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The Second Advent of Christ and Its Blessings

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ: and he shall reign unto the ages of the ages. And the four and twenty elders, which sit before God on their thrones, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, which art and which wast; because thou hast taken thy great power and didst reign. And the nations were wroth, and thy wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, the small and the great: and to destroy them that destroy the earth."

—Rev. 11: 15-18, R.V. margin.

HAVING now seen—it is hoped clearly—the Scripture teaching concerning the Presence (Parousia) of our Lord at His Second Advent, that His Kingdom was not to come with outward show, but was to be *among* the people, powerful yet invisible, as that of Satan has been; having also realized that He was to be present for a time while the people generally were in ignorance of the great fact; having realized also that these are the times of His Presence for the purpose of setting up His glorious Kingdom in power, it behooves us now to consider what are some of the blessings that are to be brought by His Presence in the earth for the Thousand Years.

The fact of His presence will be first manifested to the unbelieving world and sleeping nominal Christians by the "flaming fire" and the dreadful "clouds" of the time of trouble that impends at this moment. Not that He will be manifested to the eyes of their flesh, but rather to the eyes of their minds or understandings. So clearly will He be manifested to the eyes of understanding of the nations, that it is written that they shall see Him coming in the clouds (Rev. 1: 7), and that all the tribes of the earth shall be vexed and shall wail because of Him. (Matt. 24: 30.) But it seems not to be intended that He shall be seen by the eye of flesh, because He is now the exact impress of the Father's substance, and no man can look upon God and live. (Heb. 1: 3, R.V. margin; Ex. 33: 20.) It is also written, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me." (John 14: 19.) "But ye see me;" yes, we cherish the hope that we shall some day see our dear Redeemer,

Mediator, High Priest and King as He is, in all His glory. But should we have that unspeakable privilege, to look upon the faces of the Father and Himself, it will not be because they will have miraculously made it possible for the eye of flesh to behold them, but rather because we shall have been changed from our present fleshly conditions to spiritual ones according to the promise, so that we shall be like Him, not He like us. (1 Cor. 15: 44, 49, 50; 1 John 3: 2.) There is no prospect held out that fleshly beings, as such, shall ever be able to behold the face of our glorified Lord; to the contrary, the emphatic statement concerning our Lord Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of lords, is that He dwells in the light which *no man* can approach unto; "whom *no man* hath seen, nor can see." (1 Tim. 6: 15, 16.) The manifestation of the fact of our Lord's presence to the world will not be to the eyes of their flesh, but to the eyes of their understanding, through the events of the time of trouble that is about to destroy the whole of the present social order.

The first effect of our Lord's taking to Himself of His great power to reign is the anger of the nations as they realize their power declining, and God's greater wrath with them as they resist the divine decree that His Son should reign. There can be but one end to such a controversy, and that is that the resisting political systems should be utterly swept away, destroyed by the fierce flames of the fire of God's wrath (Rev. 6: 17; 2 Pet. 3: 7, 10) in order that the people might afterward have turned to them the pure language of divine truth so that they might also worship God in spirit and in

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truth, unhindered by the fetters of error and superstition that have prevented them from even knowing that there is a God in heaven, and that salvation is provided for in Jesus Christ His Son, and in Him alone, for there is no other name given.

After the sweeping away of the present social order, the blessings of the Second Presence of our Lord will begin to make themselves manifest. For the present purpose these blessings may be considered under four heads, as mentioned in Rev. 11: 18—"the time to give their reward (1) to thy servants the prophets, and (2) to the saints, and (3) to them that fear thy name, the small and the great; and (4) to destroy them that destroy the earth."

"To Thy Servants the Prophets"

This class comprehends the faithful under the old dispensation, the last member of their honorable company having been John the Baptist. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the Kingdom of God is preached." (Luke 16: 16.) "All the prophets and the law prophesied until John." (Matt. 11: 13.) Abel belonged to that company, also Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham, and Sarah, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and Moses, and David, and Samuel, and all the holy prophets down to and including John the Baptist, already mentioned. Besides these, there were many others less conspicuous, whose names are not even mentioned to us as yet, who were faithful in the midst of great persecutions for the sake of truth and righteousness, and who through their faith obtained promises and did great wonders, some of the faithful women even receiving their dead raised to life again. And some of them were tortured, refusing the offered deliverance, "that they might obtain a better resurrection." (Heb. 11.) They were not perfect, but they were men and women of faith. Inasmuch as they believed God, and acted as well as they could upon their belief in what God told them, God was pleased to count their faith to them for righteousness, as He did that of Abraham, in anticipation of the perfect sacrifice of Jesus that was to be offered in the fullness of time. (Rom. 4: 3.) On this account, these faithful ones, who all died in faith, not having received the promises, are numbered with the first of the two classes mentioned by our Lord when He spoke of the resurrection of the dead which He would bring to pass; they belong to those that have done good, and they shall be raised at once to the everlasting life and the reward promised them. They have passed their judgment in a manner acceptable to God, and, having obtained a good report through their faith (Heb. 11: 39), no further judgment or testing is required. Those who have done evil will be raised to judgment, to be judged in the next age, and the better resurrection that the Ancients had in view was that they should be raised at once to life and their reward without further testing and trial.—John 5: 28, 29.

Their reward will be earthly. To Father Abraham God made a promise of a certain portion of land which He showed to Abraham, and which the latter saw with his own eyes. (Gen. 13: 14-17.) Although this land was explicitly promised to Abraham, he never was the possessor of a footbreadth of it, but dwelt in it as a stranger and a sojourner. (Acts 7: 5; Heb. 11: 9.) Did God's promise, then, go by default? No! God is no defaulter; all His promises are sure, and all His purposes are brought to pass. Abraham shall have his land

that he saw, and the faithful of the old dispensation shall share the inheritance with him, as promised. No doubt, the return of the rains to Palestine, tending to make it again a country suitable for agricultural and pastoral pursuits, whereas it has been little better than a desert for many centuries, is being brought to pass by divine power in our days by way of preparing that land for the comfortable habitation of those to whom it belongs by divine promise. How grand it will be when the land perfected shall be the dwelling place of those faithful ones of the old dispensation!

But the influence of these Worthies is not to be limited to the land which God promised to Father Abraham. They are distinguished in the divine purpose by another prediction, which bespeaks for them the highest earthly positions in connection with the affairs of the Kingdom of God, whenever it shall be fully established in power and great glory. It seems easy to understand why they should be thus honored with such great responsibilities in the New Order; being perfect men, they will be able to set a perfect example of righteousness to the rest of the people of the world, who will be much in need of such example; the Ancients will also instruct the people in the ways of the Lord, and, while holding the positions of authority in the earth in those days, they will be able to maintain a kindly and sympathetic attitude toward the weaknesses and mistakes of those who then will seek to render obedience to Christ, the King of kings, whose delegates the Ancients will then be.

The portion of Scripture which prophesies this great distinction for the Ancients is—

"Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth."—Psalm 135: 16.

Instead of being the fathers of our Lord Jesus Christ, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and others shall be His children, because He will raise them from death, and will thus be their father or life-giver. He will give them princely positions in all the earth in the next age, thus constituting them His delegates and representatives in all parts of the earth for the purposes of His government. Knowing, as we now do, this much of the manner in which the Kingdom of God will be organized when it undertakes to cause God's will to be done on earth as in heaven, and realizing that the Ancients will be the visible representatives of the King "Who dwells in light unapproachable," we are enabled to know and adopt, without vacillation or uncertainty, the correct attitude toward the efforts at social reform which abound in our day. Some of these movements profess to be acting in the name of Christ, and some of them are wholly secular. But however much we may admire the zeal of these would-be reformers, and however much we may sympathize with the objects they desire to accomplish, we are bound to realize that they are not the Kingdom work, because the work of social reform is to be carried on under the direction of the perfect Princes, the Lord's own delegates whom HE will appoint—and the Princes are not yet on the scene. We thus have it brought home to us more forcibly than ever, that the work of the Church during the Gospel age is not social reform, but is the taking out of a people for the name of Christ. In this let us persevere, by declaring the good tidings to as many as possible far and near, by word of mouth and by printed matter, for it is by the Gospel message that the people is being taken out for the name of Christ to become

His joint heirs. "He called you *by our Gospel*, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Thess. 2: 14.

"To the Saints"

The reward prepared for the saints is most extraordinary, being nothing less than the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, to sit with Him in His throne, and to live and reign with Him for the Thousand Years. (Rev. 3: 21; 20: 4.) If the dignity of the Ancients is to be great, the glory of the saints is to be much greater. If God provided for them a very good thing, He has provided for us "some better thing." (Heb. 11: 39, 40.) We are told that our Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, and that He dwells in the light which no human being can approach unto; we are also told that this inheritance of His is reserved in heaven for us who are being kept by the power of God through faith unto the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter 1: 3-5.) The inheritance of the Ancients is reserved on the earth; the reward of the saints is reserved in Heaven. They saw some of their inheritance; we have never seen ours. In order that we may see our inheritance, we must be changed from fleshly to spiritual bodies; then we shall be like our Lord in glory, and then we shall be able to see Him as He is. (1 Cor. 15: 49; 1 John 3: 2.) This is the unspeakably glorious reward of the saints who have followed faithfully in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ during this age, having been cleansed by His precious blood from all unrighteousness. This is the salvation that is to be brought to the saints at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

No one who has a true conception of values will deny that this exceedingly great inheritance is well worthy the best efforts that can be made by us on its behalf, so that we might not fall short of the thing promised. Nor will any well informed Christian deny that at our very best we cannot in ourselves be worthy of this wonderful reward. Our sufficiency for this is of God. Who promises the reward, and this sufficiency is in Christ.

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."—1 Cor. 1: 30, 31.

It remains for us, who have been enlightened and called by the Gospel with this "High Calling," to see to it that we give ourselves up wholly to do the will of God, and that we also be exceedingly watchful and prayerful in our efforts to prevent the entrance into our lives of anything that would in the least degree hinder us from whole hearted devotion to the divine will. "Let no man," says the Apostle, "beguile you of your reward."

The saints, as well as the Ancients, are in the first class of the two mentioned in John 5: 29, because they "have done good." Not that a single saint has been perfect in goodness beyond his desire to be so; God has been merciful to our unrighteousness with the mercy which the New Covenant provides through Christ Jesus, Our Mediator and Advocate. And our continued acceptableness to God has been in proportion to our submission to the Holy Spirit's writing upon the tables of our hearts.—Heb. 8: 6, 10-13; 9: 15; 1 John 2: 2; 2 Cor. 3: 3-5, 18.

The order in which these blessings should be bestowed is that the saints who have slept should first receive their portion, then the saints who are alive and remaining

unto the presence of the Lord should receive theirs. The manner of this has already been considered under the title, "The Second Coming of the Lord, and our Gathering together unto Him." "God having provided some better thing for us, *that they without us should not be made perfect*," intimates that the Ancients could not receive their reward before the saints, and suggests that they will be rewarded directly after the living saints shall have been changed. These two classes include all who have "done good" from the beginning of our race down to the time of the second advent of Christ and the change of the living saints, and they, under Christ the Everlasting Father, will constitute the Millennial Hierarchy, the saints as kings and priests on the throne with Christ, and the Ancients as princes in all the earth, the perfect human representatives and delegates of Jesus Christ. Who dwells in the unapproachable light, in the ineffable glory of divinity.

"To them that fear Thy Name, the Small and the Great"

If the saints and the Ancients together include all who have been acceptable to God to the time of the Second Advent, "What are these, . . . and whence came they?" Will there be an opportunity after the Second Advent of Christ to exercise faith and receive a reward? Yes; there will be such an opportunity afforded all who have not had it and wilfully sinned it away. The number of persons to be granted that opportunity under the favorable conditions which will obtain in the next age must be tremendous; it will include the unenlightened heathen (white and colored) as well as those who have died before reaching years of discretion. It will include practically all who are in the graves, and who do not belong to the first class mentioned in John 5: 29. And so the Revelator saw a vision of the dead, small and great, standing before the throne in the next age (Rev. 20:12); and he heard the invitation go forth from the Spirit and the Bride to all who were athirst and who-soever would to come and drink of the river of water of life which in his vision he saw proceeding from the glorious throne as ruling in the next age.—Rev. 22: 1, 17.

Why should there not be believers in the next age? If the testimony of Paul was believed in Thessalonica notwithstanding great opposition, why should not the testimony concerning Christ be believed in all parts of the earth in the next age, when there will be no toleration by the Lord of opposition to the Truth? Does not the Apostle distinctly mention the two classes of believers when he says that Christ "shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day?" (2 Thess. 1: 10.) And will not the believers in the next age greatly admire Christ, when they come to know the truth about Him? Some of them have known absolutely nothing about Him, and have died in that state of ignorance which was no fault of theirs; others have heard something about Him, but that which many of them have heard has not been calculated to attract them to Him; yet others have been so much under the influence of evil environment and other unfavorable conditions of life that the truth about Christ could have no attraction whatever for them. The publication of the Truth about God and Christ, and the Ransom for all, and the One Mediator between God and men, as it will be fully and properly made known to these in the next age, is necessary in order that God's will may be done, His will being that all men shall come to

the knowledge of the truth.—1 Tim. 2: 4-6.

The saints will have their dwelling place in heaven; the Ancients will have theirs on earth, a special portion being held in reserve for them. Those who will become believers in the next age will also dwell on the earth, and it will be their everlasting home, in harmony with the will of God expressed through the prophet Isaiah—

"For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens: God himself that formed the earth and made it: He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord, and there is none else."—Isa. 45: 18.

Consideration of this blessing, as taught in the Scriptures, is approached by many Christians with much fear and many misgivings, lest they should believe something that is too good to be true. It would be the greatest folly to believe more than God tells us about these things, and none of us wishes to do that; but it is equal folly not to believe that which God has told us. If, therefore, it has pleased God to arrange that the next age shall be a time of blessing for those who have not been fully enlightened, and that then they may believe in Jesus and be saved; and if He has told us this in His Word, why should we not believe and teach it? The only question ought to be, Is it so taught in the Bible? If it is, let us believe it with all our hearts, and let us tell it again, launching out in faith upon the divine promises. Limitations of space forbid the presentation and discussion here of all the Scriptural evidence on this subject; the inquirer is therefore referred to "Bible Talks," chapters 3, 4 and 5.

"Destroy them that Destroy the Earth"

Undoubtedly it will be a great blessing when the wilfully corrupt are finally dealt with and everlastingly destroyed. And all must agree that if God's will is to be done on earth as in heaven, there is no alternative but the destruction of those who wilfully disobey Him. There could be no unity of spirit and purpose between the obedient and the wilfully disobedient, but always discord and controversy. Were the disobedient allowed to live after their wilfulness had been fully demonstrated in the next age, there would never be a state of harmony and repose. It will therefore be a blessing not only to the righteous, but also to the wicked that the latter should be put out of existence, so that their baneful presence might no longer mar the peace of the Universe, and be a source of possible corruption of the righteous. Any one who refuses to love God with all his might, mind and strength, and his neighbor as himself, and who refuses to acknowledge that Jesus died for his sins accord-

ing to the Scriptures and therefore is ready to act as Mediator or Reconciler between God and himself—any one who refuses to do these things after being enlightened, deserves all the penalty that God has provided for such disobedience.

Thank God, there is no reason to believe that He intends to eternally torment these wicked ones. "All the wicked will he destroy." (Psalm 145: 20.) The disobedient "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (2 Thess. 1: 9.) When this shall be accomplished there will be no voice but that of praise to God, no desire but that of obedience to His holy and perfect will for evermore. The wilfully wicked are not to be banished to some corner of the Universe, there to spend eternity in pain and blasphemy; they are to be blotted out, never to be heard from any more for ever. It will be an awful punishment that these will bring upon themselves, yet it will be a blessing thus to have them dealt with, and to be relieved of their presence.

Here again we find timid souls fearing lest they should believe something about God that is too good to be true. And Satan, ever ready to impose upon one's fears, seeks to hold God's people in this state of unbelief of truth by the apparently reasonable "argument" that if the destruction of the wilfully wicked were taught, instead of eternal torment, the wickedness of the wicked would be so increased that there would be no living in the earth. This is only a statement of a supposition, and there is no evidence to support it. All the evidence that is available on the subject points the other way. Eternal torment has been taught for more than fifteen centuries in Christendom, and what is the state of Christendom to-day? Has the world been converted by the teaching of eternal torment? No, and it is not likely to be. Does God propose to convert people to Himself by the teaching of eternal torment? Do we love Him because He will eternally torment us if we do not? No; "we love *because he first loved us.*"—1 John 4: 20.

Much more might be said on this subject, and many passages of Scripture might be referred to, but as the subject has been fully discussed elsewhere, the reader is referred to that.

Dearly beloved, as we realize the times we are living in, and that we are even now in the days of the presence of the Son of Man, which shall culminate in the day when he shall be revealed, let us seek by all means to make our calling and election sure to an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and may it be our privilege to inherit the chief blessing!



Suffering with Christ

(Hampton Conference Addresses—"Suffering and Joy." Continued from last issue.)

"If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8: 17.

WE HAVE heard to-day of the sufferings of mankind; of the curse which came upon all because of the unbelief and disobedience of Father Adam. We have also heard of the sufferings of a special few, comparatively speaking, who before

the First Advent suffered on account of their endeavour to do the Will of God. They believed the promises, and suffered much for righteousness' sake, and the faithful ones of Abraham's descendants strove to walk in the path of faith as he and other ancients had done.

But the suffering I desire to speak about to-day is a suffering peculiar to this age. It is a suffer-

ing like some one else, in some respects like that of Abraham and the holy prophets whom we are exhorted to take as examples of faith and patient endurance (James 5: 10; Heb. 12: 1; Rom. 4: 16), but more especially like that of One whom we can take a pleasure and have full confidence in following, because we have the assurance that He was none other than the Son of God. Jesus left us an example, that we should follow *His* steps.

In the early days of Christianity, the Church seems to have suffered a great deal physically on account of their faith, and all through the dark ages they suffered much; but as the consumption of the Papacy has proceeded, physical suffering gradually diminished in many lands, until now there seems to be very little. Of course, we know of Christians who suffer bodily, but in the majority the physical sufferings are only such as result from disease either inherited or acquired. Therefore something more than physical pain alone must be meant by suffering with Christ.

A Tarrying Time

But how do we suffer with Christ? Seeing that the time we are living in is so peaceful, and the very laws of the land protect us as well as they can, and even do much to alleviate the sufferings of the people.

Many have asked: How do I suffer with Christ? I have no illness; in fact, I enjoy excellent health; neither am I put in prison or driven out of house and home, as were the early Christians, or as are Christians now in some uncivilised countries. That is where I am worried, for I plainly see that, unless I suffer with Him, I cannot obtain the prize of the High Calling.

I will ask you to look at Matt. 25: 1-6. We may see, perhaps, some reason why our particular day is so peaceful, and this will perhaps help us to see what the true suffering is.

Verse 1: "And went forth to meet the bridegroom." We could think of this as the called out ones all through the age, having gone out to meet their Lord, whose second advent had been promised. In so doing, they gave up their former mode of living, to embrace a code of love and affection. Many of these have long been asleep; nevertheless, they obeyed the call to go forth, and they will meet Him.

Verse 2: We have thought the five wise and the five foolish virgins represent two classes.

Verse 3: The foolish would be those of the general professing class without a proper knowledge, and deficient in the Holy Spirit.

Verse 4: But the wise had the oil, the Holy Spirit.

Verse 5: The tarrying has been all through the age, till the Second Coming of our Lord.

Verse 6: The midnight seems something like the times we are living in. Spiritually the present day is very dark. Even with all the experience and helps we have, the light which the saints enjoy is only as a lamp in a dark place.

You will mark that sleep does not indicate activity, but rather resting. I think we can say, then, that this is a resting time for many, but I do not think so for the church. And yet we are in a peculiar position: although we are resting with the remainder of the world, in one sense, we should be active according to the Spirit

(1 Thes. 5: 6), gathering the oil and developing the graces of the Spirit, so that when the time comes, our lamps may be burning bright, and we may be ready to meet the Lord.

The Meaning of Suffering

To "suffer" means to bear, endure, tolerate, admit, allow, permit. We will look at a few texts where the word is used with these shades of meaning, and perhaps that will help us to understand in what way our sufferings are with Christ.

1 Cor. 9: 12: Here we see the apostle suffering for the sake of the Gospel of Christ, not to take anything from the Corinthians, although he had the power; but knowing them as he did, he bore with them for the Gospel of Christ's sake.

1 Peter 2: 23: This is speaking of our Lord's endurance under trying experience; that, "when He was reviled, He reviled not again, when He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."

Matt. 3: 15: This is equivalent to saying, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it behoves us to fulfil all righteousness."

1 Cor. 10: 13: Here the word "suffer" has the same meaning, to permit.

Undergoing Pain

But there is yet another and deeper meaning to the word "to suffer"; it means to undergo pain. There may be a degree of pain involved in allowing others to do or to refrain from doing certain things, as when Paul bore with the Corinthians in the matter of financial support; our Lord underwent both physical and mental pain when He allowed Himself to be reviled and spit upon by the crowds, and when scourged with the usual stripes applied to a condemned criminal; but the most severe of all pain is that which is concerned with the affections: and it is this kind of suffering to which I wish to call your special attention.

We have already heard to-day that the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ were of two kinds, or rather for two purposes; first, as a sacrifice for sin; and second, that He might learn obedience by the things He suffered. In the suffering as a sacrifice for sin we are not invited to share, for only one offering for sin was needed, and our Lord Jesus offered that "once for all" when He gave His perfect human body, unblemished and sinless, on the cross. But we may and do suffer with Him in learning obedience; that is, our sufferings, or the pain we undergo, both mental and physical, and deeply touching our affections, if they come upon us when seeking to learn obedience, are truly suffering as He suffered—suffering with Christ. Our Lord suffered or endured the reproaches of those who reproached God His Father (Rom. 15: 3), and we suffer or endure the same sort of reproaches, having our names cast out as evil, and being counted the off-scouring of the earth (Heb. 13: 13). Further, it was pointed out that our Lord Jesus Christ suffered in that whereas in His pre-existent state his every word was executed as soon as spoken, when He came to earth He found the very reverse—His words were unheeded, His commands disobeyed; He was "despised and rejected of men." And still more severe were His sufferings in that while He always did those

things which were pleasing in the Father's sight, He was separated from His Father and humiliated to a criminal's death, and separated also from His disciples who failed fully to understand Him or sympathise with Him.

The Mind of Christ

I would like to bring to your notice that in all this the keenness of our Lord's sufferings was due to the depth and warmth of His affections. He loved the Jewish people, therefore their rejection of Him was felt the more keenly; He loved His disciples, therefore their failure to understand Him, and their constant bickering among themselves, increased His sense of loneliness and desolation. He loved the whole world, for He had come to give His life a ransom for all; therefore He felt the indifference of the Romans who might have protected him from injustice as they did ordinary prisoners. But, above all, He loved His Heavenly Father, and was grief-stricken that the Father also should forsake Him in the last hour. The loving, tender heart of Jesus was continuously grieved and pained from the beginning of His ministry to the end.

In 1 Pet. 4: 13 we are told to rejoice inasmuch as we are made "partakers of Christ's sufferings." In order, therefore, to be partakers of His sufferings, we must first be made partakers of His affection. If the sufferings of Christ are to abound in us (2 Cor. 1: 5) we must first have the *mind of Christ* abounding in us, that we may love as He loved. I think, dear friends, that we can rejoice indeed if this suffering and this love are being experienced by us. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 2: 5.) Having His mind, we would, like Him, desire to do the perfect will of God; we would love God supremely, and would love the brethren even to the extent of laying down our lives for them, and would endeavour to be kind and good to all men. To live a holy life in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation who care nothing for the will of God is sure to bring trouble; hence our suffering, and *suffering with Christ*.

Trying the Affections

When we first come to the light, and begin to do the will of God, little though it be, someone will soon discover something in our manner or conversation that they can jeer, laugh, joke or take offence at. This will be a severe test to us, as to whether we love God well enough to continue serving Him in spite of such treatment, and also as to whether, when we are reviled, we follow our Lord's example and revile not again. In such a case, we are beginning to suffer with Christ, and this suffering, more or less, will be our lot till death. Indeed, we may expect the suffering to be most trying as we come to know more, and to do more, the will of the Father. And why? Because we are cultivating the mind of Christ in ourselves, by which we have affection for God, for His Christ, for His children, and for all men. And, strange to say, this very affection will be, as it were, the germ of this suffering, which we have seen so well exemplified in the life of our Lord, who gave His life for all men, that He might reconcile them to God (Eph. 2: 16); and which was exemplified also in the Father—"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."—Rom. 5: 8.

We can also quite understand how one physically afflicted, whether he were born so, or became invalided through illness or accident, can suffer with Christ. Having been brought to the light, He can show His love to the Father and to our Lord by the exercise of patience and self-control and by the kindly affection and consideration which he shows to others. He can cultivate the mind of Christ, and learn obedience, and grow daily in grace, knowledge and love.

Again, I suppose all of us have had the experience, since being in the light, of having no fellowship with those that are near and dear to us in the flesh. We have a natural love for them, and when we know the truth, we desire them to know it also; and that they do not, and will not respond to this super-love and affection shown by our loving God and His dear Son grieves us; and also that they fail to appreciate our sincere love and desires for them. If they speak or act in a derogatory manner of our God and Father, and His dear Son our Lord, or of those of like precious faith who have come into our hearts, life and being, our hearts are grieved. Surely this also is suffering with Christ.

But there is yet another way by which we may and do suffer acutely, which at times would almost make us give up all hope, were it not for the beautiful example of our blessed Lord; and that is, to be misunderstood by our brethren in the faith. To be misunderstood by the world, and by worldly relations, may and does cause us pain. But to be misunderstood by our brethren in Christ, who are suffering likewise—think of it—suffering as did our Lord, when His disciples walked no more with Him. Let us read John 6: 66, 67—

"From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve. Will ye also go away?"

This brethren, I think, is real suffering of a true Christian with Christ, when faithfulness to the word of God, and to our duty as members of the body of Christ, compels us to go on in the narrow way while those we love and sincerely desire to help misunderstand and walk no more with us. Let us see to it, then, that we be not found misunderstanding one another, and let us remember the words of our Lord (Matt. 25: 37-40)—

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the *least* of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

Suffering with One Another

We can individually suffer with Jesus, but we are not alone in the suffering, as He was alone on earth; for we are all members together of one body or Church, and if we each have the mind of Christ and His true love in our hearts, our sufferings will be all very much alike, and for the same reasons. If one true member suffer, all the other true members will sympathise and suffer with it; likewise if one member be honoured, all the other members rejoice with it. (1 Cor. 12: 26.) Therefore as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so let our consolation also abound, and let us comfort one another even as we ourselves are comforted of God, and let us rejoice together in being permitted to be partakers of the sufferings of Christ that we may also in the glorious Kingdom be partakers together of His joy.

—S.S.W.B.

JOY

(Hampton Conference—Concluding Address.)

THE PARTICULAR portion of the Divine Word which is now to engage us for a few minutes does at the first sight appear to carry with it something in the nature of a contradiction of what we have been hearing to-day. To rejoice, to be glad, to be joyful, are expressions frequently used in the Scriptures. (Psa. 32: 11; 70: 4; Isa. 65: 18, 19; Matt. 5: 12; Phil. 4: 4.) Yet it is doubtless true that pain, sorrow, suffering, are the inevitable lot of man, forming, as a rule, a considerable portion of his life, and being always in the end completed in death.

It is also true that good and bad alike suffer in this way; but, as it has been shown, the good have an additional suffering; they not only come under the bane of those ills that follow in the train of the Adamic transgression, but they have to endure hardships on account of their belief of the truth. And we have no grounds for supposing that their hardships and sufferings are not real.

Sufferings Real—Physical and Mental

When the Apostle gave a general review of the faithful of the past age (Hebrews 11), recounting the violence that was meted out to them and the sufferings endured by them because of their faith, he did not say nor intimate that those sufferings were not real. When he said they were tortured, stoned, sawn asunder and put to the sword; that they wandered about destitute and afflicted in the dens and caves of the earth, he made a statement which must, in the nature of things, be taken in a literal sense. They felt the gnawings of hunger, the miseries of destitution, the bruises of the great stones, and the rackings of the torn nerves, as much as the most hardened criminal could have done who ever wore the face of a man. It was the ordinary physical pain that always comes with such treatment, and we cannot disassociate mental anguish from this.

Yet how easily all this could have been avoided! Merely to move along as were others at that time, and there would have been none of these additional sufferings.

But while we are taking this cursory glance at the faithful of the past, more conspicuously than the example of any of them, the sufferings of our Lord stand out above them all. Beside what He endured, these sink into insignificance. And yet we have been asked to believe that the sufferings of the Divine Redeemer were not real; such holding the view that because He was God it was inconceivable that He should suffer and that therefore His anguish of mind and laceration of body were in some way assumed in order to meet certain of the prophecies concerning Him.

But how shall we apply this to the first great temptation of 40 days; to the continued national and violent opposition which He met; the frequent attempts on His life; the insincerity of professed followers; the bodily suffering and anguish of mind that seemed almost to overwhelm Him at His end: shall we relegate this to the sphere of the unreal? Shall we say that our Lord Himself and those who wrote of Him were deceivers?

No, we cannot so consider them. Our Lord was "made flesh" for the purpose of suffering death for our race, and by reason of His perfection and sensitiveness necessarily suffered most intensely and genuinely.

The Pains of True Discipleship

So, then, as those of the past realised a full measure of suffering by reason of their faith and a firm and uncompromising stand against evil within and without, let us not suppose that the pathway of the Christians to-day will be strewn with roses, nor that their afflictions will be any less real.

True discipleship will always (at the first at least) realise the sharp pangs of ostracism, the being cast out as evil, and the sense of isolation, for the world continues to hate the followers, as it hated and crucified the Leader—

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3: 12.

These are Scriptural facts which we all must admit, and they have been abundantly and clearly shown us to-day.

Incentives to Endurance

Yet a closer study of the lives of the faithful of the past reveals that there was an *incentive* beside which their sufferings appeared to them as nothing. We perceive the reality of the suffering, and yet mingled with it is a note of joy and gladness.

See the readiness of Abraham to obey; to leave his own country and home and friends, and journey into a land he knew not of, amongst strangers and even enemies, in order that he might inherit the gracious promise of God, that if he would do this the promised Seed (Gen. 3: 15), who should be the blesser of all the families of the earth, should come of his line.—Gen. 12: 3.

