the Urim and the Thummim: Exod. 28: 30; Lev. 8: 8; Num. 27: 21; Deut. 33: 8; 1 Sam. 28: 6; Ezra 2: 63; Neh. 7: 65. The meaning of the words is "the Lights and the Perfections." (See R.V., Leeser, etc.) Some commentators consider that these were but another name for the precious stones of the breastplate, upon which were graven the names of the children of Israel, and that the answers were given by illumination of the stones; others think that the answers were given by an audible voice. It would be difficult, for example, to understand how the prophecy of John 11: 49-52 could have been communicated to Caiaphas by simply illuminating the stones

of the breastplate; but it would be easy to understand how a "Yes" or "No" could be given by the appearance or non-appearance of a light, in answer to a direct question as to the eligibility of a priest (Ezra 2: 61-63; Neh. 8: 63-65), or the guilt successively of a tribe, family and individual (Josh. 7: 14-18), or as to whether David should go up to battle. (1 Sam. 23: 2, 4, 11.) The necessity of the Urim and the Thummim in order to receive answers from the Lord is shown in Ezra 2: 61-63; Neh. 8: 63-65. With the Urim the question of eligibility could have been decided in a moment; without it there was no alternative but to exclude the applicants.

Another suggestion is that the Urim and the Thummim was neither the breastplate nor its jewels, but something added. Exod. 28: 15-29 describes the breastplate with the twelve stones, and verse 30 says, "And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim." Leaser's translation reads "into"; other translators have "on to." Might they have been two precious stones of particular purity and brilliancy? Moses seems to have understood what was meant, and may have instructed Aaron in their use. Were they some token of His presence which God had given him in the mount?

"The Lights and the Perfections" being placed in the breastplate of judgment may have symbolised that God who is light knows all things, and that His judgment is perfect; and the fact that Aaron bore them upon his heart would indicate the preciousness to him and to Israel of the presence and judgment of God, just as the bearing of the twelve stones upon his heart into the Most Holy was a memorial before the Lord of the existence and fidelity of Priest and people.

It is not unlikely that some method of receiving answers from God was in vogue from the very beginning among those descendants of Adam who called upon the name of the Lord (Gen. 4: 24), and that Noah and his family continued the same after the flood. Melchisedec was priest of the Most High God, ministering at Salem, and no doubt enjoyed the privilege of communion with God. Rachel inquired and received a comforting assurance, together with a prophecy quoted in the New Testament as an authoritative answer from the Lord. (Gen. 25: 22, 23; Rom. 9: 12.) In this she no doubt followed the custom of her people who originated in Ur of the Chaldees, whence Abraham and his family migrated to Canaan. Indeed, it was to avoid an alliance with idolaters that Abraham sent his servant to the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia, to select a wife for Isaac (Gen. 24: 3, 10); Jacob also married among his own people, who acknowledged the same God.—Gen. 31: 44-54.

The Oracle among the Pagans

This may have existed from earliest times in imitation of the oracle of God; for the custom of consulting

the oracle can be traced among many ancient eastern peoples, and is in vogue to this day among savage tribes. Balaam appears to have been a worshipper of the true God, though not closely associated with the children of Israel; his apostasy, graphically told in the Scriptures, suggests how others may have fallen away. In spite of his covetous desire to earn the reward of the enemy of Israel, each time he consulted the Lord, hoping for a curse upon Israel, he could gain consent only to bless them. But he grievously sinned in having the evil desire in his heart, in visiting Balak, and in building altars to God in the mount of Balak; thus publicly associating himself with the idolaters. He could not curse Israel under the inspiration of God, but his personal example proved a curse, and the rebellious among the Israelites soon joined themselves to Baal-peor.—Num. 22; 23; 24; 25: 1-5; 2 Pet. 2: 15.

This association of the children of Israel with the Canaanites in the worship of Baal continued more or less all through their age, one of the greatest of their abominations being the passing of innocent children through the fire of the god Moloch. (2 Kings 17: 7-17.) No wonder the Lord was provoked to anger and sent them, first the ten tribes, and subsequently the two tribes, into captivity! (2 Ki. 17: 18-23.) The valley of Hinnom, in which the statue of Moloch was erected, became subsequently the garbage tip of Jerusalem, and was used by our Lord as a representation of the Second Death.*

The oracles of the heathen deities, while ostensibly speaking with the authority of God, could not of course guarantee their utterances; too often the God of the Hebrews discomfited them. But the memories of the people were short, and the idol temples exercised a fascination for them. Moreover, the priests were crafty, and knew how to make their failures appear successes. They also knew how to give answers from the oracle capable of more than one interpretation, or so worded that whatever happened the oracle would seem to have foretold it. From this practice the word "oracular," in the case of the Hebrew oracle referring to an authoritative utterance from God, came to have its secondary meaning of "obscure" or "enigmatical." It is in the latter sense that it is principally used to-day, an "oracular" speaker or teacher being one to whose phrases two or more meanings may be attached; hence, an unreliable person.