And when Jehovah appeared unto him on the mountain, where he had builded an altar unto the Lord, and assured him that all the lovely land below with its hills and dales and watercourses and great lakes reflecting under the Oriental sun—a land in which angels might live—a land from whose deep valleys there rose the sweet odors of the scented reeds, of the cinnamon, the cassias and the cedars; a land flowing with milk and honey: his eyes of faith would pierce through the dark veil of the future to see the teeming millions of the race of which he was to be the progenitor living in that lovely land, under conditions of absolute peace and security! See the incentive to faith and love—even the rich promises of God!

See the willingness of Moses to take in hand probably the most stupendous task that ever fell to the lot of a man, for he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of the anointed people greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for "he looked away to the recompense of the reward."—Heb. 11: 26, Variorum.) See the incentive—even the rich promises of God!

And the prophets, hunted down as beasts of prey, cast

into miry dungeons, put to the sword, and *orally* treated according to the custom of those times! See their majestic courage and their great strength under the most trying conditions, enduring additional suffering because of their faith, for they too "look away to the recompense of the reward"!

A Song of Gladness

Are we seeing now how it is the ancient worthies could and did rejoice? Their lives were examples of faith and love, and both these (faith and love) were begotten by the rich promises of God.

The first note of the Everlasting Song, the first suggestion of the promise, was struck in Eden when God promised a Deliverer (Gen. 3: 15), and in later times He revealed His purposes still more to the faithful. These purposes showed clearly to their minds a love so full and boundless that they could but as reasonable beings love the Lover and the creatures upon whom His love was to be spent. So love was generated in them.

And the marvellous works of creation, apart from the special manifestations of Himself to them, established faith in His wisdom and power. They, therefore, could believe that what He had promised He also would perform. Hence we see that faith and love were the outcome of the promises, and that by means of these they were sustained in their time of trial, learning more and more to love the Great Giver of all good and joyfully to endure affliction.

And just here we get a glimpse of the blindness of the natural man, for they persecuted those who had become zealous for the promised blessing of their persecutors. Therefore, on account of all these things, God has provided for these noble characters of the past, who have fully attested their fidelity in the fiery furnace of affliction, a great reward. They shall, at the resurrection, be "princes (or head persons) in all the earth" (Psa. 45: 16), and their persecutors shall be their subjects, willingly following their leading, ever ready to do their bidding, that they may attain unto the perfect life fully exemplified in the "princes." Oh, the joy of the privilege of assisting men upwards to life! of seeing them gradually developing in righteousness and putting off iniquity under the benign influences of that day!

"Wherein Ye Greatly Rejoice"

Yet the greatest of these, the greatest of the prophets, was less than the least one in the Kingdom of Heaven! (Matt. 11: 11.) His place is as a perfect man in the earthly phase of the Kingdom, but the Kingdom of Heaven is reserved for them who are "kept by the power of God through faith unto the salvation ready to be revealed in the last times;" that is, since John, for this salvation first began to be spoken by the Lord. (1 Pet. 1: 4, 5; Heb. 2: 3.) And these very prophets, who knew what their own reward would be, perfect life on a perfect earth, were caused to prophesy concerning the grace that should come unto you: viz., the glory that should follow the sufferings of Jesus Christ, and it became a matter of the greatest interest to them.—1 Pet. 1: 10, 11, 12.

Bearing in mind that the greatest of these prophets was less than the least in the heavenly kingdom, what should be our joy at the prospect before us: for since the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead the inheritance of those elect ones through sanctification of the Spirit is an incorruptible one, undefiled, and that

fadeth not away, *reserved in heaven for you* (1 Pet. 1: 1-4).—

"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold trials."—1 Pet. 1: 6.

But God, who is rich, has promised that He will not allow you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation provide a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Cor. 10: 13.) He has made His angels "ministering spirits," sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. (Heb. 1: 14.) And He has promised, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age," and "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." (Matt. 28: 20; Heb. 13: 5.) He has asked you to "cast all your care upon Him, for He careth for you" (1 Pet. 5: 7), and to "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him."—Psa. 37: 7.

All of these indicate the extreme measure of the Father's love for the faithful of this age, in that nothing shall be allowed to overtake them to their hurt or undoing, and one of the earliest assurances of our Lord was that if we seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, all the needs of life will be a matter of the Father's especial care. (Matt. 6: 33.) Wonderful provision has thus been made for those who shall aspire to the "inheritance undefiled, reserved in heaven for you." Therefore *we ought to be glad and to rejoice*. Yet more, it is also stated that—

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him":

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne":

"These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."—2 Tim. 2: 12; Rev. 3: 21; 14: 4.

In these is provided a prospect so stupendous as to be almost unbelievable; but "He is faithful that promised." (Heb. 10: 23.) Therefore we ought to be *very glad and rejoice greatly*. But to be a recipient of His favours *now*, and to taste just a little of the joys of His love *now*, would well repay the believer for anything he may have to endure to attain these glories, even though there were no prospect beyond the present.

Rejoice Exceedingly

But before the overcomer lie the countless ages, and a universe of wonders ever revealing the unfathomable riches of God and delighting every conceivable sense to its intensest capacity. The vast immeasurable depths of space with its burning suns and countless worlds provide the sphere of his activities while time and distance offer no obstruction. He shall be made like Him, for he shall see Him as He is, and dwell in the sublime and serene presence of God throughout the unending circle of eternity; associated with Him in the glad work of uplifting the race, dead in trespasses and sins, to life and a glorious perfection when it shall be that the glad ascriptions of praise and honor shall be made unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb by all the redeemed and perfected race; for—

"He shall come to be glorified in His Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day."—2 Thes. 1: 10.

Therefore we ought to be glad; we ought to be more than glad; we ought to be *very glad*; let us be EXCEEDING GLAD and REJOICE EXCEEDINGLY with joy unspeakable and full of glory (1 Pet. 1: 8), for He has called us unto His Eternal Glory. (1 Pet. 5: 10.) And let no small earthly sorrow, nor

even the severe experiences through which we must pass as followers of Him, restrain our joy and glorying, especially so as at this time we hear the rumblings of the coming storm and perceive in them the portents of

the coming day. Then "Look up," the Saviour said, "and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."—Luke 21: 27, 28.

—F. S.



Right Judgment

THE narrowness that belongs to human souls in general is a great imperfection and impediment to wisdom and happiness. There are but few persons who can contemplate or practice several things at once; our faculties are very limited, and while we are intent upon one part or property of a subject, we have but a slight glimpse of the rest, or we lose it out of sight. But it is a sign of a large and capacious mind, if we can with one single view take a variety of objects: or at least when the mind can apply itself to several objects with so swift a succession, and in so few moments, as attains almost the same ends as if it were all done in the same instant.

This is a necessary qualification in order to great knowledge and good judgment; for there are several things in human life, in religion, and in the sciences, which have various circumstances, appendices, and relations attending them; and without a survey of all those ideas which stand in connection with and in relation to each other, we are often in danger of passing a false judgment on the subject proposed. It is for this reason there are so numerous controversies found among the learned and unlearned world, in matters of religion, as well as in the affairs of civil government. The notions of sin, and duty to God, and our fellow-creatures; of law, justice, authority, and power; of covenant, faith, justification, redemption, and grace; of church, bishop, presbyter, ordination, etc., contain in them such complicated ideas, that when we are to judge of any thing concerning them, it is hard to take into our view at once all the attendants or consequents that must and will be concerned in the determination of a single question: and yet, without a due attention to many or most of these, we are in danger of determining that question amiss.

It is owing to the narrowness of our minds that we are exposed to the same peril in the matters of human duty and prudence. In many things which we do, we ought not only to consider the mere naked action itself but the persons who act, the persons towards whom, the time when, the place where, the manner how, the end for which the action is done, together with the effects that must or that may follow, and all other surrounding circumstances; these things must necessarily be taken into our view, in order to determine whether the action, which is indifferent in itself, be either lawful or unlawful, good or evil, wise or foolish, decent or indecent, proper or improper, as it is so circumstantiated.

Let me give a plain instance for the illustration of this matter. Mario kills a dog, which, considered merely in itself, seems to be an indifferent action: now the dog was Timon's and not his own; this makes it look unlawful. But Timon bid him do it; this gives it an appearance of lawfulness again. It was done at church,

and in time of divine service; these circumstances added, cast on it an air of irreligion. But the dog flew at Mario, and put him in danger of his life; this relieves the seeming impiety of the action. Yet Mario might have escaped by flying thence; therefore the action appears to be improper. But the dog was known to be mad; this further circumstance makes it almost necessary that the dog should be slain, lest he might worry the assembly, and do much mischief. Yet again, Mario killed him with a pistol, which he happened to have in his pocket since yesterday's journey; now hereby the whole congregation was terrified and discomposed, and divine service was broken off: this carries an appearance of great indecency and impropriety in it: but after all, when we consider a further circumstance, that Mario, being thus violently assaulted by a mad dog, had no way of escape, and had no other weapon about him, it seems to take away all the colours of impropriety, indecency or unlawfulness, and to allow that the preservation of one or many lives will justify the act as wise and good. Now all these concurrent appendices of the action ought to be surveyed, in order to pronounce with justice and truth concerning it.

There are multitudes of human actions in private life, in domestic affairs, in traffic, in civil governments, in courts of justice, in schools of learning, etc., which have so many complicated circumstances, aspects and situations, with regard to time and place, persons and things, that it is impossible for anyone to pass a right judgment concerning them, without entering into most of these circumstances, and surveying them extensively, and comparing and balancing them all aright.

Whence by the way I may take occasion to say, how many thousands are there who take upon them to pass their censures on the personal and the domestic actions of others, who pronounce boldly on the affairs of the public, and determine the justice or madness, the wisdom or folly, of national administrations of peace and war, etc., whom neither God nor men ever qualified for such a post of judgment! They were not capable of entering into the numerous concurring springs of action, nor had they ever taken a survey of the twentieth part of the circumstances which were necessary for such judgments or censures.

It is the narrowness of our minds, as well as the vices of the will, that oftentimes prevent us from taking a full view of all the complicated and concurring appendices that belong to human actions: thence it comes to pass that there is so little right judgment, so little justice, prudence, or decency, practised among the bulk of mankind: thence arise infinite reproaches and censures, alike foolish and unrighteous. You see, therefore, how needful and happy a thing it is to be possessed of some measure of this amplitude of soul, in order to make us very wise, or knowing, or just or prudent, or happy.

ISAAC WATTS (1674-1748).

Prophetic Parables

(Continued from November Issue.)

The Parable of the Talents

—Matt. 25: 14-30—

(To the Disciples.)

14. For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

15. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

16. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.

17. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.

18. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

20. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

21. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

22. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

23. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

24. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

25. And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

26. His lord answered, and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

27. Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

29. For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

30. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

THE RELATION of this parable to the one previously examined (the Parable of the Watching Servants—Mark 13: 32-37) is shown by the opening sentence. The object for which the man travelled to the far country is not stated here nor in Mark 13: 34, but it is mentioned in Luke 19: 12 in connection with the Parable of the Pounds; namely, "to receive for himself a kingdom." This object is not, however, directly concerned with the main lessons of these parables, because the business upon which the Master travelled abroad did not affect the relations of his servants to himself. They were bound to do their duty by him, whether he prospered or failed in his mission. The object of his journey is of weight, however, in considering the matter of the subsequent reckoning with the servants, as showing that his power was such that he could inflict dire punishment upon all and sundry who would dare to oppose him.

These three parables are in agreement in showing

that the man "called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods." Mark tells that the master gave authority and specified work to each servant; Luke 19: 3 says that each servant was given a "pound," in addition to occupying the house and exercising the authority of the nobleman. Matt. 25: 15 describes the extra financial responsibility as "talents." The teaching is plain, therefore, that our blessed Lord, when He went away to His Father, left His disciples in a certain stewardship, involving enterprise, industry, conscientiousness and loyalty to Him as Lord and Master. The teaching is also plain, that His goods were entrusted to His own servants, those who had become His by faith (John 1: 12; Matt. 16: 16-19), and not to the servants of the Evil One, such as the scribes and Pharisees whom He rejected.

"Goods" and "Talents"

What might these represent? Some misconception exists concerning this parable because of the use of the word "talents," though the marginal reference should make plain to any student that the word "talent" refers not to personal ability, but to a sum of money entrusted to the servants for trading purposes. He gave "to every man according to his ability," thus showing that the "ability" and the "talents" refer to two different things. In the parable the natural capacity of each servant was considered, and the amount of money given was proportioned thereto. The weight of a talent of silver was 100 pounds, and of a talent of gold 200 pounds. If we reckon that the talents given were of silver, the servant who received five talents received £937 10s., the other servants in proportion. It is not, therefore, correct to base on this parable, as many do, an exhortation that God's people should cultivate all their natural talents or abilities in the line of music, art, science, business, etc., etc. Our Lord Jesus did not do so, neither did the apostles; they had rather to abandon the pursuit of many things of pleasure and profit from a human point of view in order to devote themselves to spiritual work.

A Sacred Trust

What then did the goods and money given to the servants represent? They represented the *gospel truth* and the *interests of the Kingdom*, which were committed to the Apostles, and which were passed on by them to others through their preaching and writings, and which have been handed down from generation to generation to our own day. The care of the goods and the use of the money represent the duties and privileges associated with the possession and circulation of the truth.

While He was yet with the disciples, and after having instructed and empowered them, the Lord sent them out two and two before His face; first the twelve, afterward the seventy. But their great commission dates from that authority which they received from the risen Lord, for which work of service they received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, God Himself bearing witness to the genuineness of their mission with "signs

and wonders," and with "divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit."—Heb. 2: 4.

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations." "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."—Matt. 28: 19; Luke 24: 47.

This commission still holds good, for we read that, "This gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations" before the end of the age.—Matt. 24: 14.

That His work may go forward in an orderly and methodical manner, God has "set" the various members in the body, giving each its particular function or service. (1 Cor. 12: 28-30, 12, 18; Rom. 12: 4-8.) And to secure the harmonious working together of the whole, He has put all the members under orders to one Lord Jesus, and under the control of one Spirit. (Eph. 1: 21-23; 1 Cor. 12: 4-11; Rom. 8: 14.) Whatever and whoever is not of the one Spirit is not of the body.—1 Cor. 12: 3; Rom. 8: 9.

That the Apostles regarded the gospel of the grace of God as a sacred trust is shown by many Scriptures, of which only a few can be here quoted—

"According to the glorious gospel of the grace of God which was committed to my trust."—1 Tim. 1: 11; also Titus 1: 3.

"The gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was to Peter."—Gal. 2: 7. That is, the responsibility of carrying the Gospel to the Gentiles was specially committed to Paul, while the responsibility of serving the Jews was specially laid upon Peter.—Matt. 16: 18, 19; Acts 9: 15; 2 Tim. 1: 11.

"Whereof I am made a minister [or servant], according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, fully to preach the word of God."—Col. 1: 25.

"But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts."—1 Thes. 2: 4.

"God . . . hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."—2 Cor. 5: 19.

The Trust Handed Down

The apostles were faithful in the discharge of their stewardship, even at great cost of personal suffering, and in the face of much misrepresentation and abuse from those who opposed themselves for one reason or another. (2 Cor. 6: 4-10; Acts 19: 24-27.) They travelled all over the then known world, from Jerusalem east to Babylon, and west to Rome and possibly Spain, investing their capital, and receiving returns in the shape of new converts, "the children of the kingdom." (Matt. 13: 38; 1 Cor. 9: 19.) Thus while they did not attempt to add to the Gospel message their own theories in order to increase their profits—a mistake which many servants since their time have made, with the result that the cause of the true gospel has been hindered rather than advanced—they increased the Master's "talents" by teaching and training others, and exhorting them to serve as stewards of the same favours.—2 Cor. 8: 16-24; Phil. 2: 19-25; Eph. 6: 21.

"How I kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house. . . . I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. . . . Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of the Lord, which He hath purchased with His own blood. . . . Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."—Acts 20: 20-31. Many ancient authorities read "Lord" as above.

"The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."—2 Tim. 2: 2.

The gospel of which the Apostles and early disciples were given the stewardship, and which has been handed down through the age, is a very definite one—

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." "These things command and teach." "These things teach and exhort." "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou." "I charge thee . . . preach the Word." "Holding fast the faithful Word." "The faith once delivered unto the saints."—1 Tim. 4: 16, 11; 6: 2; 2 Tim. 2: 2; 4: 12; Titus 1: 9; Jude 3; see also 2 Thes. 2: 15. Compare warnings against believing or teaching things contrary to the apostolic doctrine and commands: e.g., 1 Tim. 1: 3-10; 6: 3-5; 2 Tim. 2: 16-18; Gal. 1: 6-9.

The Scriptures themselves contain this whole counsel of God, but it is necessary for the brethren to assist one another in the understanding of it, because the original purity of the apostles' teaching was lost soon after their departure. But each servant may still recognise that he receives his stewardship from the Lord, that the truth, in so far as he has received it, is to him a sacred trust (as it was to the early disciples) and that he will have to answer to the Master as to the use he has made of his "goods" and "talents" or invested capital.

Sorry will be the plight of the careless or indolent servant who fancies he is advancing the cause of the gospel, when he finds that instead he has been feeding the ignorant on a mixture of man-made tradition and fanciful theories with only a sufficient flavouring of truth to make it palatable, that thus he has been advancing Satan's interests rather than the Lord's, and that his work must be burned up. (1 Cor. 3: 10-15.) It behoves us then to study the Scriptures humbly and prayerfully, that we may as servants have the genuine gospel* as our trust; then may we be faithful in its service!

"According to his several ability"

Since the "talents" of the parable do not refer to personal genius or capacity, but to the funds entrusted to the servants for trading purposes, on what basis is the distribution made, as between the servant who received, say, £1000, the one who received £400, and the one who received £200? The parable answers, "according to his several ability." In an ordinary household or business this ability would consist in keen perception, good judgment, activity and enterprise, perseverance, etc. The one who received £1000 had more natural ability as a trader than he who received only £200. Therefore the lord of the servants acted wisely in giving him greater responsibilities and consequently larger opportunities. It would have been mismanagement to have given a large sum of money to one unable to handle it, and to allow the one with the greater capacity to utilise only one-fifth of his ability as an investor. So our blessed Lord understands all His servants, and gives to each one blessed truth, responsibility and opportunity in His service proportionate to "ability."

In what does this "ability" consist, in the case of a servant of the Lord? Is it musical genius, scientific attainments, business capacity, or anything inherent in the individual as a child of Adam? We should say not; for the Lord's servants are not judged by worldly standards. Too many have thought they were doing God's service in using their natural genius, when they were in reality neglecting the real work of the gospel to advance their personal interests and earthly welfare.

*See "The Gospel of which Paul was a Minister," in "Advocate," July, '11.

What the Lord considers "ability" in his people might not be so regarded from a worldly point of view. The apostle says,

"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are not, to bring to nought the things that are."—1 Cor. 1: 27, 28.

Before one can be a "servant" at all, he must renounce the things of the world, confess himself a condemned sinner, repent of personal transgression, and come to Jesus that he may be reconciled to the Father and be accepted as a son through Jesus Christ. (Acts 2: 38; Gal. 3: 26.) His riches and achievements as a man must be laid aside, as well as his sins and failings, in order that he may be a "new creature" in Christ Jesus. (2 Cor. 5: 17; Phil. 3: 4-10.) Any ability or learning he may have had as a man is an advantage to him only as it is sanctified by the Holy Spirit and prayer; whatever is not so sanctified is an encumbrance, for which chastening may be required. Among brethren there may be a difference of natural gifts, yet from the Lord's viewpoint they may have equal "ability" in His service. Take, for instance, the apostles, different in character, disposition and early training; but each has his name written in the foundations of the New Jerusalem. The Apostle Paul's training at the feet of Gamaliel and in the religions and customs of the Greeks and Romans undoubtedly proved useful in his work among the Gentiles, enabling him to dispute with the philosophers and sages, and expound to them the "unknown God" in a way calculated to arouse their sympathetic interest, and that because he had wholly repudiated the past of his life, and lived solely to preach the gospel. Likewise the varied experiences and trainings of the other Apostles.

There are other "abilities," however, which in a Christian rank higher than mere natural capability, whether it be the gift of speech, or keen perception, or a logical mind, and which are of more value than a university training. The first of these is *love* for Him who died for us. This was the mainspring of the Apostle Paul's wonderful activity. He could not do enough to show his gratitude that in him first Jesus Christ had shown forth all long suffering in the forgiveness of his earlier persecution of the Church. (1 Tim. 1: 15, 16; 1 Cor. 15: 9.) The woman who was forgiven much loved much. She may have been, as a matter of fact, no deeper in sin than the Pharisee, but looking at the perfect goodness of Jesus, she realised how far fallen she was, and she was grateful for His kind words and the hope held out to her. Those who do not realise deeply their need of the Saviour cannot love him as much—so the Lord says. (Luke 7: 47.) Those who have this love will gladly lay down their lives for the brethren as Jesus laid down his life for them.—John 15: 13.

The second important "ability" is *humility*; giving a high appreciation of the honour conferred in being permitted to be a servant of Christ and a studiousness to discover the Master's wishes; giving also a willingness to be and to do anything and to go anywhere the Master indicates—to be even a broken and empty vessel, a fragment of pottery with which a few drops of refreshing water may be poured upon the parched ground.—Matt. 10: 37-39; Eph. 3: 8; 1 Cor. 3: 7.

Another important "ability" is *zeal*. Of the Lord it is written, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." (Psa. 69: 9.) His servants, who follow His example, will also burn with holy zeal for His cause. (Heb. 10: 32-34.) Other "abilities" are *faith* and *hope*, for the servant who lacks these will not venture to do much; he will look too much to the sky before casting in his seed. (Eccl. 11: 4. See also the Parable of the "Seed Growing Secretly.") Still other "abilities" are *honesty*, *truthfulness*, *sincerity*, *patience* and *perseverance*, for the servants must deal fairly, and they must labour long and unceasingly, even when discouraged by opposition and weary of waiting the Master's return.—2 Cor. 4: 1, 2, 8-18.

Given two persons, both professing Christians, one with great natural gifts as speaker or writer and a fine education, but only slightly moved by love to the Saviour for the forgiveness of his sins, and with a deficiency of humility and love of truth for its own sake; the other less gifted naturally and less cultured and polished, but full of love and zeal for the Master and anxiety to know the truth: To which would the Lord most likely entrust the £1000 of gospel truth as a sacred trust with the expectation that it would be multiplied one hundred per cent. in trading?

Three Classes of Servants

The Lord's servants at the beginning of the age were divided into three general classes:—

(1) The Apostles, specially trained and instructed; the repositories of the truths taught by our Lord, as well as of truth subsequently revealed to them by "visions and revelations." They possessed markedly the "ability" required, being full of love and zeal for the Lord, and energetic in spreading abroad the glad tidings. They may have been represented by the servant to whom £1000 were entrusted. They used their office well, and received the Master's approval.

(2) The other disciples who had known the Lord, and who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, also some of the first converts after Pentecost. These had not perhaps the "ability" of the Apostles in ardent love and zeal (unless we except such characters as Stephen the martyr, Apollos, Timothy, Titus and other evangelists), and were not entrusted with as much responsibility as the apostles. Nevertheless they were faithful to their stewardship of £400, for they "went everywhere preaching the Word." (Acts 8: 4.) They did what they could, and also received the Master's approval, foreshadowed by the commendations of the apostles.—Col. 1: 3, 4; Phil. 1: 3-7.

(3) The ungrateful, and the drones. These were lacking in love and in appreciation of what the Lord Jesus had done for them, deficient in faith and hope, and allowed their natures to become soured and embittered because the Master expected some profit from them; professing to be fellow-servants, they opposed themselves even to the Apostles.—2 John 10; 2 Tim. 4: 10.

The characteristics of these three classes may in a general way be traced down the age. There have always been servants of varying "ability," entrusted with more or less of the Master's "goods" and money, and more or less faithful in their stewardship of the same.

The Servants Commended

were those who had gained respectively £1000 or £400 more than the original capital sum. It would appear that the lord of the servants was less interested in the amount of money accruing than in the faithfulness of his servants. Being a rich man to begin with, and having returned with immensely greater honour and wealth, £1000 or £400 would be neither here nor there to him. His satisfaction lay mainly in the vindication of his own choice of servants and of the disposition he had made of the trust, and in that these servants possessed so much genuine love for himself and such deep interest in the upkeep and development of his estate as to give him the best service they were capable of.

Moreover, they demonstrated by their faithfulness over a few things the possession of "abilities" which would be available were larger responsibilities imposed upon them. A builder who wishes to test the ability of a plank to bear a certain heavy weight walks out on it, springing as he goes. If it bears his weight well, and there are no ominous cracks or splits, he is satisfied. The plank has been "faithful in little," and is worthy of "more." The same qualities of toughness and rigidity which enable it to bear a small burden enable it to bear the heavier load. The same principle is applicable in all business and manufacture. The millionaire's son who expects to inherit a system of railways requiring practical knowledge as well as financial acuteness, takes his place in the freight yard, the boiler shop, the locomotive shed, and works his way up to the line manager's office, and on up to the director's office, on exactly the same principle as the son of a labourer rises from the ranks; that is, *faithfulness in the job in hand*. The lower branches must be mastered before the higher can be properly undertaken. In the case of both men it means punctuality, application, willingness, industry, ambition, conscientiousness, etc. The shirker in the goods shed or the boiler shop would prove equally unreliable in the locomotive department or in the manager's office. Natural capacity is a factor, but the foregoing qualities have pushed many a man of less capacity ahead of another of greater capacity who lacked genuine interest in his work. Advancement in the army or navy is conditioned on proved reliability in lesser positions, and is expressed in the well known proverb—He who would command others must first learn to obey.

The Lord's parable shows us that the same principles apply to servants in his household: obedience, diligence, integrity, etc., must first be manifested in the lesser stewardship entrusted during the Lord's absence, if further advancement is desired on His return.

An Apostolic Application

The same principle is applied by the apostles to the filling of offices in the Church. No "novice" is to be appointed to a responsible position (1 Tim. 3: 6, 10); no person of deficient moral character or lacking in self-control should be placed in an office where the giving of moral instruction is essential (3: 2, 3); one unable to rule *children* under his care should not be asked to preside over *men and women* (vs. 4). Faithfulness and reliability in small matters must precede opportunity in larger affairs. The younger must learn respect for and submission to their elders before they can, without

danger to their own spiritual welfare, be invited to leave the junior ranks. (1 Tim. 6: 3; 1 Thes. 5: 12, 13; 1 Pet. 5: 5; 1 Tim. 5: 1, 2; 17-22; Heb. 13: 17.) Obedience to the apostle's commands is rigidly enjoined upon all believers, in all the concerns of life, both in the church, and in their everyday affairs (2 Thes. 3: 14), and we cannot afford to neglect any of them.

The Servant Reproved

When the proprietor was arranging his business prior to his departure on his long journey, he was well aware that one of his servants was rather deficient in the qualifications of stewardship. He might have dismissed him, and found one more worthy of confidence. But no, he was a man that did not like turning any one out in whom he saw the least possibilities of usefulness, lest the poor unfortunate fall upon hard times, and possibly "go to the dogs." He liked to give every man a chance; for "the bruised reed He would not break, and smoking flax He would not quench." He might have made him a menial under the other servants; indeed, the servant probably was an underling in the household, for he had as yet manifested no particular capacity to warrant his advancement. But the Master was generous: Careful not to overtax the man's ingenuity, he would give him a trial with £200—a sum small enough not to worry the man with too much responsibility, and yet large enough to accomplish something if he would but make an effort. He would perhaps notice what use the other servants made of their trust, and would emulate their example; besides, he might say to himself, "The Master was very kind to put this opportunity in my way, when there was absolutely no obligation on His part to do so, for undoubtedly had He given it to one of the other servants they would have done far better for Him than I shall be able to do. I will just gird myself, and knock about among other business people, and see if I can pick up any useful ideas; and perhaps the first and second fellow-servants might kindly assist me with a little advice, lest I should in my ignorance make a bad plunge to begin with, for I know they have the Master's interests at heart, and would like to see me do the best possible for him. *I should like to prove worthy of the Master's confidence in me*, and do at least as well by Him as the other servants would do.

This would have been the language of love and gratitude, drawn out by the Master's manifestation of good will. Instead, his thoughts ran more like this: I already have enough work to do without having this fresh burden thrust upon me. It is all I can do now to get a few minutes to myself, and I thought that when he was gone I would have it a little easier, and perhaps be able to work a few points for myself. Besides, what shall I do with the money? I don't know much about business, and if I should lose it by an unlucky venture, he is just mean enough to make me refund it out of my wages. On the other hand, if I should happen to be successful, it would only be to increase his riches, not mine, and he has quite enough already. Fact is, He is a grinder, growing wealthier every day through no exertion of His own, reaping where He has not sown, and gathering where he has not strawed. I for one am not going to put myself about. I won't abscond with the money; if I did, it would soon be spent and I might find

difficulty in getting another situation as much to my liking as this one; I'll just hide it in a safe place, and when He returns He can have what belongs to Him. In the meanwhile I will have as easy a time as possible to make up for the extra exertions of the last few days caused by the excitement and confusion of His departure. If the other servants are fools enough to overwork themselves during his absence, I at least am not.

Thus without making the slightest attempt to respond to the Master's kind interest in him, the wicked and slothful servant allowed the days to pass by. He ate the Master's food, enjoyed the protection of His home, intercourse with the other servants, and various other conveniences; but all the while his heart was filled with angry and bitter thoughts. He envied the other servants their manifest happiness in their work and the success attending their labours, yet he was unwilling to exert himself in a similar manner. Indeed, he took a sort of secret pleasure in placing obstacles in their way. His ill-feeling for the absent Master would naturally vent itself upon the nearer servants. (Matt. 10: 25; 1 John 3: 12.) But he had a set speech prepared by which he hoped to excuse himself in the Master's eyes (who, having been absent, would be unacquainted with the facts), so that he would not lose his billet. Thus he would make the best of the present, and at the same time be assured for the future.

But alas! when he was called before the Master to give an account of his stewardship, the smooth excuses were forgotten; the bitterness nourished in his soul broke loose in insolent speech; he was revealed in his true character—a wicked and slothful ingrate.—1 John 2: 4, 6, 9; 3: 12.

Have there been many such servants naming the name of Christ, ostensibly His servants, but secretly His enemies, harbouring bitter thoughts against Him, deaf to the call of duty and privilege? It is to be hoped there are not many; the proportion in the parable is one in three; can it be possible that one in three who have known the Lord's goodness will prove reprobate? Let each servant put it to himself: Lord, is it I?

Servants through the Age

In this and other parables covering the entire age the action appears to indicate that the identical individuals who were alive when the Lord went away will be alive when He returns at His second advent. It could hardly be otherwise in a story intended strongly to emphasise the duties of His servants during His absence, the certainty of judgment, and the distribution of rewards. It must always be remembered that a parable is not a literal statement of fact, but a similitude or short story from which certain comparisons are to be drawn. In the present parable the lesson is obviously not the exact number of servants or their identity from first to last, but the principles upon which the Master deals with them, the reward or punishment to ensue faithfulness or unfaithfulness, and the importance of watching, for "Ye know neither the day nor the hour."—Matt. 25: 13.

As already shown, the Gospel as a sacred trust and stewardship did not end with the decease of the apostles

and others to whom it was originally committed; the commission to preach the Gospel holds good as long as there are Servants to send and nations in ignorance of the doctrines of the Cross. Many generations of servants of varying degrees of "ability" have received their £1000 or £400 or £200 worth of gospel truth with the command to go into all the world to make increase for Master. We can understand how the servants alive at the very end-point of the age could be summarily dealt with, rewarded and punished; but in view of the fact that the large majority of the servants fell asleep before the verdict in their case was publicly pronounced, in what way were they reckoned with?

Several passages of Scripture lead to the conclusion that the "Judgment Seat of Christ" has been in operation over His people throughout the age, and that each servant has during his earth life been passing in review before it.

"For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living. . . . We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."—Rom. 14: 8-10.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."—2 Cor. 5: 10.

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"—1 Pet. 4: 17.

Each individual who has received the knowledge of the truth is a steward of the glad tidings. He can no longer live unto himself; he must live unto the Lord who bought him, and he must inquire, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Some task will be given, great or small, proportionate to the degree of love and zeal and other abilities. And each servant will demonstrate *by his conduct* his worthiness or unworthiness of the confidence of the Master. The gospel which he has received will be to him either a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death. His attitude toward the Lord, grateful or rebellious; his treatment of his brethren, loving or hateful; his method of discharging his duties, faithful, conscientious and unselfish, or unfaithful, dishonest and self-seeking; all these have been noted by the Master, who has read the innermost thoughts of the heart and is not deceived by high-sounding words and pretence. Thus the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of each servant is fully demonstrated and determined by the end of his course. The apostle Paul could say with confidence at the end of his ministry that he had fought a good fight, and kept the faith, and was ready for the reward which was to be given him at the Lord's appearing. (2 Tim. 4: 6-8). Similarly the unfaithfulness of a servant must be determined at or before his death, in order that he may not be called forth in the first resurrection as a joint-heir of Christ.

"Take away the Talent"

All through the age the rejection of the unfaithful servants has been manifest, in that the light they had, whether much or little, has been taken from them; of this we ourselves are witnesses in our own time. No servant can afford to trifle with the truth; for the Lord can take away as easily as He gave. *The truth must be spread*; the gospel must be preached; and if one servant

shirks his duty other means must be found, even if more responsibility is piled upon servants already heavily burdened. (2 Cor. 11: 23-28; 12: 15.) And in the Lord's service the workers who are "going strong" are much like workmen in good fettle in earthly establishments: they can always take on a little more and not feel it; because service is a real joy to them. "For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance." (Matt. 25: 29) A man who can turn £1000 into £2000 by good investment would think nothing of placing a paltry £200 more. But from the wicked and slothful servant who "hath not" the loving, grateful heart; who "hath not" the earnest zeal of true discipleship; who "hath not" increased his capital by so much as a farthing; who "hath not" even the good judgment to deposit his capital with the bank, to make it earn at least a little interest; from him shall be taken away even that which he hath; that is, the original capital, £200. The Master did not give him this amount to hide away, but to use. Had it been merely a matter of safe deposit, he would have attended to that in his own way. Moreover, the servant fully understood what was required of him, as shown by his retort (vss. 24, 25), his statement that he was "afraid" being only an excuse. The "wicked and slothful" servant stands revealed as one who truly "hath not," and is therefore unworthy of continuance in the Master's employ. The only proper disposition to be made of such an one is that he be deprived of his stewardship and dismissed from the company of the faithful. And whoever is thus cast out of the Master's house and from the fellowship of the saints, where all the light and truth are found, is indeed in "outer darkness" where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The "exchanger," or the "bank," being not one of the servants of the master's household, would represent any worldly person of good character to whom a one-talent servant of Christ might communicate the good news of the Kingdom, and who might repeat it to others as a mere matter of gossip, with the result that some third person hearing it would be converted by it. We have known items of truth to be passed on by persons who were not themselves interested in it, when some who professed to be servants were "asleep" or had somehow convinced themselves that there was nothing more to do.

The Joy of the Lord

Only those servants are in the proper frame of mind to enjoy the presence and fellowship of the Master after His return who have had His love in their hearts during His absence; who have had a sincere interest in their work, and who have longed for His return to expedite

matters still further. With the Apostle Paul they have often been in a strait, not knowing whether to prefer life or death, because life meant many trials and burdens, and death meant a long sleep; with him they have also been able to say most positively that there was a third thing which they very much preferred, and that was the departure out of the conditions of sin and death at the return of the Lord, when He would receive them unto Himself, as He had promised. (John 14: 3; Phil. 1: 22-24). With the Revelator they have cried, Even so, come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly! (Rev. 22: 20.) They have over and over again repeated the prayer, "Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven!" No wonder then that they are pleased when the long waiting time is over, and are ready for whatever fresh duties the Master may place upon them.

The "joy of the Lord" may represent the Kingdom honours in which the saints are invited to be joint-heirs. It will be their blessed privilege to be associated in the forcible setting up of the Kingdom among men, as they have throughout the age been associated in the humiliation which that Kingdom has suffered at the hands of those who have cried—"We will not have this man to reign over us." (Luke 19: 14; Acts 4: 26; Phil. 3: 21; 1 Cor. 4: 13.) Having been faithful in the period of suffering and ignominy, and as stewards of a little, they will be found faithful in the thousand years of triumph and as stewards of much.—Heb. 1: 2; Rom. 8: 17; 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12; Rev. 2: 26, 27; 3: 21; 20: 4-6.

The principle set forth by the parable, that the faithful in small things will be rewarded at the Lord's second advent by being made stewards of the everlasting glories and of the Kingdom Age Work of Blessing, is also applicable to advancement or degradation while serving in the earthly stewardship—in this way: Each believer begins his Christian life as a "babe," requiring to be nursed and fed by his teachers until he becomes indoctrinated and gains some experience in service. His knowledge of the truth and his usefulness in serving it will increase in proportion to his love and zeal and faithfulness. To him that hath the love and zeal will more love and zeal be given; to him that hath knowledge will more knowledge be given; to him who is active in service will more service be given. On the other hand, the convert who is such mostly in name will gradually lose what truth or love or zeal he has. He will be like the seed in the stony or thorny ground—gradually wither away; or like those described in Rev. 2: 4, who left their first love. This matter is more fully illustrated in the Parable of the "Faithful and Wise Servant," to be considered later on.

Greetings—1912!

TO ALL readers and to all friends of Jesus our Mediator, High Priest and King, the "Advocate" offers greetings at the beginning of another year.

May the year just opening be a good year in the experience of all of us.

May it witness a great gain by all who are "trading"

with the Master's "goods" and "talents," the Gospel or word of reconciliation committed unto us.

And may this year witness more and yet more growth in that unity of spirit which the Apostle exhorted God's people to preserve, so that an unbroken line may be at all times facing the foe, and contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

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, 1910, "Advocate." It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way.

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The "Advocate" Sustaining Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report. As the "Advocate" is regularly published at a financial loss, it is obliged to depend upon the loving co-operation of its friends until it shall become self-sustaining. Let the good work continue!

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38G	...	0	4	0		
39G	...	1	0	0		
40G	...	0	1	6		
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47G	...	0	13	9		
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The New Covenant Advocate and Kingdom Herald

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E. C. HENNINGES, EDITOR

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No. 11

Stedfast, Unmoveable

(The Editor's New Year Sermon, January 7, 1912.)

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."—1 Cor. 15: 58.

THESE words are offered to you as a text for the year 1912. They incite us to stedfastness and to diligence in the service of God, giving at the same time the assurance that brings great comfort in regard to the labors of the past and encouragement to hopefulness concerning those of the future.

When the Apostle came to Corinth, he found, as narrated in Acts 18: 1-5, the usual opposition to the message that he had to deliver. Among the Jews, the opposition was so great that they blasphemed, upon which Paul shook his raiment for a testimony against them, and said—"Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." Having only lately come from Thessalonica where the opposition of the Jews had been most violent, it may well be supposed that the Apostle was apprehensive of what might now occur in Corinth. But the Lord graciously gave him assurance in a vision by night, saying—"Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." Thus encouraged, the Apostle continued his work in Corinth for eighteen months, and it was doubtless given to him to see many of the people gathered to the Lord.—Vss. 9-11.

When the Jews could contain themselves no longer, they raised an insurrection against Paul, and brought him before the judgment seat of Gallio, the deputy, accusing him to the deputy of persuading men to worship God contrary to the Law, meaning the Law of Moses. Gallio was very vexed with the Jews for troubling him and taking the time of his court with such a matter, and declaring that he would be no judge of such things he drove them from the judgment seat. Apparently this furnished an excuse

that some of the heathen had been waiting for, for they now took the ruler of the synagogue—Sosthenes, the successor of Crispus who had become a believer in Jesus—and beat him before the judgment seat. "And Gallio cared for none of these things."—Vss. 12-17.

After this occurrence, Paul still tarried in Corinth a good while, busy all the time, we may be sure, in teaching the brethren, and helping the new believers to get established in the faith which he was delivering to them. The exact length of Paul's stay in Corinth seems not to be stated, but it was probably not less than two years altogether, and as the Lord had assured him that there were many in that great and cosmopolitan city who were waiting for the truth that he brought, the Apostle must have left behind him a large congregation of saints. Whether the Sosthenes, mentioned in 1 Cor. 1: 1 as a "brother," was the same as the ruler of the synagogue who had been beaten before Gallio's judgment seat, cannot be determined; the name was a common one in those days, and no stress can be laid upon the coincidence.

But the Apostle had not gone far when the congregation fell into a most lamentable state of division, which grieved the absent Apostle exceedingly, and must have been one of the prominent causes of his writing the first of his two epistles to that church. Besides the fleshly spirit of sectarianism, we may gather from this epistle that this congregation were tolerating gross immorality in one of their members, and apparently glorying in it, whereas they should have delivered him over to the adverse circumstances of disfellowship for the destruction of his old self, in order that the new mind might be saved in the day of the Lord. The congregation at Corinth also distinguished themselves by being most rude to the Apostle who had brought them the good tidings; instead of sympathizing with him in his affliction, they made light of it, and derided him on account of it. In addition to all this, there was a deal of doctrinal confusion among them which the Apostle deplored, and

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sought to correct. Some of them had gone so far as to declare that there was to be no resurrection of the dead—1 Cor. 1: 10-13; 3: 1-4; 5: 1-13; 2: 1-5; 2 Cor. 10: 10; 1 Cor. 11: 19; 15: 12.

One wonders how people who were guilty of all the above, and of a great deal more that may be read in the first epistle to the Corinthians, could presume to call themselves Christians and saints. But the Apostle, while not for one moment falling in with their wrong doings and teachings, was able to remember the depth of the pit of sin from which they had been digged, and so could make large allowances for them, and could at least wait to see what effect his letter of exhortation would have upon them. Fortunately, the effect was good; they promptly acted upon the commands of the inspired Apostle, thus clearing themselves and justifying his care for them.—2 Cor. 7: 8-12.

The Apostle's large-hearted attitude toward these people while waiting the issue of his letter to them is shown in his manner of addressing them so frequently as "brethren," and, in our text, "beloved brethren." But this large-hearted one could also be very stern, if the occasion required it. If any one claiming to be a believer did not obey the commands of the Lord through His inspired servant, the faithful were to have no company with such. (2 Thess. 3: 14.) If any were causing divisions contrary to the apostolic doctrine, they were not servants of the Lord, but of their own desires, by good words and fair speeches deceiving the hearts of the simple. Such were to be marked and avoided. (Rom. 16: 17, 18.) And this is equally the duty of God's people in the present day. It is not an agreeable duty to perform, but it is not for us to choose when the Apostle commands.

Stedfastness

Exhortations to this Christian virtue abound in the Scriptures. In fact, it may be said that the principal purpose of the New Testament epistles is the inculcation and cultivation of this trait of character. If the believers in Jesus had something that was worthy of acceptance, the same was worthy also of being stedfastly stood for. If it were not worth standing for and fighting for, it would not be worth receiving. Says one of the apostles—

"It was NEEDFUL for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints."—Jude 3.

Writing to the Philippians, Paul said—

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; and in nothing terrified by your adversaries."—Phil. 1: 27, 28.

To the Ephesians the same Apostle wrote—

"Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore."—Eph. 6: 13, 14.

To the Galatians he wrote—

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel."—Gal. 1: 6.

In the words of our text he wrote—

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable."

Should the Apostle be understood here to mean that whatever a person believed, he should remain unmoveable in that belief, and never in any circumstances alter his position? So to understand the Apostle would be to greatly misunderstand him. Paul had been a Jew; he was converted from Judaism to Christianity, and he was using all his energies to show the truth to other Jews, and more especially to heathen Gentiles, in order that as many as possible might come out of darkness into light. Not that Judaism was wrong in its own age: it was the ordinance of God in its day and dispensation. But when the true light shone in the person of Jesus, the Christ, it was for the Jews to emerge from the shadows of the former time, and walk in the light of God which He had sent to them. Only a few of them did so, but their change of position was fully warranted by the circumstances of that time, which were themselves but fulfillments of inspired prophecies with which they all should have been familiar. It is thus seen that it is always right to change from a wrong position to the right one, and it is always right to come out from a state of partial knowledge to one of better information. No one can say that he knows everything; nor can any one say that his knowledge of any one thing is perfect, so that there is nothing more for him to learn on that subject. 1 Cor. 8: 2; 13: 12 should dispel such an illusion if one had it.

However, while fully recognising the propriety of great modesty in respect to one's estimate of the amount of his own knowledge, it must not be overlooked that we can have sufficient knowledge of all the things that pertain to our salvation and high calling in Christ Jesus. This must be so, otherwise the hope of salvation would be as the ashes of vanity. We can know, for example, that JESUS is the Christ, and that honest confession of this truth with all that it implies of love and devotion to Him, and to God Who placed Him in that exalted position, secures us admittance into the household of God. (1 John 5: 1; Gal. 3: 26.) The fact that these necessary things are made known to us, and that we must know them and believe them and exercise ourselves in them in order to salvation, is stated by the Apostle in this same letter to the Corinthians, and his language cannot be misunderstood.

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; BY WHICH ALSO YE ARE SAVED, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain."—1 Cor. 15: 1, 2.

Then follows a summary of the gospel, the first two points of which are that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. If these things be not true, says the Apostle, "then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." These things, with what is implied in them, we are expected to know; we are to believe them with full assurance of faith, receiving them as faithful sayings, worthy of all acceptance; we are to rejoice in them with joy unspeakable and full of glory; we are to stand in them and on them, "stedfast and unmoveable."

"Always Abounding in the Work of the Lord"

If we are to stand fast, "unmoveable," that is not to say that we are to be as it were statues. Our

minds are to be fixed in the truth, and steadfast for it; but our mortal bodies are to be energized by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8: 11), so that they shall be very moveable and active in His service, "always abounding in the work of the Lord."

All Christians profess to be more or less active in the work of the Lord, and no doubt we all verily think we are doing God service in our several lines of activity. But a sad disappointment is waiting for some—for many—of these workers.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. MANY will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."—Matt. 7: 21-23.

In view of this solemn prediction, will any one deny the necessity of being assured as to what the will of God is? Is it not most important that we know what the work of the Lord is in which we should abound, so that we may be found doing that work, and not be found in opposition to it or sidetracked from it? The importance of this point cannot be overestimated or overstated. Let us seek instruction upon it from the divine Word; and for our present purpose let us consider the question in its two natural divisions, viz., the work of the Lord on behalf of ourselves individually, which we may call the inward work, and the work of the Lord on behalf of others, which we may call the outward work.

The Inward Work

The inward work consists in that effort which all believers must make to approximate in themselves the character of God and Christ. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," is one of the commands of our Lord to His people. And, strange and sad though it may seem, it is nevertheless true that in our day this command to personal holiness troubles many professing Christians no more than it did the Pharisees in the days of our Lord's first presence. Yet the very hope of our High Calling is bound up in it, and we shall not attain to the prize without having fulfilled this command to the best of our ability, in truth and in sincerity.

"Follow . . . holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God."—Jeb. 12: 14, 15.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."—Matt. 5: 8.

This following of holiness consists not only in putting off the old vices, but also in putting on the new virtues. The old man must be put off, and the new man must be put on. Not only must the old and evil disposition be cast out and the heart be "swept and garnished," but Christ's sweet spirit must be enthroned within. Let us see how the Scriptures state both these requirements of the Christian life in this inward work of the Lord.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us (1) cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, (2) perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."—2 Cor. 7: 1.

"(1) Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and (2) be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted,

forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Eph. 4: 31, 32.

"But now ye also (1) put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have (2) put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him; . . . Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."—Col. 3: 8-14.

This is the inward portion of the work of the Lord, in which His people must abound in order to be acceptable to Him. The "old man" must be turned out bag and baggage, and must be forbidden the premises, while the "new man" must be given a hearty welcome, and every provision made for his well being and his growth in grace. Writing to God's people of this inward work of the Lord, and showing the necessity of "abounding" in it, an Apostle said—

"For if these things be in you, and abound. . . . If ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—2 Peter 1: 5-15.

This, in brief, is the inward work of the Lord. Of its necessity I hope we are all fully persuaded. The strength of this persuasion in us is manifest by our activity in the twofold work of cleansing and adorning which is described in the above Scriptures. The weakness of this persuasion in us will be betrayed, notwithstanding our professions, by our lack of attention to the work of cleansing and adorning. We shall also find that although this part of the Lord's work is truly inward, and its efforts and its greatest effects are inward, it has an outward effect too. Who has not heard of the good effect upon others of a quiet and consistent Christian life, so potent an influence that sometimes even the froward may be won by it to the obedience of faith? (1 Peter 3: 1-4.) And who has not known instances of the helpfulness of a consistent and cheerful Christian example to those who were almost disheartened in the struggle along the narrow way? Truly, the effect of the inward work is farther reaching than any of us can know in the present life. May the Lord help us all to persevere in it to the end!

The Outward Work

As long as we are in this world, it is our duty and high privilege to be co-workers together with God in that part of His great purpose which for the time being is being carried on. During the Gospel age, the work of the Lord is the taking out of a people for His name (Acts 15: 14); in this therefore we are to cooperate. How shall we do it? Shall we participate in worldly schemes and pleasures? Shall we raise money for the Lord's work by conducting fairs and bazaars? Shall we try to cooperate in the Lord's work by forwarding the "good citizenship" movement? Shall we seek to gather in as many as possible for the Lord by preaching monstrous errors, such as eternal torment, thinking thereby to drive men and women into the Kingdom?

Worldly fairs and bazaars and politics are quite out of the question, and cannot be considered for one moment as means to the end which the Lord has

in view. And as for the preaching of errors with a view to the ingathering of people for the Lord, one need only remember the reproof by the Lord of those whose fear toward Him was taught by the precepts of men to realize the impossibility of such devious methods having His sanction.

The only way to cooperate in the work of the Lord for the taking out of a people for His name is to preach the truth, *preach the truth*, PREACH THE TRUTH. This is the means which the Lord Himself has appointed for the purpose.

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."—Matt. 28: 19, 20.

"Unto us which are saved it [the preaching of the Cross] is the power of God. For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."—1 Cor. 1: 18, 21.

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

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth."—1 Peter 1: 22.

The preaching of the truth is thus seen to be both for the purpose of inviting those who come in contact with it to the obtaining of joint heirship with our Lord Jesus Christ and also to assist in the sanctification of those who believe the truth and obey it. All of us are preachers, and all of us are therefore empowered and expected and responsible to preach the truth. Not all of us will stand in pulpits or on platforms to be public preachers. The most of us will have to do our preaching in other ways than that. It may be by private conversation, or in a Bible class by expression of what one sees in the Scripture; it may be by writing something about the truth in a letter; it may be by the endeavour to lead a consistent Christian life; it may be by giving, lending or selling publications that will help others to a better understanding of the Scripture; in any or all of these and other ways one may be a preacher of the truth, and any way that is open should be used by every one of us.

This is the outward work. To show a benevolent

and helpful disposition toward the brethren and toward all men in temporal things is not to be neglected in the other department of the outward work, which has to do with the spiritual interests of God's people, the ones being taken out for His name, is manifestly of vastly greater importance, because it has to do with the everlasting things, whereas the temporal things are only for the time now present.

As the inward work has also an outward effect as well as that inward one particularly sought by it, so has the outward work an inward effect besides the outward one looking to the blessing of others. Every one of us who takes part in the outward work knows this to be a fact, and can testify to it. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself," is the gracious promise to this effect, and it has never failed.—Prov. 11: 25.

"Your Labour is not in Vain"

What a cheering assurance this is! The Apostle says *we know* this to be a fact, and forasmuch as we know it, we shall be steadfast, and unmoveable, and should always be abounding in the work of the Lord. No one likes to undertake laborious work unless he has some assurance that the labor will not be in vain. If he thought it would be in vain, he would not undertake it. The whole question thus seems to resolve itself into a question of faith. Do we believe that this is the Lord's work and that He wishes us to do it? Do we believe it strongly enough to have full assurance of faith, so that we can say that we *know* that our labor is not in vain in the Lord? If so, we shall thereby be greatly helped to steadfastness in the same, and patient perseverance against the great difficulties that the Lord permits to rise against us to the end that our faith may grow stronger by the act of resisting opposition. If we do not know, it is high time that we find out. But I trust, dear brethren, that we do all *know* what the Lord's work is, and that our determination is to engage in it—both the inward and the outward—more zealously than ever in this New Year just begun, knowing that it is not a vain labor, but one that shall be most profitable to us in the eternal future. Amen.



The Lamb and THE LAMB

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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.

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; the subsequent observances being in the nature of memorials of the original Passover and deliverance. 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.) 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. Thus 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 accord-

ing 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 of 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 attained.

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 communicants form one body of believers *because each 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 only 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.*

*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), post paid.

"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 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.—1 Cor. 11: 27-31.

Unworthily 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. Then 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 meditating 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 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 in which He was betrayed," which, according to the Jewish style, was the beginning of the day on which He died.

One text (Acts 20: 7) is referred to by those who believe the Lord's Supper should be observed weekly on Sunday mornings, 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 to the point.

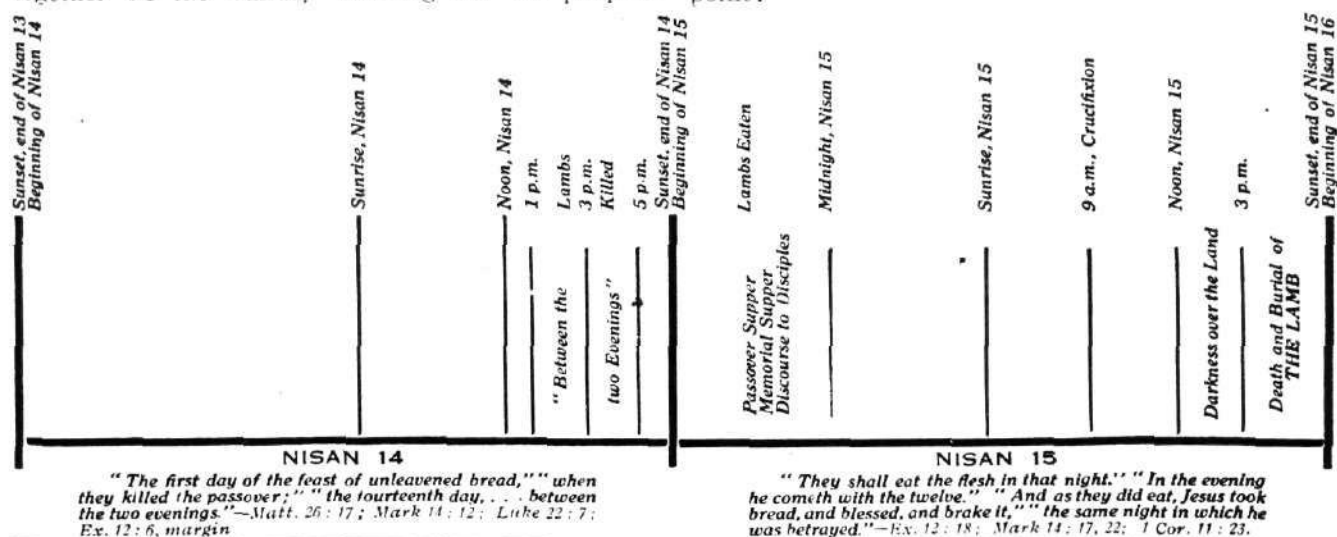
It may further be noted that the meeting mentioned in Acts 20: 7 took place at night—that is to say, Saturday night, being the beginning of the first day of the week. The fact that the meeting took place at night appears in verses 7 and 11, and it is good evidence that the disciples had not come together on the Sunday morning for the purpose

of "breaking bread." Moreover, verse 11 shows that the Apostle started on a journey early on the Sunday morning. 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. The diagram of the two days illustrates this point.



* The command to "kill it in the evening" (margin—"between the two evenings") was understood by the Jews to mean at any time after the sun began to decline; that is, at any time after noon.—Ex. 12: 6; Deut. 16: 5, 6; Exod. 12: 29, 31, 33, 34; Num. 33: 3.

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 prepare Passover lambs for themselves; therefore the Levites prepared for them. But as Nisan 14 closed at night-fall, 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.

Reference to the account of the original Passover, in Egypt, shows that that supper was eaten on Nisan 15. It was eaten at night, the people having their sandals on their feet and standing with staves in hand. At midnight the firstborn of the Egyptians were slain, and Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron by night and commanded them to lead the children of Israel out. (Ex. 12: 29-33.) Their departure was prompt, because "the people took their dough before it was leavened." (Vss. 34, 39.) As the date begins with sunset, it is clear that the Israelites ate the Passover and made the first stage of their journey all on the same date. According to Num. 33: 3, this date was "the fifteenth day of the first month," for then the people departed from Rameses. Thus we have another corroboration of the fact that although the lambs were killed in the closing hours of the fourteenth of Nisan, they were not eaten until after the sunset which began Nisan 15.

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 was already more than half gone when the disciples asked Him where they should prepare the Passover. After receiving the direction 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 whole, without a bone being broken. (Ex. 12: 46.) In view of all this it was simply impossible that our Lord should have even eaten the Passover on Nisan 14, and much less could He have been crucified on that date as well. Not only so, but our Lord being a Jew and required to obey the Law, one cannot entertain the suggestion made by some that He would in His last hours transgress the commandment by observing the Passover a day earlier than the prescribed time. But He could eat the Passover after night had fallen, being the beginning of Nisan 15, and be crucified before another night came round. And so it was done, as shown in the diagram on page 167.

John 18: 28 is sometimes thought to be contradictory of the definite statements 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 so understanding them.

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 Sabbath 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, which were offered on the tenth day of the seventh month, and of the Covenant sacrifices, over which the Law Covenant was originally entered into between God and the children of Israel. (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 these; but He did not die at the three different dates of these typical sacrifices. No Scripture says that He must have died as a 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 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, 1912

According to the Jewish method of reckoning, which is still identical with the method in vogue in our Lord's day, the first day of Nisan will correspond this year with March 19, beginning at sunset, March 18. The fifteenth of Nisan will, therefore, fall on Tuesday, April 2, beginning at sunset of April 1. 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 Monday, April 1, 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.

Prophetic Parables

(Continued from last Issue.)

The Parable of the Pounds

—Luke 19: 12-27—

(To Zaccheus, the Disciples and the people.)

12. He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

13. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

14. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

15. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

17. And he saith unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

18. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

20. And another came, saying, Lord, behold here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21. For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

22. And he said unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow.

23. Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

24. And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

25. (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26. For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

27. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

CONSIDERATION of the Parable of the Pounds rightly follows that of the Parable of the Talents, for it may be regarded as another version of the same story, and illustrative of the same general principles. As before remarked, it is likely that the Lord in his several years' preaching in the various districts of Palestine repeated His parables with variations of detail or in different settings, the main lessons remaining the same. In the Parable of the Pounds several additional details are given. The "man" of Matt. 25: 14 and Mark 13: 34 is a "nobleman" in Luke 19: 12, who has not only a large estate and many servants, but also "citizens" who are subject to him. His "servants" undertake to administer during his absence, but his "citizens" hate him and send a message after him intimating that they do not desire his return or rulership. This detail accurately illustrates the attitude of the Jews toward our Lord Jesus, who was their King, and to whom their allegiance was due; but they hated Him. It also well shows how the Lord's "servants," the Apostles and their helpers, were left in a hostile country to maintain the honour and right of the absent "nobleman," the Lord Jesus, and shows that the "trading" which they were to do would be attended with difficulties by reason of lack of co-operation from the "citizens." And so the early Church found it, their most active opponents and persecutors being the Jews, the professed people of God.—John 1: 11; Acts 4: 17; 5: 28; 1 Thes. 2: 14-16; Matt. 21: 43, 44.

Verse 27 supplies a still further detail: that the rights of our Lord Jesus over the "citizens," the Jewish nation, were more than an empty name. Their rejection of Him as their King (Matt. 23: 37; Mark 15: 13, 14; Acts 4: 25-27) did not make Him any less their sovereign. He had not only the right to rule over them, but the right to punish their rebellion against Him. They had become His irreconcilable and bitter "enemies," traitors to their country, and death is the usually recognised penalty for such. History records how the Jewish nation suffered for their rejection of the Messiah, confirming this parable as a true prophecy and warning, to which the Jews should have taken heed.