One of the best known of the oracles of antiquity was that of Apollo at Delphi, situate in a magnificent temple. There was also a popular oracle at Dodona, whose god dwelt in a tree, the responses being given by the priests in accord with certain augurs by the flight

See "Everlasting Punishment," page 44.

of birds and other movements of nature. Concerning the oracle at Delphi the historian says:—

"In the historic period, and perhaps from the earliest times, a woman known as the Pythoness was the organ of inspiration, and it was generally believed that she delivered her oracles under the direct afflatus of the god. The divine possession worked like an epileptic seizure, and was exhausting, and might be dangerous, nor is there any reason to suppose that it was stimulated. . . . It is probable that what she uttered were only unintelligent murmurs and that these were interpreted into relevance and set in metric or prose sentences by the 'prophet' and the 'holy ones,' members of leading Delphi families who sat round the tripod, who received the questions of the consultant beforehand, probably in writing, and usually had considered the answers that should be given."—*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition, art. "Oracle."

Special preparation was made by the Pythoness for the seizure, such as partaking of certain foods or drink, the practice of various form of magic, and the utterance of certain mystical words. Modern critics as above discredit the use by the medium of logical sentences, and attribute to her only "unintelligent murmurs." The modern science of psychology seeks to explain such phenomena on the ground of mental stimulus or self-delusion, whereby the subject throws himself into a trance and exhibits a purely human phenomenon, the activity of the "subconscious mind" while the controlling faculties are under restraint. This is not the view, however, of many Christians who study their Bibles and compare the historical descriptions of the oracle at Delphi with the account of Paul's meeting with the Pythoness at Thyatira. (Acts 16:16-18.) This damsel had apparently at one time acted as Pythoness at the temple of Apollo, or been associated with that oracle in some capacity requiring spirit possession, and had been taken "on tour" by certain speculators for gain. The words she uttered were not "unintelligible murmurs," but a plain and emphatic declaration—"These men [i.e., Paul and his companions] are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation." And this she did many days." Paul had no hesitation in ascribing her state to demoniacal possession, similar to that elsewhere described in the New Testament. The command was given to an intelligent spirit who knew Jesus, and knew the disciples of Jesus, and when the demon had left the damsel she was of no more use to her masters. Possibly that same evil spirit assisted in the uproar following, as the spirit cast out of the man among the tombs caused the trouble among the swine. But the Lord by a miracle delivered Paul and Silas from the illegal imprisonment.

Psychologists have yet to prove that mediumship and similar phenomena are natural manifestations of human powers. The burden of proof is on them. In the meantime it is safe to conclude, on the basis of the Scriptures, cited, that if the travelling Pythoness was under the control of an evil spirit, who gave her the

power of divination or soothsaying, the same was the case with the Pythonesses who served at Delphi and at other pagan temples.

Without questioning the fact that, as historians state, influential persons at Delphi surrounded the oracle, as hosts of priests and priestesses were attached to the temples, and that they often gave out good advice, tending to the temporal prosperity of those who sought guidance from Apollo, the god of ways, demoniacal possession is the only adequate explanation of the more mysterious facts and phenomena associated with pagan oracles. But even this good advice, bringing apparent prosperity to the frequenters of the oracle, was not an unmixed good, because it increased the power of an idolatrous religion; it was a false "providence," as the god represented by the idol was a false "god." Adversity is better than prosperity in many cases; it is always better than prosperity under the delusions of Satan if it will assist one to seek and to find the true God and His righteousness.

Of those who consulted the oracle, there were skeptics then as now, who possibly saw nothing phenomenal, or who attributed what they saw to purely human agencies. Indeed, the skeptics often made their own omens by causing a flight of birds and then announcing a prophecy which they proceeded to carry out. At a later day the Roman consuls were not above gaining popular support to their military campaigns by such means. But all the charlatanry and trickery attributable to priests or rulers in those days no more explain the spirit-possession of the Pythonesses than do the tricks and sleight of hand of modern "magicians" explain modern spiritualistic mediumship. Thousands of investigators, including well-known scientists, have sought to discover where trickery ends and actual spirit-manifestation begins, and have failed. They fail partly because, in the words of M. Camille Flammarion, the French scientist, "It is infinitely to be regretted that we cannot trust the loyalty of the mediums. They almost all cheat. This is extremely discouraging to the investigator." As all of the most famous modern mediums, taken up by different scientists, and of whom much has been said and written in books, newspaper reviews, and magazine articles, have been found untrustworthy, and the scientists are in despair or seduced to collusion to save their own reputations, the Christian has nothing to gain by personal "investigation."

Perhaps the Apostle Peter had in mind heathen oracles in contrast with the authoritative and unchangeable utterances of God, when he said—

"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."—2 Pet. 4:11.

(To be continued.)

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