But the Jews were not alone in expressing the sentiment, "We will not have this man to reign over us." This attitude was adopted by all the Gentile nations to whom the disciples carried the glad tidings of Jesus as

Lord and Christ, the "heir of all things," including the Gentile "world." By comparing Psalm 2: 1-12 with Acts 4: 24-28, the inspired apostolic explanation of the Psalm is found. Jesus is declared to be the Anointed King set on Zion's hill; "both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles" are declared to be among those "heathen" or nations which "raged" and contrived vain things, for they could not cast off the cords of Jesus Christ. The same is true of their successors in authority, both in Judaism and among the Gentiles. They may threaten and storm, but God's Anointed is supreme, and they cannot unseat Him. And the fate of all these resisters is described in the parable—"Bring them hither, and slay them before Me." Every Gentile nation and ruler who opposes Jesus Christ goes down before Him. And the coming trouble, world-wide and unquenchable, is a further demonstration of this truth. The great day of wrath is near, in which the nations shall drink finally of the wrath of His indignation, and they shall go down, to rise no more.—Rev. 2: 16, 22; 8: 8; 11: 13; 18: 17. Compare Luke 20: 16-18.

The Slothful Servant's Plaint

The question here arises, Is the statement of the slothful servant, "I knew Thee, that Thou art an hard man, reaping where Thou hast not sown, and gathering where Thou hast not strawed," a true statement of fact, or a false accusation, as applied to our Lord Jesus, the Master of the household? To this we reply, Both: It is a false accusation in that it is only a half-truth, ignoring completely the further facts that the original capital was His, that His servants owe life and many other blessings to His mercy and loving kindness, and that faithful service is only a reasonable requirement. It is a true statement, which our Lord did not deny, but rather emphasised, in that He deals firmly and vigorously with His servants. While He is long suffering and patient in His dealings with them, there is also a severe side to His character, which they are made to feel if they transgress. He *does expect* to have work done without personally performing the routine labour. Even the Roman centurion could understand that, for he had others under him and had only to say to this man go, and he went, and to that man come, and he came. (Matt. 8: 8, 9.) And this is as it should be. The Lord Jesus is no weakling, afraid of His own voice, to be ridden over rough shod by every insolent discontent. He is a Mighty Sovereign entitled to respect and reverence, who will see to it that it is rendered. It is not optional with His subjects and servants whether they will serve Him or not: all his enemies will be made to lick the dust.—Psa. 2: 9-12; 72: 1-9; Phil. 2: 9-11; 1 Cor. 15: 24, 25.

Myriads of angels already acknowledge His authority, and hasten to perform His bidding; fire and flood are His ministers to perform His pleasure. (Heb. 1: 6-8; 1 Pet. 3: 22; Rev. 5: 11, 12.) Why should puny man be allowed to hold out against Him?

The Reason for the Parable

The Parable of the Talents follows the inquiry of the disciples (Matt. 24: 3)—"What shall be the sign of thy presence, and of the end of the age," and the Lord's assurance (Matt. 25: 13), "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." The Parable of the Pounds is said to have been given because the Lord was "nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately appear."

(Luke 19: 11.) It was difficult for the disciples to understand that their Lord must die, that the "Kingdom of Heaven" in which their inheritance lay was a spiritual Kingdom, and that the forcible setting up of the Kingdom on earth would be delayed for nineteen centuries; in fact, that it was not God's will that they should, at that time, understand the "times and seasons" (Acts 1: 6, 7), and all the minutiae of the plan of salvation. These two parables gently and diplomatically set before them the unwelcome truth that they *must serve faithfully for a long period during His absence* before they could enter fully into their expectations to sit, the one on the right hand, and the other on the left hand, in the Kingdom. These two parables have been a source of encouragement as well as of instruction to all the Church since, as each member has realised himself a steward of "pounds" or "talents" to be traded with for his Master's gain.

Ten Servants, Ten Pounds

Another variation between the two parables is that in the one only three servants are mentioned, of differing ability, receiving three different sums of money, and the two faithful gain 100 per cent.; while in the other there are ten servants, each received the same amount, the gain in the case of two is respectively ten times and five times the original capital, and report on seven servants is omitted entirely. But the difference of "ability," plainly stated in the one parable, is strongly intimated in the other, by the statement that of two servants starting on an equal footing one of the servants gained ten pounds more, while the other gained only five.

Still another variation is that in the Parable of the Talents the reward of the faithful servants is apparently equal, each being invited to enter into the joy of their Lord, while in the Parable of the Pounds the rewards are proportioned to the amount of gain—ten pounds, ten cities, five pounds, five cities. The amount of money entrusted in the Parable of the Pounds is much smaller than in the Parable of the Talents, the "pound" being worth (according to the margin of the A.V.) only £3 2s. 6d. This variation in the value of the stewardship brings out the more strongly the fact that faithfulness and diligence are required of the servants, and that with all their efforts they do not add more than a trifle to his wealth. This reminds us of the Lord's words in conclusion of the Parable of the Sycamine Tree.*

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."—Luke 17: 10.

Nevertheless, the Lord has promised a great reward to those who faithfully endure—even joint heirship in the Kingdom. It is worth striving and suffering for; is it not?

Parable of the Men that Wait for their Lord

—Luke 12: 35-40.—

(To an Innumerable Multitude of People and to the Disciples.)

THE PARABLE

35. Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;

36. And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for

THE INTERPRETATION

their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37. Blessed are those servants whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

See also the Parable of the Goodman of the House, Matt. 24: 42-44.

ON SOME occasions the Apostles, and even the Pharisees, were quick to grasp the point of a parable, and to express the varying emotions aroused by the story. In the present instance Peter had doubts as to whether it were intended for the multitude, or as a bit of private teaching for the disciples alone.

Taken in connection with what precedes, and with verses 49-59, we can see a special application to the people then present, and referring to His first advent. The multitude gathered around Him had not yet accepted Him as their Lord; they were as yet largely moved by curiosity to see new miracles and to hear the scribes and Pharisees scored. On one occasion He told them plainly that the "loaves and fishes" were the chief attraction. (John 6: 26.) But now He defines what their correct attitude should be—"like unto men that wait for their lord." The Jews as a nation professed to be waiting for the Messiah; but they had gone to sleep; they had allowed the lights to go out; now that He was among them they were not opening the door to give Him the welcome which was His due.

But blessed were those among the Jews whom He found "watching"; like Simeon waiting for the consolation of Israel, or like Nathanael praying under the fig tree, or like Simon and Andrew and Zaccheus, eager to see and hear.—Luke 2: 25, 26; John 1: 48, etc.

Verily, the Lord came forth and served them. He made Himself their servant, to declare unto them the glad tidings and to assist them to enter into the Kingdom.—Matt. 20: 28; John 13: 4-17.

But to the nation as a whole He came in an hour when they thought not; they "knew not the day of their visitation." (Luke 19: 41-44.) The parable of Matt. 21: 33-46 also pointed out the unreadiness of the Jews as a nation.

The multitude were therefore in much need of the exhortation—"Be ye also ready." And if not ready, to arouse themselves, light their lamps, and become keenly alive to the wonderful fact of His presence.—John 1: 35-39; 46-49; 9: 36, etc.

40. Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41. Then Peter said unto Him, Lord, speakest Thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

*For explanation of this parable see page

The Parable of the Goodman of the House

—which is added to the above parable (verse 39), and which is also recorded in Matt. 24: 42-44—further warned the Jews to give heed to the Master's preaching, lest later on they should wake up to the realisation that He had come and gone, and they had not recognised Him. This parable emphasises the fact of personal responsibility. Among many servants responsibility may be thought to be divided, but the "goodman of the house" can blame no one but himself if he misses the thief. Thieves do not send advance notices of their intended visits, and it is in vain afterward to say, If I had known when the thief would come I would have watched. —Luke 12: 39.

Some claim that the Lord's second advent will be with lightning flashes, claps of thunder and other visible and audible demonstrations. They say that when the Apostle states that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night he referred to the practice of eastern bandits who descend suddenly upon a house, with much noise and confusion, and rouse the inhabitants from their slumbers. This does not, however, alter the fact that a thief comes quietly and takes the people unawares. The noise made by the bandits is *after* they have surrounded the house and made sure the occupants cannot escape.

Verse 40, like verses 31-35, was an appropriate exhortation to the multitude. "The Son of man cometh in an hour *when ye think not*." With the exception of Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks, the Law and the Prophets gave no definite date for the Messiah's appearance. But this one prophecy was sufficiently plain to create in Palestine at this time a general expectation of Him, so that when John the Baptist came preaching the people wondered if he were the Messiah. But John said, No, "there standeth One among you, whom ye know not; He it is who coming after me is preferred before me."—John 1: 15, 26, 27; Luke 3: 15, 16.

When Jesus began to say, The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, and to do many wonderful miracles, they were still in doubt; mainly because they expected a mighty warrior, to curry favour with the rich and influential, and to free them from the Romans, whereas Jesus came from an insignificant hamlet; he criticised them for their hypocrisy, urging them to put off the yoke of sin. The discourse of which these parables form a part was begun by the significant remark—"Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." (Luke 12: 1; Matt. 5: 19, 20.) The people therefore had to look sharp, to be on the watch, in order to be convinced that this was indeed the long-promised Deliverer.

But any who had prepared themselves by doing their best under the Jewish Law, and yet realised their inability to fulfil all its requirements, were ready when the "thief" came; that is, they recognised the Messiah when they heard His words, and saw His miracles. To these Jesus came forth and served them with the new dispensational truth concerning the Kingdom. Of such "ready" ones was the Scribe who gave a discreet answer, and to whom Jesus said, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God."—Mark 12: 28-34.

The Lord did not directly answer Peter's question, recorded in verse 41, but gave another parable; as follows:—

The Parable of the Faithful and Wise Steward

—Luke 12: 41-48.—

(To Peter and the Multitude.)

THE PARABLE

42. And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

43. Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45. But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46. The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

48. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.

THE INTERPRETATION

For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

BEFORE considering the interpretation of this parable, it may be well to examine the parable itself in detail, that we may get the right idea of it as a story; lest, misunderstanding the story, we adopt a mistaken interpretation.

Three kinds of servants are brought to our notice, as found in upper class households in our Lord's day, and even as far back as Abraham's time:—

(1) The chief steward, or ruler, as he was called, who occupied a position of great responsibility, having supervision over the whole of the estate, buying and selling grain, stock, and other products in his employer's name, engaging and superintending the servants, and regulating the household. Such a steward is referred to in the Parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke 16: 1-8), who is shown to have had discretion to reduce the accounts of his master's debtors. Abraham for a time looked upon his chief steward as his heir, and afterward entrusted to him a very special commission. This Eliezer was said to "rule over all that he [Abraham] had." (Gen. 15: 2; 24: 2.) Such a servant to-day would be called a "superintendent" or "general manager."

(2) The house steward, having a more limited position than the chief steward or general manager, corresponding more to that of a modern "butler," who controls the larder, and sees that the meals are properly prepared.

(3) The servants or menials who perform the actual work of the household under the steward's or butler's

directions, and who were supplied by him with their daily rations.

All these were bond-servants or slaves. Just prior to our Lord's time many educated and capable Greeks who had been taken in the wars were slaves on Roman estates, transacting all business, while the Owner spent most or all of his time at Rome or in foreign conquest.

The "faithful and wise" steward of the parable does not occupy so influential a position as Eliezer in Abraham's camp, or as a modern general manager of ranch or station. His duties are more those of a butler, to provide food for the household. It is necessary to remark also that in the parable only one steward is referred to, for the story rightly pictures the ancient custom. One of the noticeable features of all our Lord's parables is their naturalness; He used the customs of the day as He found them, and the people, being familiar with the customs, could therefore readily follow His illustrations.

It is, however, the employer's desire to raise the house-steward or butler to the position of ruler or general-manager; in other words, to *make him ruler over all his goods*. But is the steward worthy of such an extension of his office? Certainly not, if he have proven drunken and gluttonous and tyrannical in his present position. On the contrary, he must be deprived of his stewardship, and not only so, he must be "cut in pieces" (that is, severely scourged—R.V.). Although the steward knew his lord was coming and would require an accounting, and was therefore in one sense a believer, his portion must be appointed with the unbelievers altogether outside the household, because *he acted as though he did not believe his lord was coming*.

But there were other possibilities before the steward than the above extreme of wilfulness and tyranny. He might not beat his underservants, nor become drunken or gluttonous; he might merely refrain from active performance of his duties, omitting preparation for his lord's coming. In such a case he would not necessarily be altogether cast out of his master's employ, but would receive "many stripes" or lashes, both as a punishment and as a corrective, in hope that he would reform. But he would lose the opportunity of promotion.

Another possibility was that of ignorance of his lord's will, and consequent failure to perform his duties, as well as doing "things worthy of stripes." It may be thought strange that one ignorant of his lord's will should be punished, but it must be remembered that the steward occupied an office in which it was *his business to know*; his ignorance resulted from neglect to inform himself by candid inquiry, and therefore indicated a measure of unfaithfulness. However, the offence in such a case is not so great as if he deliberately refused to do what he knew should be done. A few "stripes" are sufficient punishment, and it is hoped that the lesson will be learned and better service rendered in future.

It is to be noted that the "servant" of verses 43, 45, 47 and 48 is the steward of verse 42. The parable does not concern itself with the under-servants, except to record that they suffered at the hands of the unfaithful steward. The story concerns the steward only, and shows that he has it within his own power to be either (1) "faithful and wise," (2) debauched and tyrannous, under the excuse that his lord delays his coming, (3) indifferent and neglectful, or (4) carelessly ignorant and consequently making unnecessary blunders.

Much Given, Much Required

So much for the story itself. Now for the interpretation, given in our blessed Lord's own words—

"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."—Vs. 48.

This statement enunciates a principle of God's dealing, the last clause emphasising the fact that men in their arrangements with one another recognise the same principle; employers expect faithful service from their employes, and do not promote those whom they find abusing their office and neglecting their duties. It also answers Peter's question, recorded in verse 41, and shows that while our Lord's discourse and parables were for *whoever had ears to hear* (Matt. 13: 9, 43; Mark 7: 16, Luke 8: 8) whether among His immediate disciples or among the listening multitude—the chief lesson was for those among them who held positions of authority in the teaching of God's Word.

The Jews as Stewards

The Jewish people as a nation were stewards of God's good things as represented in the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms. To every Jew a responsibility was given, to bind the law on the forehead, to print it on the doorpost, and to impress it upon the family growing up around him. (Deut. 10: 1-6; 17: 1-7; 28: 1-14.) In addition, the priests and Levites were constituted special stewards, and commanded to read the books regularly in the hearing of all the people. (Deut. 31: 10-13; Josh. 8: 34, 35.) The Levites had certain villages and lands set apart for their use, scattered throughout the twelve tribes, for the greater convenience in reaching and instructing the people. (Josh. 21; 1 Chron. 6: 54-81.) After lapses into idolatry, national reforms were marked by revival of this custom. (2 Ki. 22: 13; 23: 1-3.) After the captivity Ezra showed himself a faithful Levite by gathering the people together and reading to them out of the law; both reading distinctly and giving the sense of what was read, in order that the people might understand what they heard.—Neh. 8: 1-8.

The law and the prophets and the promises were described as a table spread before their enemies (the surrounding nations), and God protected them as a shepherd his flock. (Psalm 23.) But priest, Levite and people failed to appreciate the food thus placed before them. They preferred the wine of idolatry and the meats of uncleanness. Their table became full of vomit. (Isa. 28: 8.) The prophets were false, and the people loved to have it so. (Jer. 5: 23-31.) In our Lord's day synagogues were established everywhere for the reading of the Scriptures (Luke 4: 15, 16), the ruler of the synagogue being an influential person in the community. (Luke 13: 14; Mark 5: 22; Acts 18: 8.) But still the people were not properly fed, because the scribes and rulers and Pharisees gave out the traditions of men rather than the truth in its purity. The Lord acknowledged them as sitting in Moses' seat, and therefore the authorised interpreters of the Law, but rebuked them repeatedly for their misuse of their office. (Matt. 23: 2-4.) Their hearts had waxed gross, and their ears dull of hearing, and they placed grievous burdens upon the people. Their "table," which should have been a blessing, became a trap and a snare and a recompense unto them. (Rom. 11: 7-10.) Consequently they were put out of their stewardship, and received many lashings

in the troubled days which John the Baptist and our Lord predicted for them.—Matt. 3: 7-12; 23: 1-39.

The duties of the scribes in the time of our Lord are referred to by Him in Matt. 13: 52—

"Every scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder," which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

It is evident then that the intention of the parable was to emphasise the unfaithfulness of this class of stewards, and to show that they would not be continued in their office, but would be degraded and severely punished. Any scribe or Pharisee hearing the parable would have the opportunity of applying it to himself, and his subsequent conduct would show whether or not he were of the extremely reprobate, positively evil and tyrannical in disposition, beating and insulting the people under him. If so, but one prospect was in view. If, however, he corresponded to the steward who knew his lord's will and did it not, or to the steward who did not trouble to learn his lord's will and prepare himself, he would receive more or less punishment ("stripes" or scourgings) according to the degree of light and knowledge and opportunity sinned against.

Several Scribes and Pharisees are honoured in the New Testament by the mention of their names or incidents in which they took part with credit, although not all recognised Jesus immediately. Of these might be mentioned the scribe who said, "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." (Matt. 8: 19.) Another, who had evidently thought deeply, questioned Jesus, and had apparently himself arrived at the same conclusions; namely, that to love God with all the heart and the neighbour as oneself is more than burnt offerings and sacrifices, for to do these perfectly would mean perfection, in which case no sacrifice would be required. When Jesus perceived that he answered discreetly He said, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." The Apostle Paul was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, and it took a severe experience to convince him, but he proved amenable to discipline, and was continued as one of the Lord's servants. A company of priests also subsequently became obedient to the faith, as well as several rulers of synagogues. (Acts 6: 7; 18: 8.) Barnabas was a Levite.—Acts 4: 36.

The parable was also of value to the people generally, to enable them to recognise the evils of Pharisaism and their true position as oppressed underlings, and to inspire them with courage to come out from under the domination of their leaders and accept the pure teachings and loving example of the Saviour, who said—

"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: 28-30.

The prophet Malachi had foretold that the Lord would come suddenly to His temple, and who should be able to stand? (Mal. 3: 1-6.) John the Baptist was sent before His face to give the people a few months' grace wherein to repent and prepare themselves, and warning them that He would have in His hand a fan with which to purge thoroughly the threshing floor. (Another figure showing that a separation was to take place between "wheat" and "chaff," between the "good and faithful" and the mere nominal professors and hypocrites.)—Matt. 3: 7-12.

Both John and Jesus preached repentance as the first essential for all classes of Jews, and that *the time was at hand* when they must all and severally give an account of their stewardship, and enter into a new regime.—Mark 1: 4, 14, 15.

The then application of these three parables is shown by the succeeding verses, Luke 12: 49-59, in which Jesus rebukes the people for not being able to "discern this time," and admonishes them to use their judgment in various matters—"Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" (Verse 57.) He came to kindle a fire; not to give peace but a sword. Division was to be the order of the day. Their training under the Law should have prepared them to distinguish between the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees and the purity and honesty of Jesus; between the traditions of the elders and the truth of God in the mouth of the greater than Solomon. The Jews were not like the Gentiles, "having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. 2: 12), for they had been under special training for centuries. (Gal. 2: 15; 4: 1-3; 3: 24.) It was then a pertinent question which Jesus put to them—"How is it that ye know not how to interpret this time?"—Luke 12: 56, R.V.

Gospel Age Interpretation

But if, as before stated, the Lord's interpretation of the parable (verse 48) embodies a *general principle* of dealing, recognised by both God and man, we can see in the parable a lesson applicable all through the Gospel age, and particularly at its close.

But before taking up this phase of the subject, we will examine the parable of Matt. 24: 45-51, which closely resembles the parable of the faithful and wise steward of Luke 12; and which, since it follows the great prophecy covering the entire Gospel age, justifies us in applying the principle of both parables to the stewards of the Gospel

(To be continued.)



Adversaries and the Adversary

(Continued from December Issue.)

Divination by Dreams

"Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."—Acts 19: 19, 20.

The above words are exceedingly significant as showing that the growth and prevailing of the Word of God

among the Ephesians were indicated by the voluntary burning by the people of their books of "curious art." To-day the genuineness of the work of grace in the hearts of those who hear the Gospel is demonstrated in a similar manner, by the voluntary destruction of whatever books of magic art they may possess. The zeal of the Chinese for reform has been recently shown by the gathering together to the public squares of their opium

pipes for solemn public renunciation and cremation; the Christian cannot afford to be less positive and public in his renunciation of evil and choice of good. There is a clear line of demarcation between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial, and no one can serve both; the force of circumstances, if not voluntary choice, will compel him to give his adherence to one or the other.—2 Cor. 6: 14-18; Luke 16: 13; Eph. 5: 11; 6: 11, 12.

Divination by Dreams is as ancient as the other forms of divination already referred to in these pages. Divination by the oracle required visiting the temple, the presentation of gifts which were equivalent to the payment of a fee. But dreams were extolled by an ancient philosopher as the privilege of the poorest as well as of the richest, involving neither trouble nor expense. All could dream to their hearts' content, and in the morning have the pleasure or the agony of interpretation according as they considered the dream good or bad. It was only when in doubt, or when the issues involved seemed specially important, that recourse was had to the oracles or other "interpreters" for interpretations of their dreams.

To give attention to dreams is on the surface as innocent as studying the tea leaves in a cup, or counting the petals of a marguerite, or noting the flight of birds; in reality its tendency is to destroy faith in God, to deprive one of logical reasoning power, to undermine the morals, and ultimately, if persisted in, to shatter the health. In this we do not refer to the casual relating of dreams because of their ridiculousness, such as often follow over-indulgence at the table; or such as might be useful to a physician in prescribing for more serious disorders: We refer to the relating of dreams for the purpose of interpreting them according to a systematic code, with a view to foretelling the future or obtaining guidance in personal affairs.

Dreams In the Bible

But one may say, (1) Have we not good authority for relating and interpreting our dreams? Did not God in ancient times reveal His will to His people through the agency of dreams, and does He not do so still? (2) If it was right for Joseph to tell his dreams to his brethren, is it not right for me to do so? and if his dreams were prophetic, will not mine also foretell the future? (3) Does not the Bible say that God speaks to men in dreams and thus opens their understandings? (Job 33: 14-17.) Should I not then listen to the voice of God speaking to me in my dreams?

In reply to these queries, we should say, (1) This statement takes too much for granted. The fact that God gave prophetic dreams to Joseph and Daniel and other ancients does not prove that He will give similar dreams to every dreamer. He did not give such dreams to Joseph's brethren nor to Daniel's companions. Joseph probably like other youths dreamed many dreams, but only a few of them are referred to as of special import. The time and circumstances, God's general methods of dealing, etc., must be considered in order to discover the particular reasons for giving certain dreams to certain persons.

(2) Joseph showed his innocence, not his wisdom, by telling two of his dreams to his brethren, thus arousing their envy and hatred. But it was evidently as much of God that he told these dreams as were the dreams themselves, in order that at a later date God's name might be honoured as the sole reliable Foreteller of the future.

Jacob's faith was shown not to have been misplaced, and the eleven brethren were convinced. (Gen. 37: 11; 44: 14; 45: 5-8.) Thus also the fulfilment of the prediction made to Abraham, that his seed should dwell in Egypt, was prepared for by the selling of Joseph into captivity by his jealous brethren, where his subsequent elevation to high station and honour enabled him to fulfil that part of his dream which showed him as their blessing.

Dreams In the Book of Job

(3) In considering any quotation from the Book of Job, it is well to refer to chapter and verse, to ascertain who is the speaker—God, Satan, Job, the three comforters, or the conceited young Elihu who boasted that he could teach age the wisdom it lacked. (Job 32: 1 to 33: 5, 33.) It will be seen then that the assertion that God speaks to men in dreams was made by Elihu, and therefore is not worthy of our acceptance as a general principle. As a matter of fact, God was speaking to Job in his experience, testing and proving him; and for Job to have ignored this instruction to seek guidance through dreams would have been a great mistake. Further, God spoke to Job out of the whirlwind, as we are told in the closing chapters, discomfiting the three unsatisfactory "friends" who had failed to speak to Job the things that were right, and finally instructed Job to offer a sacrifice on their behalf. (Job 42: 7-9.) Elihu was totally ignored, unless 38: 2 may be considered as applying to him, he being the last speaker—"Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" No dependence can be placed therefore upon any word of Elihu's. If his speech were a specimen of what he heard during sleep, it is evident that God did not speak to him in his dreams, whoever or whatever else may have done so.

Eliphaz, the Temanite, also darkened counsel by his reference to dreams, although he may have referred merely to waking thoughts which came to him at night while others slept. We quote the passage in full because it is used in "dream-books" as Bible authority for divination by dreams. He said:—

"Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof. In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up: It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof; an image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying, Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man be more pure than his maker?"—Job 4: 12-17.

This so-called "vision" (or imagery?) is brought in to make his following harangue more impressive to Job; he proceeds to state that Job is wrong in maintaining that he had not committed sins which brought upon him the plague of boils as his just deserts. He contends that God can put no confidence whatever in the integrity of men, even such as Job, and that had Job not grievously sinned, he would not be so severely afflicted. (4: 19; 17-27; 15: 5-35.) Evidently Eliphaz' "vision" was empty and vain; he failed entirely to understand either Job or God's dealings, whereby the righteous may be afflicted and the wicked go free. He seemed to glory in Job's sufferings rather than to offer real sympathy or consolation. Far harder for Job to bear than the boils were the heartless comments of his "friends." But for all his pains he was able to defend his character with vehemence, and doubtless found a measure of relief in indignant speech.—Job 6: 14, 27-30; 10: 2; etc.

(To be continued.)

Readers, Attention!

FRIENDS are asked to kindly take notice that the third volume of the "Advocate" will be complete with the issue for March, 1912. Nearly all subscriptions expire with the March issue, and this reminder is given so that friends may take the necessary steps to have their subscriptions for the next twelve months sent in good time. This is the only method we have of giving you this notice, and we shall be greatly obliged, and the good work materially assisted in what is very necessary, by your prompt attention thereto. A few friends have not yet taken notice of the word on this subject published a year ago, so that they are now twelve months in arrear. Ever welcome renewals and new subscriptions may be sent either to Melbourne, London, or Brooklyn, whichever office is most convenient for you. Do it now!

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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 for the spread of the Good Tidings concerning the Grave 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, 1910, "Advocate." It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way.

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E. C. HENNINGES, Editor

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The "Advocate" Sustaining Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report. As the "Advocate" is regularly published at a financial loss, it is obliged to depend upon the loving co-operation of its friends until it shall become self-sustaining. Let the good work continue!

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In the good providence of God, the liberality of some of His stewards has removed the rather heavy deficit which had occurred in the publishing of the "Advocate." We are grateful for this token of His care and the loving and zealous interest of readers. These things give new incentives to trust Him for the future, the liabilities of which will now need to be faced and provided for. The continuance of your earnest prayers on behalf of the work is greatly desired, that more laborers might be sent into the immense harvest field.

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The New Covenant Advocate

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Kingdom Herald

Vol. 3

MELBOURNE, LONDON, AND BROOKLYN, N.Y., MARCH, 1912

No. 12

Men's Hearts Failing them for Fear

THE GENERAL STRIKE is Labor's latest weapon for bringing the capitalist to terms, as was recently experienced in Great Britain and at Brisbane, and as will happen again if Labor leaders have their way. The dynamite outrages in America under the auspices of prominent Labor members, if not with the co-operation of the highest Labor leaders, are another feature of the war being waged against the present constitution of society.

Employer and employee have always been in the world; each has his grievances against the other. On the one hand, long hours, hard work, the lowest wages for which labor is obtainable; on the other, risks to money invested, unsatisfactory workmanship, lack of faithful service. But the real difficulty lies deeper than dissatisfaction with mutual relations; it lies in the instinctive desire of every human being to have his own way, to get the most for himself, to be his own master and to rule others instead of being ruled.

Yet when put to the test every man is not able to be an employer; many men are good, capable craftsmen, but poor managers, and when they do try a business of their own, they go to the wall, for the simple reason that left to themselves they have not the "grit" to make themselves work the requisite number of hours to insure a living, or the capacity to grapple with the forces of nature and of man which operate against them.

Business in this age is based on the competitive system, and no other system is possible among men in their present selfish state. Even the enlightened operations of the Wages Boards and Arbitration Courts of Australia, which have done so much to improve living conditions among all classes of workers, have not relieved the spirit of antagonism between masters and men.

But the chief difficulty, and that which will become increasingly manifest, is the lack of moral responsibility and humane sentiment in the rising generation, and the large numbers of young men "spoiling for a fight" of some description. This is true on

both the capitalistic and the labor side. Time was when great wars drew off thousands, rather millions, of able-bodied men, mostly young fellows of an adventurous spirit. True, this left many fields untilled, many factories idle, many families destitute, but the industrial situation was relieved by the fact that the adventurous spirits either killed each other or were sobered by the horror of the carnage and their own physical sufferings, so that, returning once more to conditions of peace, the survivors were constrained to take what offered and to "settle down." Having relieved the exuberance and practised the folly of youth, they were absorbed by society as tamed and more or less useful citizens.

But not so to-day: Resisting with all their might the regular warfare of yesterday between nations, now generally recognized as a waste of life, energy, and especially of money, the more serious and responsible men of families with homes to maintain, and hence desirous for a settled state of society, are *playing into the hands* of the above class of adventurous youth, and forging a weapon for their own destruction, by agitations against the present order without imposing on the larrikin and irresponsible class the necessary restraints. In the adventures of war some discipline at least was maintained, and when the men broke loose, they preyed on the enemy, and so hastened the triumph of their own cause. But in the class war at present being waged, the hot heads do not exterminate each other: the irresponsible, the moral delinquents, and self-seeking agitators all continue to flourish and make the maintenance of discipline by the older and more sensible heads all the more difficult.

There is no doubt that the Scriptures blame the capitalistic class for depriving their employees of the fruits of their toil, devouring widow's houses, etc.; and there is no doubt that vengeance must and will be meted out to them, as it was against the frivolous aristocrats of France during the Revolution. But a dispassionate view of the whole situation shows that now as then the overthrow of law and order is the result of the irresponsible and the vicious getting out of control of the better element, and making the latter

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a party to violence they would not themselves attempt, and only partly approve of in others. And as after the French Revolution the great Napoleon arose to an autocratic power almost unparalleled, showing the reaction of the people from anarchy, and also drawing off to the aforementioned usual conflict between nations the subsequent generation of sports and braves, so there will be a strong reaction against the general strike and the dynamitards and in favor of an autocracy able to deal effectively, not only with the larrikins, the degenerates, the vicious, and other of the rough element, but with those of a higher station in life who find no better use for their intelligence than to direct and use these elements for their own advantage.

Whether the re-action against the general strike and against violence generally will lead to the adoption of other more conciliatory methods of negotiation between Capital and Labor, or whether Labor

will use this weapon continuously till the social order all over the world is upset, remains to be seen. In the meantime, we who know God and who understand who it is that is directing the affairs of men to the overthrow of the last of the four universal empires and the blowing away of the remnants like the dust of the threshing floor can rest in peace.

"When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh. . . . But ye brethren are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." The world in its ignorance knows not the meaning of the present unrest; its future is dark and uncertain; its wise men are perplexed. But God's people do understand, they rejoice that the Kingdom is near, and they lift up their heads because their redemption draweth nigh, and they acclaim earth's rightful King who shall cause God's will to be done on earth even as it is done in heaven. Long may He reign!



Adversaries and the Adversary

(Continued from last Issue.)

Job's own comment on the value of his dreams is given in 7: 13-18; it is more in the nature of a complaint: His affliction was so painful that even when he sought his couch for sleep, his rest was disturbed by troubled dreams—"nightmares" we would call them. But Job did not seek from these dreams and visions the answer to his query as to why God had afflicted him; and God did not so answer him. Job was in accord with the later statement of the prophet—"Should not a people seek unto their God?" (Isa. 8: 19), while his false comforters uttered in the matter of dreams the sentiments of the heathen nations who served other gods. Job's supplications did not go unheard, for at the close of his trial the Lord restored to him his health and prosperity. Then Job could say that at last He understood the greatness of God's dealings and his own littleness, and he repented of all the bitter things he had thought and said under the irritations of his affliction.—Job 42: 2-6.

Thus it is seen that these passages of Job, which are often set before Christians to tempt them from the reasonable study of the Word of God to an unprofitable dependence upon dreams, teach the exact opposite, and are a lesson in faithful dependence upon God Himself. Every Christian needs to be on guard against sophistical and misleading use of the Scriptures. Remembering that Satan made use of isolated texts to tempt the Lord to disobedience to the Heavenly Father, and that his agents are still willing to quote text after text if by so doing any disciple may be led astray, it behoves every believer to follow our Lord's example and to have the Scriptures so well learned that he may discern the false inferences and have ready an answer from the inspired Word, in rebuttal of the tempter's misquotations and misapplications. 1 Tim. 3: 16, 17 is such a text. If it be admitted that the Scriptures "thoroughly furnish" a man unto all good works, any resort to dreams for instruction is at once ruled out.

Ordinary Dreams

Other Scriptures corroborate Job's view that dreams in general have no value; that they are an unpleasant disturbance of sleep gladly forgotten on awaking in the morning. So the Psalmist calls upon the Lord to reject and forget the wicked—

"As a dream after awaking, O Lord, reject thou in wrath their image."—Psa. 73: 20.

The transitoriness and vanity of the nations which fought against Israel are compared to a dream or vision. Their prosperity was no more real or permanent than the dream of a hungry man who fancies himself at a feast, or a thirsty man refreshing himself at cool fountains or with sparkling wine. (Isa. 29: 7, 8.) The same state of dreaminess or self-delusion is ascribed to Babylon.

"She saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." (Rev. 18: 7.) "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."—Rev. 3: 17.

Not understanding the functions of the brain, most savage tribes ascribe dreams to the migrations of the soul while the body lies asleep, or to the souls of his friends, living or dead, visiting the dreamer. The Greeks and Romans and others thought the gods visited them in their dreams. Some of their philosophers, however, approximated the modern scientific view, Aristotle explaining dreams as the impressions left by objects seen with the eyes of the body, and Plato connecting them with the normal waking operations of the mind. Schopenhauer gives the cause of dreams as—

"The stimulation of the brain by the internal regions of the organism through the sympathetic nervous system. These impressions the mind afterward works up into quasi-realities by means of its forms of space, time, causality, etc."—*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th edition, art: "Dreams."

During waking hours memory brings forward many thoughts and scenes as well as faces long dormant in the

mind. One who can realise that other functions of the body continue during sleep, the heart to beat, the blood to circulate, the stomach to digest food, etc., should have no difficulty in realising how the mind and memory may also continue more or less active during sleep; or in understanding how external noises or internal sounds or movements may give impressions to the brain. The starving or thirsty may dream of a feast, or fancy himself dying alone in a desert with the vultures circling over his head; the child that has had a fright may live over again in his dreams the recent experience which brought the terror; but, on the other hand, one may equally well dream of a feast or a famine when there is no present distress, but only a stirring of memory concerning something experienced, or merely read or heard of, at any time in the past. Thus old people repeatedly dream of childhood, and old familiar scenes, just as in their waking hours memory most frequently brings to them recollections of the past.

This explanation of the cause of ordinary dreams is most reasonable, it is in agreement with everyone's experience, and it leaves the Bible in its proper place as the true Guide of the Believer; while at the same time not denying those special dreams which the Bible records as God-given, or those which are the manifestation of spiritualistic control.

Interpretations of Dreams

Much of the superstition attaching to dreams has been fostered by designing men, sometimes but not always self-deceived as to their real nature. With the fostering of dreams there grew up also a priestcraft which made a business of interpreting dreams. These "interpreters" were found at the courts of Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar; among the Australian aborigines and other low races; they were attached to the temples of the gods of Greece and Rome; they have existed from the earliest times down to the present day among both civilised and uncivilised peoples. Dream books have come down from ancient Greece; they have been found in Siam; they are to be had in every modern language. Some of the interpretations are by analogy, after the manner of Joseph's dreams; others are purely arbitrary, and have the appearance of guess-work; others are so complicated that a dream may be made to mean anything. Nebuchadnezzar apparently placed little confidence in the interpreters attached to his service; he knew well that if he told them his dream they would readily find an interpretation of some sort.—Dan. 2: 7-11.

Dream Book Interpretations

We have before us one of the latest compilations for guiding the lay reader in dream interpretation, and are much impressed with the manner in which spiritualistic and pagan ideas are advanced under cover of Bible quotations. No reference is made to Scriptures commanding obedience to God, faith in our Lord Jesus, or duty to fellow-men. Only a few texts are picked out here and there to give a seeming support to spiritualism, dreams, etc., and some of these are misquoted.

Misquotation of Scripture is very common in all spiritualistic books and papers we have seen; for instance, in order to encourage the old heathen idea that the soul can leave the body during sleep and travel elsewhere in an intangible body, St. Paul is made to say, "We have a natural body, and we have a spiritual body,"

as though he meant that both were possessed at the same time; whereas the Apostle asserts the contrary; namely, that the natural or flesh body only is possessed in this life, and that the spiritual body will be given to the saints at the resurrection. First is the natural, *afterward* the spiritual.—1 Cor. 15: 44-50.

This dream-book contains a list of over fifteen-hundred articles, actions or ideas which may be dreamed about, one hundred and thirty-seven being under the letter "A" alone. To each of these an interpretation is given, with suggestions concerning various possible combinations. The influence of these interpretations is altogether pernicious. Some of them are by analogy; e.g., "To dream that God confers distinct favours upon you, you will become the favourite of a cautious and prominent person who will use his position to advance yours." On the surface this might seem a good dream, holding out a beneficial prospect; in reality its effect would be to draw one away from God in the search of the "prominent person" from whom the advancement is expected. Particularly is this evil tendency manifest when the other possible dreams about God are considered. "If you dream of seeing God . . . No good accrues from this dream." Further on the dogmatic statement is made that "God speaks oftener to those who transgress than to those who do not." To dream of God speaking to you is a forerunner of weakening health, etc. On the whole, according to this book, it is not good to dream much about God. But to dream "that you listen to the teachings of an occultist denotes that you strive to elevate others to a higher plane of justice and forbearance. If you accept his views, you will find honest delight by keeping your mind and person above material frivolities and pleasures." To dream of "magic" is also a very good dream. Is it not blasphemous to use the name of God in such connections? Imagine the effect upon a young and impressionable person, once he is convinced that it is to his interest to dream about magic and occultism rather than about God!

To dream of so innocent a creature as a "kid" means "that you will not be overscrupulous in your morals or pleasures"—showing that the interpreters of dreams are under a very common misconception concerning the character of that animal. In Bible times flocks of goats were as profitable as flocks of sheep; and either a lamb or a kid was acceptable as a sacrifice on God's altar. Our Lord as the Sin-bearer was typified by the scapegoat. (Exod. 12: 3; Lev. 4: 23, 28; 16: 15; John 1: 29.) To dream of a kid should not therefore be a bad omen, if it were at all an omen.

The influence of the book is immoral in that immoral deeds are prognosticated as following certain dreams. This would lead a weak mind to carry out the immorality indicated by the dream, or to suspect as immoral other persons indicated in the dream. Persons with sufficient stamina of character to resist actual immorality would at least have their minds contaminated by close association with such suggestions; they would become unstable and unreliable, tossed about by every shade of meaning discoverable in their own dreams or those of their friends; and next, finding themselves unable to "interpret" these dreams with sufficient assurance, would drift under the power of "professionals" who would exploit them to their own monetary and other advantage. The Preacher had probably had

many opportunities for observing and judging these things in his day, and his conclusion is—

"A dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words. . . . For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities; but fear thou God.—Ecc. 5: 3, 7.

Interpretations not Dependable

It is curious to note also that although in the dream-book above referred to over five hundred pages are devoted to the interpretation of various dreams, the Introduction contains an admission that in detail "two dreams are never the same," and that the same symbols do not mean the same thing at different times to the same dreamer; consequently, endless study is required to be able to interpret correctly. Moreover, in order to make interpretation more easy the reader is exhorted to "develop the power to dream," by going to sleep in a negative state of mind, in order that his dreams may come in forms suited to accurate interpretation; in other words, that in both the dream and the interpretation thereof he may come the more thoroughly under the influence of psychic powers.

The doctrine is advanced that the so-called "higher self" has more power in sleep than in waking hours. Thus if a dead relative appears in a dream and offers advice, that advice is to be followed, because the "dead relative" is only a form assumed by the dreamer's higher or spiritual self. In effect then the dreamer is to be guided by his own "higher self," and this "higher self" is described as only a part of the "universal mind," and this universal, infinite mind is "God." Such teaching is not Christianity; it is not of the Bible. It is Paganism, and the names of God and of Christ are used only as baits to ensnare the unwary. Greek philosophers are quoted as of equal authority with the Scriptures, and Christ and Buddha are named together as notable examples of successful dreamers. Advertisements in the fly-leaf of a dozen books on Spiritualism, Occultism, Hypnotism, etc., plainly show the kinship between such dream-books and "black art."

If "dream-books" are an evil to-day, when science and education have done much to destroy superstition, what must have been their power in earlier ages, when the people were kept in fearful bondage to mythological deities, and when interpreters of dreams were a regular institution at every royal court and idol temple? What would we think of four hundred dream-interpreters at the Court of St. James? No wonder the people of Ephesus when they embraced Christianity brought their books of magic art to be burned by the Apostles as a public testimony of their turning "from the power of Satan unto God"!

Modern Dreams Apparently Fulfilled

But perhaps the most subtle manner of inducing persons to cultivate the habit of dreaming and interpreting the same is the relation of dreams and what the dreamer and his friends claim to be fulfilments. The dream is thus made out to be a warning or prophecy of a coming event, and the listeners are greatly impressed, and wonder if there is not some chance of their having similar prophetic dreams. Too often such tales are received without due investigation; for the temptation is great either to alter the dream to make it correspond with the claimed fulfilment, or to juggle the facts to make them appear harmonious with the dream. Everyone has not the time or opportunity to trace such tales as may come

to his notice, but a recent writer who investigated a number of cases found the discrepancies between the dreams and the so-called fulfilments so great as to entirely discredit the claim of prophetic warnings; and his conclusion was that the majority of apparent fulfilments were mere coincidences.

But all claimed fulfilments of dreams cannot be accounted for on the score of either misrepresentation or coincidence.

We have already seen that in numerous instances mentioned in Scripture dreams were sent by God and fulfilments arranged by Him. Knowing God to be all-wise and all-powerful there is no difficulty in believing that He could override circumstances in order to bring about these fulfilments. But how can we account for those fulfilments which are manifestly not of God because associated with pagan rites or modern spiritualism, or apparently unconnected with either? The only adequate answer to this question is—By the power of the evil spirits or demons which sinned in the days of Noah, which "possessed" many people, both in Israel and among the Gentiles, and which operate to-day wherever for any reason they are able to intrude themselves. Having more than human knowledge of people and past and present occurrences, they are often able to predict future events, and having power beyond the human, they are able also in many cases to bring about the fulfilments. But their power is nevertheless limited, because many of their predictions fail, and their attempted fulfilments are often bungled, as explained by an Ex-spiritualist in our issue of December, 1911.

But a Christian need fear none of their machinations. He who has made the Lord the Most High his Refuge and Habitation is safe from all harm.—Psa. 91.

How the Lord Views Dreamers

The warnings of the Old Testament against dreamers are as much needed to-day as when given to Israel. Even though the Lord sometimes communicated with his chosen ones by means of dreams, yet His prophets were never called dreamers, the term "dreamer" being used, like the word "divination," in an evil sense.

Israel's "watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark, *dreaming*, lying down, loving to slumber."—Isa. 56: 10, margin.

I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed . . . Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Babel. The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. *What is the chaff to the wheat?* saith the Lord. . . . Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness, . . . —Jer. 23: 25-32.

"Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers [margin, *dreams*], nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers," etc.—Jer. 27: 9.

"The idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain," etc.—Zech. 10: 2.

Jeremiah explains that these dreamers were "prophets of the deceit of their own heart." It mattered not, then, whether they actually dreamed what they claimed, or whether it were manufactured during their waking hours out of whole cloth. The important consideration was that they prophesied lies to deceive the people and lead them astray from God. So to-day there

are those who dream at night, while there are others whose dreams are theories concocted during waking hours; but in either case their utterances should be repudiated as soon as it is realised that the tendency is away from God and His Word. Mahomet secured his prestige by well-timed "dreams"; the "Book of Mormon" claims to have been revealed in a "vision." Any upstart can have marvellous dreams to make himself important in the eyes of the credulous. But those who have the Scriptures of truth are not at the mercy of such dreamers; they find God's Word a safe guide, thoroughly furnishing them unto all good works.

Joel's Prophecy

is often taken as an endorsement of the dream habit, and is one of the passages used by spiritualists and diviners to justify their calling. He foretold that, "your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." But we notice first that this prophecy is an acknowledgment that dreams and visions from God were not general in the Jewish age, they being usually confined to the High Priest or to certain recognised prophets. Thus when God would teach David a lesson, He did not give him a dream of an ewe lamb, but sent His prophet Nathan with a parable and an accusation, and a prophecy of the punishment which should come upon him. (2 Sam. 12: 1-14.) After Malachi, the last of the prophets, a long interval ensued, during which the Jews in Palestine passed through many vicissitudes. But they were not without encouragement, for Joel's prophecy indicated that the time would come when the spirit of prophecy would be more widely diffused among the people, for the promise was that His spirit should be poured out on all flesh (not confined to Israel), and that revelations from God would again be given, and more widely distributed. Acts 2: 14-33 shows that Joel's prophecy began to be fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the waiting disciples, when they all began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Peter and Paul were specially favoured with "visions and revelations" which influenced their writings, and John left the wonderful Apocalypse as a permanent "vision" for all Christians to ponder over and profit by.

It must be apparent to Bible students that the dreams and revelations which God gave to the apostles were all of a sensible character, for the purpose of instructing them in the truth and guiding their movements in carrying out their great commission. Moreover, each vision, like each prophecy, was *not of private interpretation*, nor to be interpreted by a regular code as in modern and ancient dream-books. (2 Pet. 1: 12-21, R.V.) It will be noticed that in all the important dreams recorded in the Old Testament God himself gave the interpretation by special messenger, as Joseph interpreted the dreams of the officers and Daniel the wonderful image of Nebuchadnezzar. And the Bible record shows that God had to do with both dreams and interpretation because He overruled to their fulfilment. So when the vision of clean and unclean was given to Peter and another to Cornelius (Acts 10: 1-16), it was in order that a special dispensational change might be in-

dicated; namely, the sending of the Gospel to the Gentiles. Both Peter and Cornelius needed preparation for this transition from the Jewish to the Gospel regime. But Peter did not seek in a dream-book what the vision should mean. While he pondered over it, the explanation was already on its way to him by the messengers of Cornelius; but even this message from Cornelius might have left him in doubt. Hence Peter was told plainly to go with the men, "doubting nothing." It was the subsequent circumstances and the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Cornelius and his household which finally convinced Peter as to the meaning of the vision.

Similarly when the Lord gave Paul the vision of the man of Macedonia crying, "Come over and help us," He had already arranged for the fulfilment of the vision by having brought him within easy sailing distance. Finding a vessel ready to take them, Paul and his companions had no doubt that the vision was of the Lord.—Acts 16: 6-12.

As to whether the Lord's people *since* apostolic days are directed by dreams and visions of their own heads upon their beds, we should be inclined to say not; for the reason that the apostles do not recommend the brethren to study their dreams. Quite to the contrary, they repeatedly admonish the church to give no heed to any teaching contrary to what they learned from them, to hold fast the form of sound words, and to give no heed to seductive fables or philosophies. They did not specifically denounce dreams; they ignored them; but they did denounce ungodly men who crept in among the believers and misused the grace of God, and compared them with the old-time dreamers—"yet in like manner these also in their dreamings defile the flesh, and set at nought dominion, and rail at dignities." (Jude 8, R.V.) The reference evidently is to seductive teaching. All false teachings may be called dreams, because there is no substance to them; they are unworthy of credence. The only realities are the *verities of the faith*. To them we must give constant heed, pondering them in our leisure hours, and being guided by them in our daily walk and conversation. The Word of God is so framed that it gives guidance to his children in all the perplexities of life, and enables them to draw helpful lessons from all experiences.

Warnings for To-day

We have elaborated the subject of dreams because we have seen mischief done among Christians of our acquaintance, who thereby sought guidance in family and Church affairs. One of these was a person who "interpreted" the dreams of relatives, as well as his own, and thereby did much to draw them away from the Word of God as the true Guide; he betrayed the confidence placed in him as a preacher of the Gospel. The duty of every servant of God is to discourage dreams and fancies and to show the people that the *general principles* of conduct contained in the Scriptures are sufficient to apply to all the circumstances and problems of life. The difficulty is that these general principles are not studied enough; many Christians flounder in uncertainty because they do not look to see what light the Bible can throw on the subject. Let it be true to-day, as it was in Ephesus—"So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed."

(To be Continued.)

The Shield of Faith

— Eph. 6: 10-18.—

(How faith shields the Christian in the Christian warfare.)

FAITH is the foundation of the Christian life, the beginning, and its great support from the beginning to the end. Faith in God and in our Lord Jesus Christ is the great foundation of all true religion, and there can be none without it.

This faith is a very indispensable element. So much is that the case that we read, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11: 6.) So displeased is God with the man who fails to exercise faith in Him that He withholds special blessings from him. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." (Jas. 1: 5.) If he asks without faith, he will receive nothing. Many, even members of the Church, seem to forget this. There can be no capacity for communion with God without faith. Faith is the true bond of union between God and men. No other principle can take its place or office. Even the principle of love could not be pleasing to God without faith as its antecedent and base. None of the graces of the Spirit can be without faith. There can be no hope without faith. There can be no peace without faith.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11: 1.) That is how we are to get our peace and joy. As the Apostle says—"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 15: 13.) "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." (Isa. 26: 3.) There can be no love without faith. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but FAITH WHICH WORKETH BY LOVE." (Gal. 5: 6.) 2 Pet. 1: 5 to 7 shows that all the Christian virtues of manliness, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly love and love are based on faith.

Armour for the Warfare

But we wish to speak more particularly of faith as a shield. In the good fight of faith we must above all quench the fiery darts of the Wicked One, and so we see the necessity of having this shield of faith. This does not imply the discarding of the other portions of the armour; yet though the helmet and breastplate, etc., may not be dispensed with or replaced by something else, some parts of the armour may have a pre-eminence over the rest. It is this position which the Apostle assigns to the shield of faith.

It is one of the simplest principles, a trust, a confidence in another, which never wavers; but at the same time it is one of the most powerful. Faith never stops to estimate the difficulty of anything, never asks how hard it is, but it goes straight on. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is this particular kind of faith which is to be our shield in the Christian warfare. Things hoped for and not seen are things future, things not possessed at the present time, but faith is that which gives a present being and reality to

the things hoped for, such a reality that they are already enjoyed. How did Abraham see Christ's day? How did he see it? He saw it with the eye of faith. He went down into the grave in faith, trusting that he would receive a better resurrection.

By "things not seen" are meant things not known to us by our senses. These are the things which God has promised us, whether they be things of the future life or things of the present life. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Tim. 4: 8.) God has made us many promises during this life; all our wants shall be supplied; He will not suffer us to be tried beyond our ability. All the promises in Revelation, second and third chapters, we expect God to fulfil in the future life.

That these are meant by the Apostle is shown by Heb. 11: 6—"He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." The evidence by which they are received is the evidence of faith. The reason why we believe in such rewards is because we believe the promises of God. The invisible things are the things which "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Cor. 2: 9.) Of these faith is the evidence, the demonstration or conviction, as the original word signifies.

It is this that distinguishes the true disciple of Christ that he "walks by faith and not by sight." (2 Cor. 5: 7.) The things of faith are clearly distinguishable from the things of this present life and should be held with much higher esteem than the latter. The Apostle shows why he had a greater regard for the invisible things than for the visible. "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."—2 Cor. 4: 18.

Faith is much mightier than sight. Its object is to put us under the influence of things which are not seen, to let us see how valueless are the things that are seen, to exempt us from the power or influence of the temporal things. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your FAITH."—1 John 5: 4.

The things of the world have a mighty influence over the generality of people. They govern themselves chiefly by these things:—bodily ease, comfort and pleasure, external influences and advantages, honour, praise, the applause of men; these are the things they principally hope for. They walk after the sight of their eyes. But it is entirely different with the true Christian. The things not seen are of such value that they command his principal attention and win him from this world. The things that eye hath not seen are engaging the attention of all true Christians, the things which make all other things dwindle into insignificance, the things which are uppermost in their thoughts and affections. These things govern them, give law to all their actions, call forth their energies, mould their habits, transform their characters, purify their hearts and ennoble their minds. While the whole world is thinking and planning, hungering and thirsting and striving for the things that are seen, the true Christian is thinking and planning, hungering and thirsting and

striving for the things that are not seen. These things render all the pleasures of the world insipid, make all the great things of this world appear insignificant.

It is the object of faith to let us see the grandeur of the spiritual things, and to put us under their control, and at the same time to let us see the insignificance of the temporal things and exempt us from their control. If we appreciate the spiritual things as we ought, there will be nothing which we shall not willingly bear and do or suffer for them. We shall be willing to undergo all kinds of suffering, hatred, ill-will, persecution, death itself. We shall be superior to all hostility; slander, cursing, threatenings will not be able to move us or make us afraid. Crosses and scourgings will not be able to wear us out.

Giving Up

This faith makes us give up things. You remember what the Apostle said in Heb. 10: 34? "Ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." What influenced the Jews to take the spoiling of their goods joyfully, not only quietly, but joyfully? It was that faith which is the substance of things hoped for. Heb. 10 tells us plainly what did it. "Knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." That was the reason. They were influenced and sustained by this consideration, by strong faith in that precious and imperishable treasure. Their faith made it so real to them. They had the earnest of it in their hearts. "Knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance." It was better than the goods that had been taken from them. It was enduring, therefore they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, nobly enduring reproaches and suffering by that faith.

I wonder if there are any here who have given up their goods because of their faith, whose confidence in God made them esteem the promises of God. Such have sacrificed the world after the example of their great Master, who for the joy 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.

Let me call your attention to another who gladly gave up all his goods because of his faith. What influence made Moses give up a throne, the pleasures of a royal palace, all that an exalted position and wealth and learning could give him? He was in possession of the most splendid things which the world could give. What influenced him? "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." But why? Notice the reason which follows, and the strength of his faith. "Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect unto"—something; what had he respect unto? "he had respect unto the recompense of reward" (Heb. 11: 24-26)—the reward which he had never seen, but could only hope for. He willingly gave up the pleasures of the royal palace, the grandest things this world can give, because of certain things which he did not see. It was his faith in the unseen things which influenced his choice.

Lower down in the chapter we are told of some

who were tortured, not accepting deliverance, who had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted; were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins, being destitute, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy. All these perished in faith. Why? That they might obtain something. What was it? A better resurrection, a state they had never seen; they could only hope for it. They willingly surrendered all they possessed, even their own lives, because of their faith. Here is faith in one of its noblest forms—they would not accept deliverance. Why? Because to do so would have meant *sacrifice of principle*. It says much if a man endures suffering for his faith, but it is greater if there is an opportunity for deliverance and he refuses to take advantage of it, if by doing so he would be sacrificing principle. The struggle is not only to refrain from attempting an escape, but to reject the short road back to life and liberty. The Hebrew children would not accept deliverance by bowing before the idol. God had told them not to bow down before any graven image, and that was enough. Nebuchadnezzar might heat the furnace seven times more than usual. He could not make them break God's command. They had strong faith.

God may require the absolute sacrifice of all we have, even of our lives; yet we may be assured He will not forget us, nor allow us to suffer more than is necessary for the fulfilling of His law of love. God can hinder the trouble from doing us any injury; he can make it do good. If God does not save us from the affliction we shall find it will work us good, if we are properly exercised by it. He delivered the three Jews from all the harmful consequences of the fire. By hindering them from being harmed by the fire, rather than by keeping them altogether from it, they were thoroughly tested, their manhood was brought out; and the result was the declaration of the glory of God. Then Nebuchadnezzar said: "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. Therefore, I make a decree: That every people, nation and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill; because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort."—Dan. 3: 28-9.

Faith Knows no Fear

There is no need to fear the consequences when we are on the path of duty. I remember a brother who was very busy in off hours distributing tracts, and in the same office with him was a man very much opposed, who said he would see to it that the brother would lose his position. This was a test, because the man had influence. What was the brother to do? He started in and was more loyal to the Truth than ever, not neglecting his ordinary business, of course. What was the result? The result was that without asking for it he got an advance of wages. God does not always act in that way, but he did so in this case. We need not fear so long as we do the will of God.

The mystery with regard to the future did not

make the children of Israel lose their faith in God. Many would think it was a very small matter to bend the knee, rather than sacrifice their lives. But that is not the way to look at it. *To the man of faith this life is of no importance compared to the future.* The man of faith will keep his knees straight when God tells him to do so. Many foolish advisers might counsel otherwise. They might say: See what Nebuchadnezzar has done for you; gratitude alone should induce you to comply with his request. If you do it, he will likely promote you; it will be greatly to your advantage. Think, just think of that red-hot furnace, heated seven times! You are sure to go in there, because Nebuchadnezzar means what he says. Why won't you bend your knees? It is a very little thing."

What is the reply of the man of faith? God has forbidden, and I desire to obey God rather than man. Faith is the foundation of all holy obedience. The three children of Israel testified by their example to the power of faith. In them we can see what trials can be borne, what work can be done, what victories won. Why should we be overcome by difficulties? Why should we dread to encounter our foes? Why should we become disheartened? Why should we shrink from the tests that God permits? If by faith the children of Israel, the servants of God, came off victorious, why should we, the sons of God, be afraid?

When the Israelites were leaving Egypt and approaching the Red Sea, the difficulties in the way must have appeared insurmountable and their own weakness very apparent. To all human appearance the going forward seemed to be impossible. The Red Sea was in front of them, and the pursuing Egyptians were behind them. At first their faith failed them, but Moses encouraged them, and their faith revived. When senses and reason assured them there was no possibility of escape, they despised the danger and returned into the jaws of seeming destruction. When they had divine providence on their side, they were not afraid. They formed their conduct according to the promises of God.

If God has made you a promise, and Providence seems to be running contrary to it, what are you to do? Doubt God? No, never, my friends. God promised David the throne, but for many years he had to flee from place to place pursued by Saul, who wanted to take his life. This was a queer kind of way to keep his promise, but David had faith in the promise of God, and it came to pass as God had said. The angel of God promised Paul the lives of all on board, and his own life too. The winds blew, and the ship was wrecked. Did Paul doubt? No, he believed God. (Acts 27: 24-5). What do the storms amount to when God works? God glories in doing things that are hard to do. Nothing is too hard for God.

It is this kind of faith which is to be our shield in the Christian warfare. We are in the enemies' country. The world is unfriendly to all real Christianity and against ourselves as the followers of Christ, and it will be no easy thing to follow Christ. Now, this shield of faith is to be exercised against opposition, difficulties, dangers in the way, and it is these that make this life a fight of faith. *If there were no trials, there would be no necessity for faith.* It is the difficulties and opposition which make it a fight of faith. We are to fight against the activity of the powers of darkness. The opposition within ourselves

requires strong faith. And the opposition without requires strong faith. Men whose office it is to promote the truth, and who are paid to teach it, are doing their utmost to oppose it. We need strong faith to fight for the "faith once delivered to the saints," to bear trials, persecutions, and all the other difficulties we meet. Yet these are not only to be met, but they are to be met in a proper Christian spirit, with patience, meekness and resignation.

Difficulties are not pleasant. Can they not be prevented? Yes, by keeping the truth to yourself, by putting your light under a bushel, by being afraid of confessing the truth lest you be put out of the synagogue. But the true Christian under no circumstances will be afraid. He will expect difficulties, and will exercise faith when they come.

A Shield from Worry and Discontent

Why are there so many worrying and fretting over their temporal affairs? The world is dissatisfied with this, that or the other thing, fretting over things which are going to take place, or not going to take place. "Dear me, I might have my arm broken to-morrow," etc., etc. Christians should never talk like that. If they do, they haven't on the shield of faith. *The man with faith in God is shielded from discontent.* He believes that God has allotted his state and condition and that, all things considered, his position is the very best for him. He is, therefore, contented with his lot. He knows no bad thing can happen to him. An unpleasant thing may happen, but not a bad thing. The thorn in the flesh was a very unpleasant thing for Paul, but it was not a bad thing. No, it was a good thing. Whatever his circumstances or condition may be, the Christian knows they are arranged for him by God. Having faith and confidence in God's wisdom and love, he is contented. He can whistle and sing in one state as in another. Like the Apostle Paul, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." (Phil. 4: 11.) If we have on the shield of faith, that is the way to be free from care.

Faith shields a man from all trials, and troubles, and persecutions. It is because God loves him that he chastens him. No trouble or trial can come without the knowledge or consent of God. He never makes a mistake. The man of faith, believing this, counts it all joy when he falls into divers temptations. He is just as happy as though everything were going smoothly with him. There is no worry after the shield is on. How does this come about? Because, knowing the beneficial effects of trouble and trials, he does not look on the black side; he looks on the bright side, and recognises by his faith that these troubles and trials are blessings, disagreeable blessings they may be, but blessings nevertheless. They yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness, purify his faith, brighten his hope, and develop his patience, making it perfect and entire. Seeing these things, the man of faith is as happy with his troubles and trials as he could possibly be without them.

Faith Shields from Selfishness and Unbelief

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." (Gal. 5: 6.) Faith purifies the heart from selfishness and unbelief. Faith subdues the heart, works a wonderful change in our minds, makes us new creatures, quickens the soul with a new and vital principle, crucifies the flesh with its lusts.

Where faith works unbelief cannot be; it has got to get out. Selfishness has got to get out. There is no other way of proving or testifying our faith but by the benevolent and good works which it prompts us to perform. The basis of all good works is faith. *Good works are the outward sign or demonstration of faith within.* Faith and works differ only as cause and effect. Just as the courage differs from the heroic acts, inasmuch as it is the principle or basis which prompts the heroic acts, so faith differs from the good works which are the outcome of it. Faith works by love, and its strength or weakness may be discovered by the strength or weakness of the love put forth. A strong faith in God will invariably work with strong love for the brethren. A little faith in God will invariably work with little love for the brethren. *The strength of our faith in God is estimated by the strength of our love for the brethren.* Don't think you have strong faith if you have not strong love for the brethren. If you have not this love for the brethren it is because you have not strong faith in God.

James 2:14 says:—"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?" He then gives us an example or illustration:—"If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled—notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body—what doth it profit? Even so, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." (Jas. 2:15-17.) We would say, a brother like that had faith, it was love he lacked. "Be ye warmed and filled, Depart in peace, I will pray for you." You could not get finer words than these. You would say they show faith, and it was love that the brother lacked. But James says he did not have faith. Why? Because *he must have both or neither. Faith works by love.* "What doth it profit though a man say he hath faith and have not works?" A man says he has strong faith in God. Let him prove it. How? By showing strong love for the brethren. If one of you say to a brother: "Depart in peace, and be ye warmed and filled," and yet do nothing to help him, what does it amount to? These words sound like the words of a loving heart, but how about your actions? What about them? Are they loving? Are they the works of a loving heart? No, they are the works of a hard-hearted heathen. What do your words amount to? *Your lack of love proves that your faith is dead, proves you have no faith in God.* If you show me a man who ceases to love his brother, I will show you one who is making shipwreck of his faith.

1 John 3:16: "Hereby perceive we love, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" You notice it is a similar example. John says he has not love; James says he has not faith; showing you must have both. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love." You want to know how much faith you have in God? If you are hungering and thirsting to do works of love for your brother, you may be pretty sure you have strong faith in God.

Faith Shields from the Fear of Man

Most people would be all right if they could only bring great crowds after them. They have faith if the majority have faith, but they have not the courage to be different from other people. The man of faith, on the contrary, fears God, but fears nothing else, neither devil nor man. God has said he will never leave him nor forsake him. God is greater than all against him. He knows that the very hairs of his head are numbered, and that if God wants his hair touched, it will be touched. He knows God will not allow him to be tried beyond his ability, but will with the trial direct the issue. He goes on and performs his duty as if he were monarch of all he surveyed.

Let me give you several examples of the way in which faith shields the Christian from the fear of man. (Heb. 11:24-27.) By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the WRATH OF THE KING." What was it made him so bold? What allies had he, that he could brave the king's anger? We are told the reason: "For he endured, as seeing him who is invisible." He did not see him with the natural eye, yet *he was sure God was there.* Why? Because God had told him. This was his confidence, his support. This was the reason why he was not afraid of Pharaoh. It made Pharaoh, though king of the greatest nation at that time, of no importance in his sight. All the princes in the world were nothing to Moses, as he had God on his side. God had said he would bring the children of Israel out of Egypt, and so Moses felt as though he were present, guarding Israel on every side. So Moses strengthened himself, determined to be the agent of God in delivering the Israelites out of Egypt.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for. It emboldens our hearts. Faith disposes a man to do brave and commendable actions. Faith makes a man bold, firm, determined in maintaining the truth and performing his duty. He is, moreover, manly and energetic in maintaining and performing them. He has the strength of his convictions. The principle of faith is firmly established in his heart. He is above all personal interests, above all human custom or law. Nothing can obtrude between God and him. You might as well try to turn the sun from its course as try to turn such a man from what he regards as the will of God.

There have been men upon whom mobs and kings have done their works of vengeance, cruelty and persecution; men who have been stoned, bound, imprisoned, burned at the stake, but though their bodies have been made captive, their heart, soul, and mind were free. He who lives in habitual contemplation of the things that are not seen cannot be disturbed by the things that are seen. Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms, when some were raging at him and others were moved to tears, was the only one who was unmoved, the only one who had the peace of God ruling in his heart. When everyone else was excited, he was cool. Luther was ready to die for the truth which he was advocating, the doctrine of justification by faith. When warned by his friends that there was a strong probability that his safe-conduct would be violated as that of John Huss had

been, he replied:—"I shall enter Worms, though there be as many devils in it as tiles on the house-tops." He was frank and sincere in his convictions. Frankness does not mean forwardness nor bluntness. A man who is frank and sincere is one who will not conceal his convictions, though life itself is threatened.

Listen to Peter and John (Acts 4: 19, 20):—"Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." What a difference between the Apostles and many others of their day, e.g.: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." (John 12: 42, 43.) They did not have the courage of their convictions. They were afraid of men. They stifled their convictions. More than that, they sacrificed all the glorious things which would have been theirs, simply because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Ignoble creatures these! Better far to perish for our convictions than to be tame and cowardly, even though there were no reward at the end! If we have on the shield of faith, we shall be fearlessly true to our convictions in the face of scorn, and at the sacrifice of worldly prosperity, the sympathy of men, the admiration of the world.

Two Good Examples of Faith

Jesus feared the face of no man, but boldly reproved sin whatever the position of the sinner. "And they (the Pharisees) sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man, for thou regardest not the person of men." (Matt. 22: 16.) When Jesus was speaking at the Feast of Tabernacles, "Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is this not he, whom they seek to kill? But lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him." (John 7: 25, 26.) Again, when certain of the Pharisees warned Jesus, saying:—"Get thee out, and depart hence—for Herod will kill thee," his reply was, "Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." (Luke 13: 31, 32.) The attempt of the Pharisees to frighten him drew from him a prompt reply. No such threats would get him to forsake his duty, nor accelerate his movements. Their rage would come to nothing. Nothing could make Jesus afraid. He did not fear what Herod or anyone else could do to him. And so it should ever be with us. It is faith, not in ourselves, but in God's protective power, which gives us the victory.

The other example is Paul. Nothing ever could turn him aside from his duty. Nothing could terrify him. He had received warnings that bonds and afflictions were in store for him. He looked forward to bodily suffering of some kind, but it did not affect him at all. He had no desire to shrink from his duty, simply because there was danger. He had been through a stormy past, therefore he did not worry nor fear. Guided by God's counsel, he knew the way was the right way, and it was his great joy that the will of the Lord should be done. He seemed to be entirely indifferent to bodily suffering. None of these things could move him away from doing his duty. He was not influenced by con-

siderations which influence most men. Let persecutions come, the peace of God would rule in his heart. Let afflictions come, he would glory in them.

Nearly all of Paul's tears were shed for others, not for himself. He did not value his life. "And now, behold, I go bound in spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Spirit witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself*, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God."—Acts 20: 22-24.

"Neither count I my life dear unto myself." This was no empty boast. What was his life in comparison with that ministry with which he had been put in trust! He could willingly suffer the loss of all things and count them but dung that he might win Christ and be found in him. This was the secret of his composure and calmness of mind. He said that he gloried in tribulations. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8: 18.) The utmost his enemies could do was to take his life, but he knew they could not touch the future life, and so he was not afraid of dying. It did not make any difference whether he laid out his life in painful suffering or laid it down soon.

While Paul was unmoved, his friends were not. They besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Was that good advice? This was a case where the faith of Paul had to fight against the counsel and love of his friends. He was a determined man. He did not follow the desires of his friends, because he knew that God wanted him to go to Jerusalem. If duty points out to a man a certain direction in which he should go, let all point in the same direction, no matter whether it is the way of danger or not. "Be strong, my brother, quit yourself like a man; stand the consequences, be what they may." That is the way to talk in a case of that kind. *Do not let us tempt a brother to swerve from the path of duty.* Paul was not to be persuaded. He withstood the temptation.

We are to be easily persuaded to do our duty, but not away from it. The love of friends is sometimes used by Satan to take us off our duty. Paul's friends meant their advice well, but it was tempting Paul from the path of duty, nevertheless. Peter meant it well when he said to our Lord: "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." (Matt. 16: 22.) Perhaps he thought, as the older of the two, that he ought to give Jesus this advice. But Jesus knew that the counsel was the counsel of the adversary, to make him swerve from the path of duty. He answered: "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." If Jesus had hearkened to Peter, he would have interfered with the ransom, he would have upset the whole plan of God. It would have meant the eternal ruin of mankind. *How many here would have had the truth if they listened to the voice of friends?* Duty to God comes first. It is always better to obey God than men. If a man is not ready to die, he is not ready to live. It is a great mistake to think that a man's first duty is to preserve his life or health, or even his own family. His first duty is to do right, his second duty is to do right, and his last duty is to do right. Life is a matter

of very small account in comparison with duty. Whatever is worth living for is worth dying for. He who would tell a lie or postpone a duty to save his life is willing to do more for his life than his life can do for him.

The natural impulse is to save our lives rather than to sacrifice them. "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." (Luke 9: 24.) "Even unto death" is a degree of devotion not thought necessary. Yet it is only those who are faithful unto death that will get the crown of life. A man is not full of faith if he shrinks from his duty. To perform his duty may make him unpopular, or injure his business, but he has not faith if he allows any earthly thing to turn him from his duty. The Apostle Paul was full of faith when he would not be turned from his duty.

What a splendid example of faith is the Apostle Paul! Notice the consistency of his course, his fearlessness, his manliness, his determination, his firmness, and his composure of mind. "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith." (2 Tim. 4: 7.) Would it not be nice for us all to say that at the end of our course? He kept the faith at Antioch even when the infatuated crowd persecuted him and drove him away. He kept the faith at Lystra when he was stoned and taken out of the city as one dead. (Acts 13: 50; 14: 19.) He kept the faith when he withstood his erring brother Peter to the face. He kept the faith when he was beaten with many stripes and cast into prison at Philippi, and made the dungeons echo with his songs of praise unto God. He kept the faith when he was mocked at Athens. He kept the faith at Thessalonica when the city was set in an uproar against him. He kept the faith when he was opposed at Corinth. He kept the faith at Ephesus when Demetrius raised a tumult against him. He kept the faith when he was beaten and imprisoned at Jerusalem. He kept the faith when he stood before Felix at Caesarea. He kept the faith when he defended himself and the truth before Agrippa. No wonder he could say so confidently, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand, I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."—2 Tim. 4: 6-8.

The question of each one is this—Am I keeping the faith? Am I deliberately, and regardless of consequences, paying no attention to what this one or that one will say? Am I diligently attending to my Chris-

tian duties? Am I holding the truth openly? Have I made people know just exactly where I stand in this matter? Let each of us say: God is wanting me to do these things, and I am going to do them.

"O for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe;

That will not murmur nor complain
Beneath the chastening rod,
But in the hour of grief or pain,
Will lean upon its God.

A faith that shines more bright and clear
When tempests rage without;
That when in danger knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt.

That bears unmoved the world's dread frown,
Nor heeds its scornful smile;
That seas of trouble cannot drown,
Nor Satan's arts beguile.

A faith that keeps the narrow way,
Till life's last hour is fled,
And with a pure and steady ray
Illumes a dying bed.

Surely the prayer of everyone will be—

Lord, lead me to a faith like this,
Through trials though it be;
For O! the rest of faith is bliss,
The bliss of rest in Thee."

In conclusion, let me remind you that God has a mighty army in the sky. We read, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." (Ps. 34: 7.) "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1: 14.) Do you believe that? It does not say they come and go. They stay. They encamp round about. If that is the case, is there anything we should fear? They stay right here. Being sent by God, they are greater than all that can be against us. When the King of Syria sent a great host with horses and chariots to compass the city of Dotham about in order to capture Elisha, the prophet had strong faith in God and was not afraid, but his servant did not have strong faith in God and he was trembling with fear. Therefore Elisha said to him: "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." And Elisha prayed, and said: "Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see." And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."—2 Kings 6: 16, 17.

—M. L. McP.

The Jewish Calendar

[Having been asked by a number of correspondents for particulars in regard to the manner of adjusting the Jewish calendar with the Gregorian, the latter being the calendar in vogue in all the countries of Christendom except Russia, we have pleasure in publishing extracts from "A Jewish Calendar for sixty-four years, detailing the New Moons, Festivals and Fasts." This work was shown us some years ago by a Jew who sometimes acts as Rabbi. It was published by E. H. Lindo in London, 1838, and makes clear the differences between the Jewish and Gregorian styles; also how the month Nisan is determined, on the fifteenth day of which we love to observe,

with the simple emblems of bread and wine, the Memorial Supper instituted by our Lord in remembrance of Himself and of the shedding of His blood for the remission of sins and the ratification of the New Covenant.]

WITHOUT entering into the Rabbinical accounts of the origin of the Hebrew Calendar, it will be sufficient to show its antiquity, and to point out the erroneous opinions of various Christian Authors, some of whom date its formation the same year as the

Council of Nice, A.C. 325. The learned authors of the Encyclopedia consider it to have been formed in A.C. 360, while others date it as late as A.C. 500. The Mishna, written by Rab Judah, the Prince, more generally known by the title of Rabenu Akadosh, *i.e.*, our Holy Master, which is a compilation of the oral law, written to prevent its being lost by our dispersion A.C. 180, according to their Chronologists (but according to ours A.C. 141), is the first work we have that treats in any way upon the Calendar; the following extracts prove that our present form and the intercalary month were generally known and followed at that time as at present:—

"If a person read the Meguila (the book of Esther) in the first Adar, and subsequently finds it to be an embolismic year, he must read it again in the second Adar (the intercalary month), there being no difference between the first and second Adar, except that in the latter the Meguila is to be read, and the Purim presents to be given, which is not done in the first Adar."—Treatise Meguila, Chap. 1, Aphor. 4.

"If a man vows not to drink wine for a year, should it be embolismic he may not drink it all that year, although it contains thirteen months; but if a man vows to not drink wine until the beginning of Adar, he may drink it at the commencement of the first Adar."—Treatise Vows and Oaths, Chap. 8, Aphor. 5.

Our next author was Rab Samuel, the Astronomer, who boasted that the paths of the heavens were as well known to him as the streets of Nahardea, where he resided; by his calculation the solar year consisted of 365 days, 6 hours, the same as the Julian, which has been found to be incorrect; although it is supposed that he was acquainted with the precise time as well as Rab Ada, but he stated it in round numbers to render the calculation easier.

The errors in Julian or Old Style were corrected in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII., who deducted ten days from October, making it that year to consist of 21 days only, that difference having occurred since the Council of Nice, whereby Easter had been kept at improper seasons, according to the ordinances of that Council. To endeavour to prevent the recurrence of these discrepancies, he ordered that only every fourth [centenary], instead of every centenary year, should be Bissextile. Thus the years 1900, 2100, 2200, and 2300 will not be leap years, but 2000 and 2400 will be Bissextiles.

Although the Gregorian calculations have been made with great nicety, they are still imperfect, and other alterations must take place in future ages. As a proof, the Council of Nice ordered that Easter should not be kept on the same day as the first day of Passover, in order that there might be no appearance of Judaism in it—"Ne videantur Judaizare"—to prevent which they ordered its observance on the Sunday after the full moon, Passover being always kept on the day of the full moon; and yet in 1825, both were kept on the same day, and this will happen again in 1903.

Holland and the Protestant States of Germany adopted the new style in 1700, by making that year to consist of 355 days only. The King of Sweden, fearing that striking off ten days at once might prove prejudicial to commercial transactions, adopted it gradually, by making no leap year from 1696 to 1744, the ten intermediate Bissextiles being only of 365 days, made the year 1741, the same as other States, except England, where it was only adopted in 1752, by making September 3 to be reckoned the 14th, for having made the year 1700 Bissextile, it became necessary to deduct 11 days instead of 10 days, as other States had done.

Russia is now the only European State that adheres to the old style,* which is yet observed by the Greek church, and thereby differs with the Protestant and Catholic churches in the observance of Easter sometimes eight days, in some years a month and even five weeks, but in some years it is observed at the same time.

Contemporary with Rab Samuel, the astronomer, was Rab Ada, born in Babylon, A.M. 3948—A.C. 188, consequently he must have written a century previous to the Council of Nice; his calculations are those we are guided by, and the experience of near 17 centuries has proved their correctness, not the smallest error having been discovered in that time. He calculated—

	Days.	Hrs.	Min.	Sec.
The Solar Year	365	5	55	25 25/57
The Lunar Month, from one conjunction to the other	29	12	44	3 1/4
The Lunar Cycle of 19 years	6939	16	33	3 1/4

From these calculations, in A.C. 353, Rab Hilel formed tables for making calendars, which we use to this day; from the approximation of the dates, it is easy to be conceived that the authors of the Encyclopedia supposed these tables to be the origin of our calendar.

The Talmud and Guemara also offer some explanations of them, but the best elucidations are those by Maimonides in his "Sanctification of the Months."

Differences between the Hebrew and present Christian calendars—

	Days.	Hrs.	Min.	Sec.
400 years, according to Ada	146098	17	29	35 25/57
400 years, according to the Gregorian system, 303 of 365 days and 97 of 366 days	146097			

Difference in four centuries about

1 3/4 day, or exactly	1	17	29	35 25/57
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This will be the difference in the year 2000.

The Jewish year is luni-solar, for although the months are lunar, our calculations being founded on the cycle, every 19th year we come to the same date in the solar year. The cycle contains 235 lunations, which we divide into 12 years of 12 months, and 7 (termed Embolismic) of 13 months.

The celebrated mathematician, Meton, of Athens, who flourished B.C. 432, which was in the reign of Zedekiah, A.M. 3328, made the same division of time, but by making every third year embolismic, the 18th and 19th were both of 13 months; by our arrangement the solar and lunar years are better equalised.

	Days.	Hrs.	Min.	Sec.
19 years, according to Rab Ada	6939	16	33	3 1/4
235 lunar months	6939	16	33	3 1/4

The year is of three kinds—perfect, common, and imperfect.

The Perfect has 355 days, and is when the months of Hesvan and Kislev have each 30 days.

The Common, 354 days, when Hesvan has 29 and Kislev 30.

The Imperfect, 353 days, when both have only 29.

The Embolismic year is formed by the introduction of an intercalary month, immediately after Adar, which is called Veadar, or Second Adar. The year then consists of 385, 384, or 383 days, according to the rule above. The reason of the introduction at that period is that the Passover may be kept in its proper season, which is the full moon of the vernal equinox, or after

*Owing to the year 1800 not having been Bissextile, there are now 12 days' difference between the old and new styles; after 1900 there will be 13 days.

the sun has entered Aries; it is indifferent at what period of it the full moon happens, but it must be kept while the sun is in that sign.

That a time was fixed for its observance is shown in Numbers 9: 2—"Let the children of Israel also keep the Passover at its appointed season."

That our months have always been lunar is shown by 1 Kings 6: 38—"And the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which is the eighth month," etc. By a reference to the Hebrew text, it will be seen that the two words translated month are different, the first being derived from the word "moon," the latter from "innovation."

Our months are the following:—

Tisri, which has 30 days.	Nisan, which has 30 days.
Hesvan " " 29 or 30.	Iyar " " 29.
Kislev " " 29 or 30.	Sivan " " 30.
Tebet " " 29.	Tamuz " " 29.
Sebat " " 30.	Ab " " 30.
Adar " " 29.	Elul " " 29.

In the embolismic years, Adar has 30, and the intercalary month Veadar 29.

As a lunation from one conjunction to another, termed a synodical month, has 29: 12: 44: 3 $\frac{1}{3}$, being 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ days and about $\frac{3}{4}$ hour, it could not be better arranged than by making one month 29 and the following 30 days. When a month has 30 days, the last day of that month and the following day are both kept as New Moon, on the principle that a holiday cannot be kept part of a day, the 30th day being half in the preceding month, and half in the new moon, the whole day is made a holiday, and the following as a matter of course, from its being the first whole day of the new moon. That this rule was followed in ancient times is to be seen in 1 Sam. 20: 5, 27.

It will have been seen that by this arrangement there is yet a deficiency every month of 44 min. 3 $\frac{1}{3}$ sec., making nearly 9 hours in years of 12 months. To make up this deficiency one day is added to Hesvan every second or third year, by which that month then consists of 30 days. When Hesvan has 30 days, Kislev invariably has the same.

Without Hesvan having 30 days, Kislev is sometimes made 30, which is done to prevent Passover happening on Monday, Wednesday or Friday; for as that festival regulates all the other holidays, it is arranged that none may fall on days on which they could not be properly observed. On the same day of the week as the

1st day of Passover are the fasts of Tamuz and Ab.

2nd day of Passover are the first day of Sebnut and Hosana Raba.

3rd day of Passover are the first day of New Year and Tabernacle.

4th day of Passover is the Rejoicing of the Law.

5th day of Passover is Kipur, the day of Atonement.

Consequently, were the first day on Monday, Purim would be on Saturday and Kipur on Friday, days on which neither could be observed. If it were on Wednesday, Kipur would be on Sunday, on which it could not be kept; the reason is that as Kipur has the same strict ordinances as Sabbath, it cannot precede or follow the Sabbath. If it were on Friday, Hosana Raba would be on Saturday, a day on which the ceremonies of it could not be observed. By the above regulation, it will be seen that Rosh Ashana [Tisri 1—Jewish New Year] can never fall on Sunday, Wednesday or Friday.

This holiday [Jewish New Year] is to be observed on the day of the conjunction, with the following exceptions—

1. If the conjunction takes place on Sunday, Wed-

nesday or Friday, the holiday is to be kept on the following day, as in 5604.

2. If the conjunction should happen after noon, the following day is to be observed, and if that should happen to be Sunday, Wednesday or Friday, the next is to be kept, as in 5601.

3. If the conjunction takes place in an ordinary year on Tuesday, on or after 9h. 11m. 20s. A.M., it is not to be observed thereon, and as it may not be kept on Wednesday, it will be observed on Thursday, as in 5616. An objection may be made to this, as New Year should be observed on the day of conjunction; but were it to be so kept, the preceding month of Elul would only be of 27 or 28 days, and a month can never be less than 29.

4. The conjunction being on Monday, on or after 3:30:52 p.m., in a year immediately following an Embolismic, the holiday is to be kept on Tuesday, as in 5617. This occurs but seldom.

Our embolismic years are Nos. 3, 6, 8, 11, 14, 17, 19 of each cycle.

TABLE SHOWING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SOLAR AND JEWISH YEAR DURING EACH YEAR OF THE CYCLE, ACCORDING TO RAB ADA.

	Days hrs. min. sec.				
The Solar year	365	5	55	25	25/57
12 Lunar Months	354	8	48	40	
1st Ordinary ...	10	21	6	45	25/57 Behind the Solar on 1st year
	10	21	6	45	23/57 diff between the two years
2nd Ordinary ...	21	18	13	30	50/57 Behind the Solar on 2nd year
	10	21	6	45	25/57
3rd Embolismic	32	15	30	16	13/57 Would be, but month added by
	29	12	44	3	1/3 reduces the difference to
	3	2	36	12	56/57 behind the Solar on 3rd year
	10	21	6	45	25/57
4th Ordinary ...	13	23	42	58	24/57 behind the Solar on 4th year
	10	21	6	45	25/57
5th Ordinary ...	24	20	49	43	49/57 behind the Solar on 5th year
	10	21	6	45	25/57
6th Embolismic	35	17	56	29	17/57 would be, but by
	29	12	44	3	19/57 reduces the difference to
	6	5	12	25	55/57 behind the Solar on the 6th
	10	21	6	45	25/57
7th Ordinary ...	17	2	19	11	23/51 behind the Solar on the 7th
	10	21	6	45	25/57
8th Embolismic	27	23	25	56	48/57 would be, but deduct this from
	29	12	44	3	19/57 makes it
	1	13	18	6	28/57 ahead of Solar on 8th
deduct this from	10	21	6	45	25/57
9th Ordinary ...	9	7	48	38	54/57 behind the Solar on 9th
	10	21	6	45	25/57
10th Ordinary ...	20	4	55	24	24/57 behind the Solar on 10th
	10	21	6	26	25/57
11th Embolismic	31	2	2	9	47/57 would be, but by
	29	12	44	3	19/57 reduces the difference to
	1	13	18	6	28/57 behind the Solar on 11th
	10	21	6	45	25/57
12th Ordinary ...	12	10	24	51	53/57 behind the Solar on 12th
	10	21	6	45	25/57
13th Ordinary ...	23	7	31	37	21/57 behind the Solar on 13th
	10	21	6	45	25/57
14th Embolismic	34	4	38	22	46/57 would be, but by
	29	12	44	3	19/57 reduces the difference to
	4	15	54	19	27/57 behind the Solar on 14th
	10	21	6	45	25/57
15th Ordinary ...	15	13	1	4	52/57 behind the Solar on 15th
	10	21	6	45	25/57
16th Ordinary ...	26	10	7	50	20/57 behind the Solar on 16th
	10	21	6	45	25/57
17th Embolismic	37	7	14	35	45/57 would be, but by
	29	12	44	3	19/57 reduces the difference to
	7	18	30	32	26/57 behind the Solar on 17th
	10	21	6	45	25/57
18th Ordinary ...	18	15	37	17	51/57 behind the Solar on 18th
	10	21	6	45	25/57
19th Embolismic	29	12	44	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	would be, but by
	29	12	44	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	equates the year.

According to Lindo's Calendar, the Jewish year in which Tisri 1 corresponded with October 2, 1902, was the first year of the 299th Lunar Cycle.

Extract from Art. "Chronology," Smith's Bible Dictionary

"The characteristics of the year instituted at the Exodus can be clearly determined, though we cannot absolutely fix those of any certain year. There can be no doubt that it was essentially tropical, since certain observances connected with the produce of the land were fixed to particular days. It is equally clear that the months were lunar, each commencing with a new moon. It would appear therefore that there must have been some mode of adjustment. To decide what this was, it is necessary first to ascertain when the year commenced. On the 16th of Abib [otherwise called Nisan] ripe ears of corn were to be offered as first-fruits of the harvest. (Lev. 2: 14; 23: 10, 11.) The reaping of

the barley commenced the harvest (2 Sam. 21: 9), the wheat following. (Ruth 2: 23.) It is therefore necessary to find when the barley becomes ripe in Palestine. According to the observation of travellers the barley is ripe, in the warmest parts of the country, in the first days of April. The barley harvest then commences about half a month after the vernal equinox, so that the year would begin at about that tropical point, were it not divided into lunar months. We may conclude that the nearest new moon, about or after the equinox, but not much before, was chosen as the commencement of the year. The method of intercalation can only have been that which obtained after the Captivity—the addition of a thirteenth month whenever the twelfth ended too long before the equinox for the first-fruits of the harvest to be offered in the middle of the month following, and the similar offerings at the times appointed."

From Far and Near

God's Truth In its Beauty

I have been an interested reader of the *Advocate* during the past year, and deem it of great benefit to any sincere Christian who desires to learn and understand more and more of God's truth in its simplicity and beauty. In this time of misunderstanding and doubt we surely require all the help and encouragement available. Please extend my subscription for a year, and use the balance of enclosed amount in the interests of the truth as you see best. Praying that He who cannot err may continue to direct the work and bless your efforts in His behalf, I am,

Yours in His service,
——— Canada.

The Privilege of Mutual Service

It has been on my mind to forward my mite toward placing the *Advocate* in better financial condition. I feel it a privilege to do so, and pray that it will still continue to be the very great help it has been in the past to such a widely scattered number of the Lord's followers, who perhaps might not be so helped without it. Please find enclosed £2.

Yours in our Mediator's service,

——— Victoria.

"The Inward Work"

I wish to thank you most heartily for the New Year's address, "Stedfast, Unmoveable," and mostly for that part on page 163 of February *Advocate*, on "The Inward Work." I consider it most needful that we exhort one another just on those important matters expressed, and texts quoted under this heading, and again I thank you for same. Enclosed is my regular fortnightly donation to the *Advocate* fund. With Christian love and greetings, I am,

Yours in Him,
——— South Australia.

A Prompt and Eager Worker

Please send me the 9/6 parcel of "Everlasting Punishment" booklets; I will sell as many as I can, and give away as many as I can. The plan is a fine one, and I hope many will respond to it. It will be a splendid means of spreading the "good news." With Christian love, I remain,

——— Victoria.

The Order of Events at the Second Advent

In the November, 1911, issue of the *Advocate*, in an article entitled, "The time is fulfilled," it is sought to prove that the second advent took place in the year 1799. I, as well as other subscribers to your paper, with whom I have discussed this subject, find a difficulty in accepting this teaching. In 1 Thess. 4: 15-17 and 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52, the idea seems to be that our Lord's first work on His return will be to raise the sleeping saints, and on the completion of this work, the saints then living on the earth will be changed from natural to spiritual conditions, so that they may be caught up together with the risen saints, to meet their Lord in the air. It also seems to teach that these saints who are changed will be the last members, none coming after. There is nothing said about others being born after the second advent, then made saints, and changed. It is those saints living at the time of Christ's coming who are to be changed.

The apostle Paul's words in 1 Thess. 4: 17, "We which are alive and remain, shall be caught up," etc., seem to limit this experience to one generation, those living at that time. Also the parables dealing with this subject seem to teach that when the Lord comes, the full number of saints will have been found, and that only the work of assembling them remains to be done. If it be true that Christ came in 1799, this would not be the case, for surely many saints have been made since then. If you can more fully explain

this subject in some future article I shall be very grateful.

Praying the Lord's continued blessing on your work, with Christian love,

Yours in the one hope,

— England.

Reply

The difficulty in the above would appear to be that the questioner understands the Scriptures to teach that the very first item of the tremendous program associated with our Lord's second advent—His presence of a thousand years—is the resurrection of the sleeping saints, to be followed forthwith by the change and exaltation of the living saints. As a matter of fact, the Scriptures do not so teach, and all should realize this.

In 1 Thess. 4: 15-17 the resurrection of the sleeping saints is put as the *first of two* events, the other being the change of the living saints; but the relation of these events to the remainder of the great program is not stated, nor is it even mentioned in this text that there would be more items. It is therefore not correct to build upon 1 Thess. 4: 15-17 an idea of the order of events which it does not even mention.

The same is true of 1 Cor. 15: 51-54, except that here we have the fulfilment of "Death is swallowed up in victory" (Isa. 25: 6-9) definitely put as following the glorification of the sleeping and living members of the Church. To cite 1 Cor. 15: 51-54 as evidence in respect to which work would be first taken in hand by our Saviour at His second coming is therefore quite as impossible as to refer to 1 Thess. 4: 15-17 for the same purpose.

If we turn to other portions of Scripture for this information, we find Rom. 8: 19 telling of the glorification of the church and the relief of the groaning creation; but this passage does not distinguish between the sleeping saints and those "who are alive and remain." Its incompleteness in regard to details shows that it is not intended as a statement of the *order of events* in connection with the second advent.

Examining Dan. 12: 1-3 we find mention of a time of trouble as well as of the resurrection of the dead, some to life and some to shame and contempt. Here, again, the statement is in such general terms as to indicate clearly that it is not intended as precise teaching concerning the details of these events and their order.

In Rev. 11: 15-18 there is what appears to be a fairly complete statement of the program, though even here some important details, such as the change of the living saints and the Lord's dealing with the "man of sin," are wanting. But verse 18 shows that neither is this passage given as a statement of the order of the events, for here we have the rewarding of the saints mentioned after the rewarding of God's servants the prophets, which would contradict the very definite statement of Heb. 11: 39, 40, where it is laid down that "they" of the past ages cannot be made perfect without "us" of the Gospel age.

And so other portions of Scripture might be examined, and the result would always be the same, viz., that in none of them is there intended to be a statement in one-two-three order of the events in the divine program concerning our Saviour's second presence.

But while this is admittedly the case, there is, nevertheless, a clue to the order of events, and this is supplied by the chronological prophecies of the 1260, 1290 and 1335 days. At the expiration of the 1260 days, the dealings of our Saviour with the "man of sin" were to begin. He would then begin to consume the Papacy, which consumption would culminate at a date not stated in the destruction of the evil system by the *appearing* (*epiphaneia*) of His presence (*parousia*), hitherto unrevealed to the world. (2 Thess. 2: 8; Matt. 24: 37-39.) It is understood that the 1260 "days" ended in 1799. If this be correct, we should understand that our Saviour has been present since then, and that He has been doing the work appointed to be begun at that time. In any case, some power has been dealing with the Papacy in the last 113 years, doing the very work of "consuming" it which the prophet Daniel and the Apostle Paul foretold would be done by the Lord Jesus. This being so, why should we hesitate to say that the Lord is present and is doing the work? Further explanations on this point are presented in *Advocate*, November, 1911, pages 115 to 117.

The 1290 "days" are understood to have ended in 1829. A suggestion concerning this period is given in the November, 1911, issue, page 117.

The 1335 "days" are believed to have ended in 1874, and at this point of time it would seem that the Lord would take up the work of rewarding His saints, both the sleeping ones and those who would be alive and remain. As to the manner in which this would be done, please see suggestive thoughts in *Advocate*, November, 1911, pages 117, 118, and October, 1911, pages 104, 105. On no account should consideration of the strong prophecy of Rev. 14: 9-13 and the belief of the Thessalonian church (*Advocate*, October, 1911, page 103) be omitted.

It is gathered from these time prophecies that the first item of the great events in connection with our Lord's second presence was to begin the consumption of the Papacy, in 1799. In 1829 it would seem that He proceeded to rouse His people from their lethargy on the subject of His Advent and Kingdom, and it must be confessed that some of their ideas in those days were very indistinct and dreamy. In 1874 and "from henceforth" (Rev. 14: 13), would be the time of special blessing to the saints who would complete their course in death, and this without stipulating whether they became saints before 1874 or since then. The prophecy makes no limitation on this point, nor should we.

We can quite agree, however, with the idea that the span of time of a generation of the human race, beginning at 1874, will be the measure of the existence yet to be allowed the present order of things, and we have so stated in the *Advocate*. But a "generation" is not a fixed term of years. It is therefore impossible for us to say that the Scriptures teach that the consummation will occur in such a year. We feel certain that it is wise not to speculate on points not definitely made known in the Word of inspiration. And we do urge all who know these things to watch and pray, and to be ready at all times for the consummation of their hopes, and to give an account of their stewardship. The proper attitude for all, whether the time be long or short, is to serve the Lord with the whole heart.

Readers, Attention!

FRIENDS are asked to kindly take notice that the third volume of the "Advocate" is complete with this, the issue for March, 1912. Nearly all subscriptions expire with the March issue, and this reminder is given so that friends may take the necessary steps to have their subscriptions for the next twelve months sent in good time. This is the only method we have of giving you this notice, and we shall be greatly obliged, and the good work materially assisted in what is very necessary, by your prompt attention thereto. A few friends have not yet taken notice of the word on this subject published a year ago, so that they are now twelve months in arrear. Ever welcome renewals and new subscriptions may be sent either to Melbourne, London, or Brooklyn, whichever office is most convenient for you. Do it now!

The "Advocate" can also be introduced to your friends by means of our plan of trial subscriptions for three months: Send four names and the price of a year's subscription to either of our offices, and the "Advocate" will be sent to each address for three months. At the end of the three months you can send other four names, or, if you like, the original four again.

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, 1910, "Advocate." It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way.

No. 101G, 5/-; 102G, 13/-; 103G, 6/-; 104G, 10/-; 105G, 5/-; 106G, 6/-; 107G, 3/-; 108G, 6/-; 109G, £1; 110G, 8/-; at London, 69, 10/-; 70, £1; 71, 10/6; 72, 7/6; 73, 5/-; 74, £1; 75, 5/-; 76, 14/-; Sundries, 1/8; total for month, £8:18:8 (\$43.41); previously reported, £74:11:1 (\$362.32); total for eight months, £83:9:9 (\$405.73).

The New Covenant Advocate and Kingdom Herald

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Memorial Supper, 1912

According to the Jewish method of reckoning which is still identical with the method in vogue in our Lord's day, the first day of Nisan will correspond this year with March 19, beginning at sunset, March 18. The fifteenth of Nisan will, therefore, fall on Tuesday, April 2, beginning at sunset of April 1. 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 Monday, April 1, 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 ME."

The "Advocate" Sustaining Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report. As the "Advocate" is regularly published at a financial loss, it is obliged to depend upon the loving co-operation of its friends until it shall become self-sustaining. Let the good work continue!

No. 89G, £1:8:6; 90G, 1/-; 91G, 1/-; 92G, 2/-; 93, £1:0:6; 94, 17/6; 95G, 2/-; 96G, 10/-; 97G, 17/6; 98G, 1/-; 99G, 4/-; 100G, 1/-; 101G, 1/-; 102G, 10/-; 103G, 2/-; 104G, 4/6; 105G, 1/-; 106G, 1/-; 107G, 13/-; 108G, 14/-; 109G, 3/-; 110G, 13/5; 111G, 4/-; 112G, 2/-; 113G, 8/9; 114G, £1; 115G, 1/-; 116G, 2/-; 117, 5/-; 118, 5/-; 119G, 4/-; 120G, 14/9; 121G, 3/-; 122G, 1/-; 123G, 1/-; 124, 12/8; 125, 13/-; total for month, £13:6:1 (\$64.63); previously reported, £189:9:8 (\$920.87); total for eight months, £202:15:9 (\$983.50).

Besides the above, we have received an amount in rather unusual circumstances, which are here related for the information of all friends. A sister wrote to say that she had arranged to bequeath a sum for the benefit of the work, but having in mind that the "Advocate" is not yet self-sustaining, it occurred to her that the amount might be more useful to the work if it were made available at once than if it waited until her decease, even though in the meantime she were to send in the interest on it, which would not be much. In reply to her inquiry, we confirmed her thought as to the greater usefulness of the amount if made available at once, and offered to give a special form of receipt for it under the terms of which she could, if necessary, draw upon the amount during her lifetime. She sent the amount originally intended as a bequest, and added a little to it, and the money is now being used in the work of spreading abroad the good tidings. Whatever amount remains with us at the time of the sister's finishing of her course will then be credited as a donation. Needless to say, the thoughtfulness of this friend is greatly appreciated, for the work benefits by it now, instead of waiting until her decease and the months afterward before her estate would be settled. Possible complications are also avoided.

FORM OF RECEIPT GIVEN.

"Received from now residing at, the sum of, a much appreciated donation to the funds of the "New Covenant Advocate," it being understood that the donor has the right—should the need arise—to draw on the above sum (but not to bequeath) to the amount of at any time during life. Any portion or all of the above remaining in our hands at the decease of the donor becomes an outright donation to the funds mentioned, and is then to be credited and acknowledged in the manner in vogue at the time."

The New Covenant Advocate

— and —

Kingdom Herald

Vol. 4

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No 1.

Is Satan Stronger than God?

WHAT a peculiar question! Of course Satan is not stronger than God, the Almighty. What do you mean by asking such a question?"

"No; I did not think you believed Satan to be stronger than God. Neither do I believe such a thing myself. But you believe some other things from which it could be inferred that you must believe Satan to be stronger than God. The question was asked in order that these other beliefs of yours and their consequences might be brought to your notice."

"You surprise me; what do I believe that would cause anyone to infer that I must think Satan is stronger than God?"

"You recognise that the whole world lieth in the evil one, and that if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them whose minds Satan, the god of this world, has blinded?"

"Yes; I believe these statements because the Scripture says so in 1 John 5:19, R.V., and 2 Cor. 4:3, 4."

"You believe, also, that they must be turned from the power of Satan unto God, in order to be saved?"

"Yes; by all means."

"You can see, too, that but a comparatively small number are being so turned, and that a very considerable proportion of those who profess to have turned to God are turning back again in the wrong direction?"

"Yes; it is a sad state of affairs, but it is true, just as you say it."

"You believe, also, that the present span of three-score-and-ten years, more or less (mostly less), on earth is the time, and the only time, given to men in which they may turn to God, through Jesus Christ, the only name in which salvation is possible?"

"Yes; I believe that to be so."

"How, then, can you avoid the conclusion that Satan is stronger than God? If you admit that the whole world is under Satan's power, and that he blinds the minds of the people so that they cannot understand the Gospel and turn unto God for salvation; and if salvation must be found in this life or not at all; is not Satan very much stronger than God, since he keeps his hold on the world and God gains

so few? Are you surprised that I asked you the question we began with?"

"Oh, but you have made no allowance for something else I believe, which makes a great difference."

"Yes? What is that?"

"Why, about the heathen and young children. You know that most of those who have lived in this world have died very young, or else have passed their lives in heathen lands, so that they never knew anything about Christ and the salvation provided in Him. I consider that they are saved, because they never rejected Christ. The same would apply to the feeble minded. By this means the bulk of humanity is provided for."

"I see what you mean. But this belief of yours only makes your position infinitely more difficult than it was before. In the first place, this last idea of yours is thoroughly unscriptural. The Bible says nothing about vast multitudes or even a single soul being saved through ignorance. It says—'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' (John 3:16.) The Apostle Paul takes up this point and elaborates it—'For the Scripture saith, whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed. . . . Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?' (Rom. 10:11-14.) This reasoning is applicable at all times, and it shows that the ignorant heathen have not been in a position to hear about Christ, to believe in Him, and to call upon the Lord for salvation. Your supposition about them is clearly contradicted by the Scriptures."

"What am I to understand, then?"

"But I have another objection to your idea that most people are to be saved because they were too ignorant to reject Christ, as so many do when they hear of Him. Besides being unscriptural, as already shown, your idea implies that God is lacking in the very rudiments of wisdom. It is only a little more than a thousand years since the Gospel began to make an impression upon the ancestors of many of

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us, these forbears of ours being at that time heathen in the wilds of northern Europe. Would it not have been a clever stroke of wisdom, besides great economy of effort on God's part, if he had left them in ignorance? I mean, of course, if your idea were correct. Then they would have been certainly saved, as you think. And why should not God have left us also in that state of ignorance in which you suppose salvation is assured; and not only us, but everybody? In short, if the ignorant are certainly saved, because they do not know enough to reject Christ, why should the Gospel be preached at all? It would have been far better to have allowed us all to die as ignorant heathen, infants, or feeble-minded, according to your idea. Do you not see what a serious reflection your theory casts upon the wisdom and love of God?"

"I am greatly perplexed. The thoughts you present have never before occurred to me, and I am at a loss for an answer. Give me a week to think it over, and I shall try to have an answer for you."

"Well, what is the result of your week's thinking?"

"Nothing! I have turned the question over in my mind day and night; I have prayed about it, and have asked others for help; but at this moment I see less light than a week ago, if that were possible. I confess that I have found no Scripture to support my idea about salvation being assured by ignorance, and I realize that in my thoughts on this subject I have somehow come very far short of the glory of God. I see no way out of my perplexity, and some of our leading men have rebuked me for being so inquisitive about these things, saying that I should not bother my head about them. But I *am* bothered, and I now come to you as a sincere seeker for light. Perhaps God, who allowed you to upset me, will answer through you my prayers for light on these questions."

"Let us hope and pray that such may be the case. I can but lay before you what the Scripture says, and leave it to you to consider and to search further, whether these things be so. And we may expect the Spirit to guide us into all truth, and that if we are of those who are willing to do God's will, we shall know the doctrine. (John 7: 17; 16: 13.) Shall we begin now?"

"Please do not delay. I am so anxious for light on this question that I fear my impatience must be very apparent to you."

"Very well. Do you remember that place in Acts 15 when, after the Gospel began to go to the Gentiles, James explained that it was doing so in fulfilment of prophecy? He said—God 'did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name.' This shows that during this age God has had no intention of converting or even enlightening all the Gentiles, but only of 'taking out' some from among them. This explains why so few have turned to God and remained turned during this age."

"Yes, I understand; but what has that to do with answering the question about the vast multitudes who have died in the ignorance of childhood, heathendom, or feeble-mindedness?"

"A great deal. Do you also remember that those who thus come to God in this age, through Jesus their Redeemer and Mediator, are called the 'elect,'

and that if faithful, fulfilling the condition of suffering with Jesus for truth and righteousness' sake, they have the promise that they shall become joint heirs with Jesus of an inheritance reserved in heaven, to which our Saviour was raised from the dead by the power of the Father? These things are stated in many places, but I will now mention only 1 Peter 1: 1-5; Romans 8: 16-18."

"Yes; I have read these portions of Scripture, and have rejoiced and do rejoice in such gracious, heavenly promises, to which I hope I may be kept by the power of God. But you have told me nothing about the question that I have thought and prayed over for the past week."

"Patience; we are coming to it. Do you also remember that James says that we who are thus begotten of God are 'a kind of first fruits of His creatures'? (James 1: 18.) Did it never occur to you that 'first fruits' imply other fruits to follow, and that if the 'elect' are the 'first fruits' there will be others saved besides the elect? Now turn to Rom. 8, and let us read verses 19-21 from the Revised Version. 'For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.' Here the Apostle assures us that there is not only a reward for the 'sons,' but also a hope to be entertained on behalf of the creation too, that they also may become children of God. But he assures us that this earnest expectation of the creation—the human race—waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. From Col. 3: 4 we understand that this manifestation occurs at Christ's Second Coming; therefore, following the Second Advent of Christ will be the promised blessing of the whole creation that groans and travails together in pain. You see, it is all provided for in God's purpose, and has been foretold in the Scriptures, so that we need not depend upon the faulty reasonings of men to solve these questions for us."

"Marvellous! Why have I not seen this before?"

"And further, as showing God's provision, as stated in His Word, I would mention that whereas the 'elect' are gathered out from among the nations under circumstances of much difficulty, and are allowed to be subjected to the attempts of Satan to deceive them, those attempts to deceive will not be permitted for the thousand years of Christ's reign with His joint heirs. Satan will be shut up 'that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled.' (Rev. 20: 3.) Is Satan stronger than God?"

"Decidedly not! But why could not our leading men have told me these things instead of rebuking me for inquiring?"

"I suppose they do not know them. Not taking into account God's purpose in regard to the age to come after Christ's Second Coming, the great theologians and teachers have missed many grand truths."

"I see. Now, will you favor me still further by pointing out what the Bible says about the nature of the blessing to be given the whole creation?"

"In the first place they are all to be brought to the

knowledge of the truth, because this is God's will. (1 Tim. 2: 4-7; John 1: 9.) If then they become believers and remain obedient, they shall have everlasting life. First they must *hear*; then they may *believe*, and *call* upon the name of the Lord."

"This is truly glorious! But tell me, would it not be better, in view of the difficulties that now beset believers, to put off believing until the next age, when it will be so much easier than now?"

"No, indeed! Viewing the question from the standpoint of self-interest only, it is an immense advantage to be a believer in this age, because faithfulness now is to be rewarded with the heavenly inheritance, and joint heirship with Christ. The obedient believers in the next age will not sit with Christ in the throne; they will stand *before* the throne, an unnumbered multitude having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 7: 9-17.) They will live on the earth, it and they being made perfect. The difference between the rewards of the two ages shows that it is far better to be a believer *now*. But besides this selfish consideration, there is the further thought of love to God and the promptings of gratitude to Him when we hear of His mercies. The Apostle puts the mercies of God as a strong incitement for us to serve Him. (Rom. 12: 1.) Would not God have a right to consider us most ungrateful if we put aside present opportunities in the hope of easier ones bye-and-bye? Besides, the grace of God is given to compensate for present needs of wisdom and strength. Why should we hold back?"

"Undoubtedly you are right. But does not this teaching look like giving men license to do as they please in this life? And would it not be dangerous doctrine to put before the people? I see nothing in

Scripture about giving men more than one 'chance' of salvation."

"No more do I. What I was telling you was that God's will is that all men shall be brought to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2: 4.) And you will remember that we were speaking of those who died without having been brought to such a state of knowledge as God purposes all shall have. Until they get that knowledge, they have not had their 'chance.' Whenever they get that knowledge, be it in this life or after they are brought back from death, they have their 'chance' and the responsibility that comes with it."

"What a wonderful demonstration of divine love and wisdom! And all in the Bible, too! I shall never be able to thank God enough for His goodness to men, and in particular for His goodness to me, not only in inviting me to joint heirship with His Son, but also in allowing me to see such wonderful things in His Word. And to you, my friend, my thanks are offered for the part you have had in opening my eyes. Would that all might see! I feel as though I must at once tell my friends and neighbours all I have now learned, and as much more as I shall acquire from the further conversations which I hope to be allowed to have with you. No doubt questions will arise which you will be able to answer for me."

"Give all the glory to God, and spread the good news as far as you can. It is part of our privilege and duty to do this. Your joy in realizing these good things is no greater than mine in being allowed to pass them along to you. It will be a pleasure to converse further on these great subjects, and I shall gladly do what I can to assist. Perhaps I shall be able also to put some helpful books and papers before you. Goodbye for the present. God bless you!"



Laughter

"And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me."—Gen. 21: 6.

SORROW and mourning have been the experience of our race from the time that sin entered and our first parents were cast out of the beautiful garden, which might have been their home, to endure the severities of the curse—sweat of face, thorns and briars, tyranny and oppression, pain and death. But man, having been created perfect, had in himself the qualities which would to some extent counteract the depressing effects of congenial environment, misery, and loss. The ability to see the ridiculous, to appreciate the humors of a situation, has saved many a sufferer from unwise conduct while fretting under injustice and wrong. And the joys which one has in work, as well as the relaxations after hours of labor, have all done something to make life worth living in spite of sorrow and care.

But in none of these things has there been permanent happiness; they fill only odd hours or moments, like gleams of sunshine between dark clouds of trouble and storm. And in the search to find out thoroughly satisfying and enduring pleasure, man has contrived many inventions. "All the world loves a laugh," say they; "Away with sorrow and tears!"

"Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die!" But these inventions only increased the difficulties; the temporary amusement of one person meant often increased misery to a score; it meant a more rapid decline into sin and a hastening of the penalty, death. The fault lay in seeking happiness from the wrong quarter, and the fault lies there to-day. Anything that will pass away the time, that will make one forget the daily grind, or the wrangling at home, or the pangs of disease, is eagerly grasped after, only to be tossed aside presently for some newer device or amusement; until it is found that, after all, Death has the greatest claim—Prov. 14: 12, 13.

Laughter and Joy

But there is a laughter which results from pure joy, and which injures no one. It is the laughter which God gives. It is the blessed privilege of those who trust in His promises. So Sarah found it—"God hath made me to laugh." With all their wealth, servants, and flocks and herds, Abraham and Sarah had been sorely afflicted; they had no heir. Only that desire of their hearts would turn their

sorrow to joy, their tears to laughter. And God gave it to them.

Abraham's Laughter

Even the promise had constrained them to laughter; how much more the fulfilment of the promise!

To Abraham God had said—

"I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing, . . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."—Gen. 12: 1-3.

This promise Abraham and Sarah believed, though having as yet no child, they could not see how they could become a great nation. In faith and patience they waited, but as time passed they became more and more perplexed; how could God be Abraham's "exceeding great reward," if He withheld from him the one thing most desired, and most essential to the fulfilment of the promise? Could Abraham become a great nation when a slave was his heir? (Gen. 15: 1-3.) Then came the assurance, "He that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir." This also Abraham believed. And more faith was required to believe this than the promise first given, for the years were passing.

Now Sarai had eagerly entered into these promises. It was natural to desire an heir, but Sarai had a deeper interest in the promise than merely her own personal gratification. She entered into the spirit of the promise, that all the families of the earth should be blessed in her seed.

But through meditation on the assurance given to Abraham, and in an excess of self-abnegation which frequently goes with faith, she concluded that possibly it was not the Lord's intention that this promised seed should come by her. She would become a great nation by proxy. That there was a deeply religious motive in Sarah's bestowal of her maid upon Abraham is shown by her reference to the Lord. (Gen. 16: 2.) Afterward she saw her mistake, and very likely hoped that even yet she might be favored with a son.

Abraham, however, apparently took it for granted that Ishmael was the seed of promise. (Gen. 17: 18.) He was therefore surprised when told that Sarai herself should "become nations," and that "kings of peoples should be of her." Abraham laughed. It was against nature; and would not Ishmael serve every purpose? But no, the son of a bondswoman would not answer. God had already determined that the covenant of blessing should be in Sarah, a princess, and He would not be turned aside by Abraham's solicitations on behalf of Ishmael. However, Ishmael also should be blessed and become a great nation.

But Abraham's laughter was not evidence of unbelief or incredulity; it was only a spontaneous expression of surprise, wonder, and joy. When he fully realised that God would perform a miracle in their behalf, no doubt he rejoiced that this great honor and blessing should come to Sarah, as well as to himself.

Sarah's Laughter

When the good news came to her, Sarah also laughed. Was it a laugh of incredulity and unbelief?

Was Sarah spying upon her husband and his visitor, listening in the door of the tent? The uncharitable comments passed upon Sarah by some Bible students have long called for correction. The perverted view of Sarah generally held can be best explained as an evidence of the curse which has rested upon woman-kind in punishment for the original transgression; their most innocent remarks and actions being construed as evil. In the present instance pains are often taken to show that Abraham's laughter was evidence of the joy of faith, while Sarah's was the scorn of unbelief. But why make such a distinction? Sarah was a sincere worshiper of God; she willingly left her home to go with Abraham to the strange land, she hoped with him in the promises and covenants. Why should not she, as well as Abraham, laugh with joy, wonder and hope, on hearing of the marvelous deed to be wrought by the Lord in giving her a son in her old age? She did not make Abraham's mistake, and wish that Ishmael might be the seed of promise; too long in her heart had she hoped against hope for a son of her own. The message of the angel made her glad—"Shall I have pleasure?"

In regard to Sarah "spying," an unprejudiced reading of the account completely dissipates that accusation. Sarah was in the tent when the angels came and sat at Abraham's invitation at the tent door. (Gen. 18: 6.) Before giving the message the angel inquired her whereabouts, and was told by Abraham that she was in the tent. (v. 9.) Evidently it was the desire of the angel that she hear the announcement. Indeed, as the promise concerning Sarah had been given to Abraham previously, as recorded in chapter 17, it is probable that this visit and announcement were specially for Sarah's benefit. She therefore heard what was intended for her ears, and when she heard it she laughed. But observe, she did not laugh aloud; she laughed "within herself." She would therefore receive a further surprise when the messenger said to Abraham, "Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying," etc. How could he know that she had laughed; how could he read her very thoughts? No wonder she was afraid, as it was borne in upon her that the visitor was a supernatural being! When Sarah said, "I laughed not," she did not mean to prevaricate, for she had not laughed aloud; and she did not for the moment realise that the visitor was aware of the inward laughter. The statement of the angel, "Nay, but thou didst laugh," was not intended to intimate that she was lacking in faith in God, or laughing in derision of the promise, but merely to assure her that the messenger was a being able to understand the thoughts of the heart, and that she might therefore have full confidence in the promise he had given.

But if the Old Testament account leaves any doubt as to the fact of Sarah's faith and joy in the promise, two New Testament texts declare it in positive terms. Peter holds up Sarah as an example of "holy women, trusting in God," and refers to this very instance as an example of devotion to her husband after many years' married life, for she did not forget to mention Abraham when thinking of her own pleasure in the promise. (1 Pet. 3: 5, 6.) The other

reference to Sarah is in Heb. 11: 11, R.V., where Sarah herself is said to have "received power to conceive seed when she was past age, *since she counted him faithful who had promised.*"

All who Hear shall Laugh

The promise of a blessing, then, for all the families of the earth, brought a blessing first to the faithful pair who had left all in response to the Lord's call, who saw themselves past age, and all human hope of an heir, and yet had faith to believe that God would fulfil his promise. To them it brought joy, hope, laughter. And because they laughed, all that hear shall laugh with them.

Some commentators suggest that Sarah meant to say, All that hear will laugh *at me*; that is, hold her in derision or scorn. But it is not likely that in the midst of her joy over the birth of the son of promise she would consider herself as scorned by the people who would hear. Scorn was the expected portion of the barren woman, and Sarah had experienced it at the hands of Hagar. No: Sarah was full of joy and praise to God, and she remembered the promise that all the families of the earth should be blessed in her seed. How glad therefore all would be to know that after the long years of waiting the promise of God to her had been fulfilled.

Those who heard in that day rejoiced with Abraham and Sarah, seeing in the heir only a satisfaction of their long desire, and a suitable successor to Abraham's estate. We who hear to-day rejoice with them because we recognise a deeper meaning in the promise than even themselves fully realized (John 12: 13), for we see that the true Seed of blessing is our Lord Jesus Christ. The name "Isaac," signifying "laughter," given by God's direction (Gen. 17: 19), expressed not only the joy of Abraham and Sarah, but prophetically the joy of all his people in Him whose birth another angel proclaimed, saying, "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord."—Luke 2: 10, 11: "the people" is reading of original: compare Acts 26: 17, 23.

"All that hear will laugh with me." Praise and singing, laughter and clapping of the hands, break forth spontaneously from those who hear the glad tidings of a Saviour, the long expected Messiah, the great Deliverer from sin and death, made by God both Lord and Christ, heir of all things, that He might deliver and bless all the families of the earth. No words can describe the joy of His people in the Altogether Lovely One: no trials, persecutions, or misunderstandings by others can deprive them of the peace, or of the mirth, which He gives. To smile may express pleasure and contentment; it is better than moroseness and complaint; but to laugh means that the whole being is shaken with paroxysms of uncontrollable joy and gratification.

Tell a little child that an excursion to the woods or bush is planned for the following day, and see how it dances and skips, laughs and sings, in anticipation as well as in realization! So all who hear, and really believe, the glad tidings, are even here and

now filled with "joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pet. 1: 8; 2 Cor. 4: 18), they are bubbling over with happiness, and also with zeal to tell others the same good news.

The Jews were, and are to this day, an expressive race. In sorrow and trouble they did not merely look sad; they covered themselves with sackcloth, put dust and ashes on their heads, and wept long and loud. (2 Sam. 12: 15-23; Psalms 137: 1-4; Jer. 4: 8.) And when they rejoiced they were equally demonstrative; they put oil on their faces, donned their holiday attire, and came into the courts of the Lord with joy and praise and song, with instrumental music, and even with shoutings and dancings.—Lev. 9: 24; 1 Sam. 4: 5; Ezra 3: 10-13; 2 Sam. 6: 14, 15; Psalm 126: 1-3.

Therefore when our Lord wished to express the completeness of the change which the good tidings would bring to those Jewish people who were truly regretful of the decay of Israel and the iniquities in their midst, he said—

"Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh!"—Luke 6: 21.

While to those who took pleasure in sin and hypocrisy, he said—

"Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep."—Luke 6: 25.

Jesus came to give joy and gladness to those who would repent and believe in the gospel, and those who have repented and believed and persevered in righteousness can testify that their joy has been full. (John 15: 11.) They have joyed in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5: 11.) They have shouted His name and message from the housetops. (Matt. 10: 27.) They have made themselves ridiculous in the eyes of unbelievers and of half-hearted professors by their demonstrations of joy and gladness.—Matt. 21: 15.

And to-day, as in our Lord's time, they are irrepressible, because it is God's will that the praises of the King of kings be sounded abroad. (Luke 19: 40; Acts 5: 29, 41, 42.) So also for the future: "All that hear will laugh with me."

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

"Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

"With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King.

"Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

"Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together

"Before the Lord; for He cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity."—Psa. 98: 4-9.

And, blessed be God, all people, the countless myriads of the dead as well as the living, shall yet be brought to a knowledge of these glad tidings, and shall have the opportunity of having their mourning turned to joy, their weeping to laughter and praise. "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." Hallelujah! Amen!

R. B. H.

The Shepherds of Palestine

FEW sights in the Holy Land stir the imagination more than the native shepherd and his flock of sheep. Whether you meet them on the hills or in the plains outside Jerusalem, or on the more fertile valleys around the Sea of Galilee, there is something about them that singles them out for special notice. They at once carry the mind back to Biblical days—both shepherds and sheep being repeatedly mentioned in the Scriptures.

How many shepherds and sheep there are in Palestine to-day I would not like to say. Some few years ago the Turkish government returned the number of sheep in Palestine and Syria as over four millions. The herds vary considerably in size, some numbering only a score or less, while others run into several hundreds. Speaking generally, a shepherd will be found attending to the wants of about fifty or eighty sheep.

These wild sons of the mountains belong, of course, to the native population, which may be divided into three groups—the townspeople, or Mellanijeh; the peasants or dwellers in villages, called fellaheen, and the Bedouins, those nomads who live in tents and spend their lives roaming. The shepherds, therefore, come under the head of peasants or fellaheen; but even among these they are virtually a race apart. They live entirely with their flocks. Night and day their sheep and goats are their sole friends and companions. They tend them by day, and guard them by night.

The Original Dwellers

There is one interesting fact about these men which has generally escaped notice, and it is this:

The shepherds are undoubtedly the original dwellers of this historic country. They tended to the wants of their sheep and led them from pasture to pasture among the hills and valleys long before the coming of the Children of Israel.

No less an authority than Colonel Conder has styled them "Modern Canaanites," declaring that they are "the descendants of the Semitic race which the Egyptians found in Palestine before the time of the Hebrew conquest." Then pride, isolation, narrowness of mind, and close intermarriage have all tended to preserve their ancient character intact. Indeed, these stubborn men of the mountains have never been absorbed or expelled by any conquering people.

When I gazed at these men in the streets of Jerusalem, ruddy of face, stalwart and dignified, they have always seemed out of place. The hillside is their home and temple. Their dress, demeanour, and bearing bespeak them as sons of the fields. Their shoes are of the roughest description, almost circular in appearance. They wear an outer garment of bright colours. It is woven from camel's hair, as was that of John the Baptist. It is without seam, square, and sleeveless, and hangs in picturesque folds from the shoulder. A kerchief for the head, tied in two black rings of rope and wool, complete the shepherd's outfit. In the winter, however, they take an undressed fleece, which they girdle about their loins, when they more than ever appear like members of their own flocks.

Honourable, Dangerous and Difficult

Their business is an honourable one, and full of danger and difficulties. For this reason they are all

armed—some with their conventional staff and sling, and still others—particularly in the outlying districts, with firearms. These latter are invariably old-fashioned flint-lock muskets, or some other obsolete type of firearm. With these weapons the shepherd protects his flock from wild beasts—leopards, panthers, and wolves. But his worst enemy, sad to relate, is not the wild animals of the country, but the roving Bedouins. The latter are always making raids and carrying off the sheep, with the result that even to-day many a good shepherd is called upon to lay down his life for the sheep.

The shepherd's staff is a heavy club, often with a head studded with nails, made of the hardest wood, and of formidable shape. A hole is bored through the lighter end, the handle, so that it may be attached by a piece of string to the girdle, or when used as a weapon, round the wrist.

Then we have the shepherd's rod—not in the form of a crook, this is never seen—the end may be forked or bent, but not in the style adopted by the artist, and the one seen in the pastoral staff of a bishop. When the shepherd brings home his sheep, and leads them to the fold, he often stands at the entrance, places the rod across the door-post, so that each sheep goes under the rod, and when one needs special treatment the rod descends, and catches the sheep by the leg to receive extra care and attention. Here we preserve the meaning of David's allusion when he said—"Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

The Shepherd's Sling

The first article that a shepherd boy in the Holy Land possesses is a sling. It is his "dog," his assistant. He does not use it to throw stones at the sheep, but just beyond them when they are straying too far away, and thus with constant practice he is able to save his legs and lighten his labours.

Much has been made of the fact that the shepherds of this sacred land lead their sheep. They are not driven, as is done in this country. This custom—certainly a very pretty one—of leading the sheep has arisen, of course, through the absence of roads and the scanty nature of the pasturage found on the mountain sides. It would be impossible to drive the flocks from place to place unless dogs were employed, and there are no sheep dogs in Eastern countries. Hence the shepherd goes on in front, the sheep following behind, a shepherd boy, as a rule, bringing up the rear. This is the shepherd's principal duty—to guide his sheep and find out pasturage for them.

When two or three shepherds meet with their flocks at a well, they will sit and chat until all the sheep are mixed together as one flock. When they have finished their conversation each one moves in the direction he wishes to take, and shouts to his sheep, "Tahho," "Tahho," short and sharp, never thinking of looking round until he is some distance away. One by one the sheep hear his voice, and follow slowly after him. A stranger looking on would see them moving, some after one shepherd, some after another, until all were together again in their own flocks. There is never a mistake, though all use the same word. The voice of the shepherd is unmistakably his own: it has a distinct individuality about it, caused by the constant use

of the same tones, hence the sheep follow him for they know his voice.

All Sheep have Names

Then the shepherd knows his sheep. They all have names. These appellations are suggestive of some peculiarity of feature; thus we hear such names as "brown ear," "black ear," etc. I was once afforded a striking lesson of these men's ability to detect their own sheep. At Bethlehem three shepherds were induced by an American farmer and his friend, who desired to put this trait to a practical test, to drive their sheep into a small enclosure. Then one of the shepherds entered and at once sorted out his sheep, and, needless to add, he picked out the right ones. The others did the same without the slightest hesitation. Indeed, it has been said of these men that they could sort out their sheep blindfolded by merely passing their hands over their faces.

As to the sheep themselves, they are distinctly of the Syrian breed, and famed for their "fat tails." This is one of the peculiarities of the sheep of certain Eastern countries. Often goats will be found with the sheep. When these mixed flocks are being led from one pasture to another the sheep invariably will be found on the right side and the goats on the left. Often, too, a shepherd will be encountered carrying a little lamb in his strong arms, for the watchful kindness and tender solicitude of these shepherds for their sheep is not only proverbial, but carried into daily practice. On more than one occasion, whilst travelling through the country at night, I have detected a shepherd on some high moor, across which the hyænas howled, sleepless, far-sighted, weather-beaten, armed, leaning on his staff, and looking out over his scattered sheep, every one of them of his heart.—HAROLD J. SHEPSTONE in "The Weekly Scotsman."



Christian Evidences

THOSE who have been born of Christian parents, and early trained in the ethics of Christianity, have many advantages over those whose parents were unbelievers, and who perhaps knew nothing of Christ till many undesirable habits had been formed. But the person who is converted after attaining middle life has this advantage, that he is better able to contrast his new life in Christ with the old life as an unbeliever, and to give all praise and thanks to God for his deliverance. The child of Christian parents too often takes to himself credit for his good inclinations, and fancies that good inclinations give him a standing in God's sight superior to that of his neighbours who have not had his birth and training. He is strongly tempted to self-righteousness and self-complacency, just as were those Jews who imagined that they were all right simply because they were the children of Abraham and tithed mint, anise, and cummin. Many persons have lived and died unbelievers who were well intentioned, and yet those good intentions were not accepted instead of faith. To be a Christian means more than many people think it does.

A series of Lessons has been in use for some years in English schools,* designed to show the children of Christian parents what their standing is, and the necessity of definite knowledge and positive steps on their part if their Christianity is to be of more value than the paganism of the child of pagan parents. These lessons give the evidences for considering Christianity the true religion; and altogether they are so instructive and helpful to both young and old, that we herewith publish extracts for the benefit of our readers.

First Rise of Christianity

(Lesson I.)

1. Supposing you were asked the question how you came to be a Christian, perhaps you would answer that it is because you were born and brought up in a Christian country, and that your parents were Christians, and had taught you to

believe that the Christian religion is true. And if, again, your parents were asked the same question, perhaps they might give the same answer. They might say that their parents had brought them up as Christians; and so on.

Perhaps, however, they would have some better reason than this to give for believing in their religion; but then, most likely, they are acquainted with other persons who have not. For it is certain, that there is many a professed Christian who can give no other reason for his being so, than that he received the religion from his parents, and they from theirs; and so on, for many generations back.

But you know that it cannot always have been so. You know that the Christian religion had a beginning. You know that the disciples of Jesus Christ, and their followers, went about among various nations, making converts to his religion, among people who had been worshippers of the Sun and Moon, and of various false gods. Our forefathers were among those nations. In former days the people of these Islands were what we call Heathens, or Pagans; that is, worshippers of a number of supposed gods, whom they believed to govern the world, and to whom they offered sacrifices and prayers. We have among us a kind of monument of this, in the names of the days of the week; each day having been dedicated [or made sacred] to some one of their gods. Thus, the first day of the week, which we sometimes call the Lord's Day, in honour of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, still keeps also the name of Sunday, from its having been dedicated, in former times, to the worship of the Sun: as Monday was to the Moon; Tuesday to Tiu, the god of war; Wednesday to Woden, Thursday to Thor, and so of the rest.*

Now our forefathers, who were worshippers of these gods, would have told anyone who might have questioned them on the subject, that this was the religion of their country, and what they had learned from their parents. And at the present day, there are many nations still in the same condition with our forefathers; among others, great numbers of our fellow-subjects in the British dominions, in the East Indies, have been brought up as Pagans, and worship various false gods. And, again, there are many who are followers of Mohammed, whom they hold to be a prophet superior to Jesus Christ.

2. Now, what I want you to consider is this: Have you any better reason for believing in the truth of the Christian religion, than a Mohammedan has for believing in his religion, or the Pagans in theirs? And do you think you can learn, and ought to learn, to give some better reason? They believe what their parents have told them, merely for that reason,

* "Introductory Lessons on Christian Evidences," published by Longmans, Green and Co.

* See *Saturday Magazine*, Vol. IV., pp. 8, 16, 24, 48, 72, 136, and 240.

and because it is the religion of their country, and the wisest men of the nation have told them it is true. If you are content to do the same, then, though there may be a great difference between your religion and theirs, there is no difference at all in the grounds of your belief and of theirs. If ten persons, for example, all hear different accounts of some transaction, and each believes just what he happens to hear from his next neighbor, then, if nine of those accounts are false, and one true, he who chanced to have heard the true one, is right only by accident, and has no better grounds for his belief than the rest. In the same manner, if several different persons hold each the religion of their fathers, and have no other reason, and seek no other reason for doing so, then, though one of them may happen to believe a true religion, and the rest false ones, it is plain he has no better grounds for his belief than they. What he believes may be in itself right; but we cannot say that he is more right in so believing it than the others are.

3. Now, do you think it is the duty of each man to keep to the religion of his fathers, without seeking any proofs of its being true, but satisfied with merely taking it on trust, because his teachers have told him so? If so, our forefathers would have been wrong in renouncing their Pagan religion, and embracing Christianity. They had been brought up in the worship of the Sun, and Moon, and Woden, and their other gods; and so had the ancient Greeks and Romans, to whom the Apostles preached. This had been the long-established religion of their country, handed down to them from their forefathers, many of whom were great statesmen, and wise and learned writers; and if this had been a sufficient reason for their keeping to it without inquiry, they would have been bound to reject the Gospel and continue Pagans.

And this, we know, is what many of them did: refusing to listen to the Apostles, and others, who offered them proof that the Christians had 'not followed cunningly-devised fables in making known to them the coming and power of the Lord Jesus Christ' (2 Peter i. 16). Now, we cannot think these men acted more wisely than those Pagans who set themselves to inquire what was true, and who did embrace Christianity.

4. These last must have had strong reasons for doing as they did. It could not have been from love of change for its own sake, or mere idle whim: for we know that many of them had to face ridicule, and blame, and sometimes persecution, from their friends and countrymen. And, what is more, they had to change their mode of life, and to renounce, on becoming Christians, many evil habits which had been tolerated in the Pagan religions. For we find the Apostles, —Paul especially,—speaking often of the 'abominable vices in which the Pagans had been accustomed to indulge, and which the converts to Christianity were required to abstain from. Ephesians ii. 1: 'And you hath he made alive [quickened] who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world . . . fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.' Peter tells the Christians he is writing to [1 Peter iv. 3] that 'the time past of their life may suffice to have wrought the will of the Gentiles: i.e., to have lived as the Gentiles did, according to their sinful inclinations: 'wherein,' says he, 'they think it strange that you run not with them into the same excess of riot.' And you will find mention made in many other parts of the New Testament, of the change of life which the Christians submitted to.

Now, it must be a difficult thing for a man to bring himself to throw off (as the early converts to Christianity must have done) his early habits, and his veneration for the gods of his country in whose worship he had been brought up, and his reverence for wise, and illustrious, and powerful men among his countrymen, and his regard for the good opinion of his neighbors, and also his care for his own peace and safety. Yet all this must have been done by many of those of our forefathers and other Pagans, who first embraced the Christian religion. They must, therefore, have had a strong conviction of the truth of the religion; not from their having been brought up in it, as you were; for it was quite the contrary with them, but for some other reason. They must have had some convincing evidence of its truth: or else we may be sure they would not have received it.

And these men could not have been convinced of the truth of the Gospel by any such *experience* as many Christians have of that inward consolation and peace of mind, and enlightening of the understanding, produced by their religion: which affords them a satisfactory assurance of its coming from God. For

those who had not embraced Christianity could not have had this experience. And yet some convincing proofs they must have had, to lead them to embrace it, in spite of so many prejudices, and so many difficulties.

5. And it appears that they were taught by the Apostles not only to have a reason, but also to be able to give a reason to others, for the faith which they held. Be 'ready always, (says the Apostle Peter) to give an answer [for defence] to every one that asketh a reason of the hope that is in you.' And it does certainly seem very fair that they should be asked by their neighbors, and should be expected to answer the question, 'Why do you renounce the gods of the country, and embrace the religion of this Jesus, and call on us to do the same?' This, I say, would appear a very fair question to be asked of persons living in the midst of Pagans, and educated as such.

But perhaps you may think this was not at all intended to apply to you who have had the happiness of being brought up in a Christian country. You should remember, however, that you may some time or other chance to meet with some of these Pagans, or Mohammedans, whom we have been speaking of; to some of whom we have sent missionaries to convert them. And besides this, you may hereafter meet with persons of our own nation, who doubt or disbelieve the truth of Christianity: and their doubt or disbelief is likely to be very much strengthened, if they find that you have no better reason for being Christians than the Turks have for being Mohammedans, or the ancient Greeks and Romans for worshipping Jupiter: or your own forefathers, Thor and Woden; namely, that such is the religion of the country. They will be apt to say, 'These religions cannot be all true; but they may be all equally false: they are, perhaps, only so many different forms of superstition, in which the people of different countries have been brought up, and which they all believe in, each because they have been brought up in it, without seeking for any other reason.'

6. The Apostle's direction, therefore, you may be sure, applies to all Christians in every age and country. It is needful for all of them to be able to give a reason of the hope that is in them. And among others you may give as one reason, what I have just put before you: that those who first embraced Christianity, renouncing for it, as they did, their early prejudices, and their habits, and often their friends and their comfort, and safety in this world, must have had some strong evidence to convince them that it was true. It is not merely from the Christian writers of the New Testament that we learn how much those persons had to bear and to do who embraced the Gospel. We may be sure, even from the very nature of the case, how great their difficulties must have been. And therefore we could feel no doubt, that when they did become Christians, it must have been on some strong reasons, even though we had no knowledge what these reasons were.

It is possible for us, however, to inquire, and to learn, what these reasons were which satisfied them of the truth of the religion. And it must, therefore, be a duty for all who have the opportunity, to learn what proofs it rests on: that they may be 'ready to give an answer to those that ask them a reason of their hope.' And you should observe also, that the Apostles not only required their converts to be ready to give a reason, but must themselves have *supplied* them with reasons: since they could not have made them converts, without offering proofs to satisfy them that the religion was true.

And this is one point which distinguishes the Christian religion from those of the Pagans: for it does not appear that any of those religions ever made any appeal to proof, or claimed to be received, except from their being the ancient established belief of the country. The Christian religion was brought in, in opposition to all these, by means of the reasons given—the *evidence*, which convinced the early Christians that the religion did truly come from God. It must, therefore, be the duty of Christians to learn what that evidence is.

Faith and Credulity

Lesson II.

1. Our forefathers and the other Pagans who embraced the Gospel, must have had some strong reason (as was remarked before), to bring them to shake off their habits of life, and their early prejudices, and their veneration for the gods they

had been brought up to worship, for the sake of Christ and his religion, which were new to them. But perhaps you may suppose that their ancient religions also must have been embraced by their forefathers in the same manner; i.e., that the worship of the Sun, and Moon, and Jupiter, and the rest of their gods, must have been first brought in by strong proofs,—at least by what were thought to be strong proofs.

But this does not appear to have been the case. We have no accounts of the first origin of the Pagan religions; and it is likely that no one of them was ever brought in all at once; but that these various superstitions crept in by little and little, and religion became gradually corrupted, as men lost more and more that knowledge of the one true God, which we suppose to have been originally revealed. This, at least, is certain, that it was not even pretended that these religions rested on any evidence worth listening to. A Pagan's reason for holding his religion is, and always was, that it had been handed down from his ancestors. They did, indeed, relate many miracles, said to have been wrought through their gods; but almost all of these they spoke of as having been wrought among people who were *already* worshippers of those gods; not as having been the means of originally bringing in the religion. And all the Pagan miracles they believed merely because these were a part of the religion which they had learned from their fathers. They never even pretended to give any proof that these miracles had ever been performed.

2. The pretended prophet Mohammed did indeed found a new religion, which spread very rapidly and widely under him and his followers. But his religion was propagated, not by evidence, but by the sword. At the head of a small number of valiant warriors, he gained victories, which enabled him and his successors to collect larger and larger armies, and with these they subdued extensive regions, forcing the conquered people everywhere to acknowledge the Mohammedan faith, on pain of death or bondage. But the Mohammedan religion never made way (as Christianity did) in any country in which its opponents had the chief power, and were disposed to resist. And Mohammed never pretended to perform any miracles as *signs* of his coming from God. His pretended visions, and ascent to heaven, and visits from angels, which he relates in the book called the Koran, were not even pretended to have been shown openly, as proofs to convince unbelievers, but were to be received by the believers in Mohammed, on his bare word. With the Mohammedans in short (as with the Pagans), the religion did not rest on the miracles, but the miracles rested on the religion. Those who believed the religion, believed the miracles as a *part* of the religion, but not as a *proof* of it. In fact, no such proof was ever even attempted to be offered, of these religions.

The Christian religion was distinguished from these (as has been said) by its resting on evidence:—by its offering a reason,—and requiring Christians to be able to give a reason, for believing it.

3. Some persons, however, have a notion that it is presumptuous for a Christian,—at least for an unlearned Christian,—to seek any proof of the truth of his religion. They suppose that this would show a want of faith. They know that *faith* is often and highly commended in Scripture, as the Christian's first duty; and they fancy that this faith consists in a person's readily and firmly believing what is told him, and trusting in every promise that is made to him; and that the less reason he has for believing and for trusting, and the less he doubts, and inquires, and seeks for grounds for his belief and his confidence, the more faith he shows.

But this is quite a mistake. The faith which the Christian Scriptures speak of and commend, is the very contrary of that blind sort of belief and trust which does not rest on any good reason. This last is more properly called *credulity* than faith. When a man believes without evidence, or against evidence, he is what we rightly call credulous; but he is never commended for this; on the contrary, we often find, in Scripture, mention made of persons who are reproached for their unbelief or want of faith, precisely on account of their showing this kind of credulity: that is, not judging fairly according to the evidence, but resolving to believe only what was agreeable to their prejudices, and to trust any one who flattered those prejudices.

4. This was the case with those of the ancient Heathen, who refused to forsake the worship of the Sun and Moon and of Jupiter and Diana, and their other gods. Many of the Ephesians (as you read in the book of Acts) raised a tumult against Paul, in their zeal for their 'goddess Diana, and the

image which fell down from Jupiter.' (19:35.) Now if a man's faith is to be reckoned the greater, the less evidence he has for believing, these men must have had greater faith than any one who received the Gospel, because they believed in their religion without any evidence at all.

But what our sacred writers mean by faith is quite different from this. When they commend a man's faith, it is because he listens fairly to evidence, and judges according to the reasons laid before him. The difficulty, and the virtue of faith, consist in a man's believing and trusting, not against evidence, but against his expectations and prejudices,—against his inclinations, and passions, and interests. We read, accordingly, that Jesus offered sufficient proof of his coming from God;—He said, the works (i.e., the miracles) that I do in my Father's name (i.e., by my Father's authority), they bear witness of me. If you believe not me, believe the works: that is, if you have not the heart to feel the purity and holiness of what I teach, at least you should allow, that 'no man can do such miracles, except God be with him.'

5. But we are told, that 'for all He had done so many miracles among them, yet they did not believe on Him.' They acknowledged that He wrought miracles: as the unbelieving Jews acknowledge at the present day. But they had expected that the Christ [or Messiah] whom they looked for, should come in great worldly power and splendour as a conquering prince, who should deliver them from the dominion of the Romans, and should make Jerusalem the capital of a magnificent empire. They were disappointed and disgusted ('offended' is the word used in our translations,) at finding Jesus coming from Nazareth, a despised town in Galilee, and having no worldly pomp or pretensions about Him, and having only poor fishermen and peasants as His attendants. Accordingly they rejected Him, saying, 'Shall [the] Christ come out of Nazareth?' 'As for this man, we know not whence he is.' 'Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.' And they persuaded themselves (as their descendants do to this day) that Jesus was a skilful magician, and performed miracles, not by Divine power, but by the help of some evil spirits or demons, with whom He had allied Himself. Though He went about doing good, healing the sick and afflicted, and teaching the purest morality, they reckoned Him a 'deceiver,' who 'cast out demons, through Beelzebub, the prince of the demons.'

But if He had come among them offering to fulfil their expectations, and undertaking to deliver their country from the Romans, then, even though He had shown no miraculous power, many of them would have received Him readily. And indeed it is recorded of Him, that He declared this Himself, and foretold to His disciples, 'many will come in my name' (that is, taking on them my character) 'saying, I am [the] Christ, and will deceive many.' And again, 'I am come in my Father's name' (that is, with my Father's authority and power) 'and you receive me not; if another shall come in his own name' (that is, requiring to be believed on his bare word, without any miraculous sign) 'him ye will receive.'

6. And so it came to pass: for in the last siege of Jerusalem many imposters came forward, each one claiming to be the Christ, and drawing multitudes to follow him, and leading them to make the most desperate resistance to the Romans: till at length the city was taken and the nation utterly overthrown.

Now the Jews who believed any one of these imposters, were led to do so by their prejudices, and expectations, and wishes, not by any proof that was offered. They showed, therefore, more credulity than the Christians did. And these unbelieving Jews, as they are called, are the very persons who were reproached for their want of faith. You may plainly see from this, that the faith which the Christian writers speak of, is not blind credulity, but fairness in listening to evidence, and judging accordingly, without being led away by prejudices and inclinations.

Moreover we find in the book of Acts that the Jews of Berea were commended as being 'more noble' (that is, more candid) than those of Thessalonica, 'because they searched the Scriptures' (the books of the Old Testament) to see 'whether those things were so,' which the Apostles taught.

It is plain, therefore, that Jesus and his Apostles did not mean by Christian faith a blind assent without any reason. And if we would be taught by them, we must be 'prepared to answer every one that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us.'

Papal "Love" for Protestants

THE Australian Catholic Federation, recently formed for the purpose of advancing Catholic interests in Australia on lines similar to those pursued by similar Federations in Great Britain and America, has made its first move by inaugurating a campaign against "impure literature." Invitations to attend a Conference on the subject were sent to all Protestant denominations, besides various temperance societies, social, and other organizations. The eagerness with which these invitations were accepted and delegates sent to the Conference was the subject of much felicitation among the promoters, but one of the Protestant leaders who "joined the rush" is said to have explained that his reason for doing so was to put "a check upon the Catholics and guard against their attacking books which are nothing more than anti-Rome."

The representative of the Catholic Federation, in making the first motion, said, "He believed that from the outset the movement would be a success, and that there would be declared what he might term a truce of God between different sections in order to devise the best methods of putting down the evil that was sapping the strength of the community. He hoped that throughout the conference and the ensuing deliberations there would be a sense of broad moderation exhibited."

The Protestant Defence Association and others alive to the methods of the Papists see in the movement only a desire to advance Catholic interests, which indeed is the acknowledged purpose for which the Catholic Federation was organized. Some time ago an effort to organize a movement against impure literature was made by Protestants, but it was not taken up. The Catholics therefore have scored in securing wide public support to their movement.

That the "impure literature" against which the Catholics are inaugurating their campaign includes books exposing the corrupt practices of the Catholics themselves is manifest, although not acknowledged at the conference; for some years ago they secured the exclusion from Australia of a book by an escaped nun, on the ground of indecency, when the only "indecent" remarks in the book were verbatim quotations from Catholic works on questions for the confessional. They have also recently secured the abolishment from the State School libraries of a useful book on Brazil, because of its description of Catholicism as found in that country.

The "truce of God" which Catholics invite Protestants to observe, is like the white flag in warfare used to cover the advance of the enemy upon a strong position and surprise the defenders into surrender. And Protestants who think that by joining with Rome in social movements they can regulate those movements will wake up later to find their mistake. But it is a significant sign of the times that Protestants everywhere are allowing themselves to be hoodwinked into looking upon social reforms as more important than doctrinal integrity. The Lord nowhere authorizes his people to join with teachers of error in reform work, but rather exhorts them to come away and be separate, touch not the unclean; Papacy her-

self being particularly pointed out as Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations, and all God's people are called upon to—

"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."—Rev. 18: 4.

It is the boast of the Papacy that she never changes; but her policy is to adapt herself to necessity, and profess liberality when expedient. Her true character is shown by the fact that in Protestant countries where liberty of conscience is established by law, the Papists take full advantage of Protestant liberality to gain power and influence, and by the fact that their great zeal for education, pure literature, etc., is confined to Protestant countries, while in those countries where she controls the government, such as Spain and Brazil, liberty and general education are taboo. Catholics should first cleanse their own, before posing as renovators of other people's houses.

Catholics are anxious for Protestants to forget history. The histories in use in their own schools and colleges misrepresent the past, and they are anxious that these faked histories should be used by Protestants, to cover up her miserable career and blind Protestants to her true character and attitude. The following notes in the Rhemish Bible,* published in 1600, have never been repudiated by Catholic authority, and therefore may be held as still expressing Catholic sentiment:—

Gal. 1: 8. There is a long note on this, which concludes, "Lastly, S. Hierom [Jerome] useth this place, wherein the Apostle giveth the curse or anathema to all false teachers not once but twice, to prove that the zeale of Catholicke men ought to be so great toward al Heretikes and their doctrines, that they should give them the anathema, though they were never so deere unto them. In which case saith this holy Doctor, I would not spare mine owne parents."

Heb. 5: 7. "These wordes have our English Translators perniciously and most presumptuously corrupted. . . . But if the good reader knew, for what point of doctrine they have thus framed their translation, they would abhorre them to the depth of Hel."

Rev. 17: 6. "The Protestants foolishly expound it of Rome, for that there they put Heretikes to death, and allow of their punishment in other countries: but their bloud is not called the bloud of saints, no more then the bloud of theeves, mankillers, and other malefactors: for the shedding of which, by order of iustice, no Commonwealth shal answer."

Luke 9: 55. "Not iustice nor al rigourous punishment is here forbidden. . . . nor the Church nor Christian Princes blamed for putting Heretikes to death."

Acts 25: 12. "If S. Paul . . . doubted not to crie for sneecour of the Romane lawes and to

*"The New Testament of Iesus Christ, faithfully translated into English, . . . by the English College then resident in Rhemes. Set forth the second time by the same College, now returned to Doway. Printed at Antwerp by Daniel Vervliet, 1600, with privilege." This edition was approved November 2, 1599, by Guilielmus Estius, Bartholomaeus Petrus, and Iudocus Heylens, Theological Doctors and Professors.

appeale to Caesar the Prince of the Romanes not yet christened: how much more may we cal for aide of Christian Princes and their lawes, for the punishment of Heretikes, and for the Churches defense against them. S. Augustine, ep. 50."

Heb. 10: 29. "Heresie and Apostasie from the Catholike faith punishable by death."

The Douay Bible, first published in 1609, and now in general use, does not contain these notes, but until some public repudiation of these barbarous ideas of the Rheims version is made by the Papal Hierarchy, or embodied in a Papal bull, Protestants are justified in rejecting in toto all official Catholic professions of love for the "separated brethren," as they now like to call ignorant and susceptible Protestants.

The audacity of Melbourne Papists in wishing Protestants to observe a "truce of God" with Catholics, while they unite in temperance and impure literature campaigns is further manifest when we consider that only recently Catholic legislation declared null and void all marriages between Catholics and Protestants not performed by a priest and not preceded by the Protestant's renunciation of his faith and acceptance of the Catholic religion. While Protestants observe the "truce," Catholic emissaries continue the propaganda to convert Protestant young people by means of their affections, securing not only the young people themselves, but their prospective families as adherents to the Catholic faith, and

teaching them to regard as impure literature the Protestant Bible and all other books which expose Papal corruption.

The following decrees against the use of the Scriptures have never been repealed:—

By the Council of Trent, A.D. 1546.

By Pope Pius VII., A.D. 1816, in which Bible Societies are called a "pestilence," and concluding, "The Bible printed by heretics is to be numbered among other prohibited books, conformably to the rules of the Index."

By Pope Leo XII., A.D. 1825, also against Bible Societies for "translating the Bible into the vernacular languages of all nations."

It may be thought that because Catholics are now allowed to use the Douay Bible, the Papacy has become more liberal. But it must be remembered that Papacy still claims the *sole right to interpret* the Scriptures, and that those who possess the Catholic Bible are in nearly if not quite as great bondage as before. Besides, this version is, by appropriate notes, made to support the confessional and the doing of penance, "repent" being explained to mean "do penance," and of course the priest is required to hear the confession and to prescribe the nature of the penance to be performed.

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean; and I will receive you."—2 Cor. 6: 17.

From Far and Near

Promised Enlightenment Realized

Having by the blessing of God possessed myself of a copy of "Bible Talks," the reading of which has deeply impressed me, I deem it my duty to testify my full concurrence with the arguments and sound reasoning contained in the volume, and sincerely trust it may prove a potent means of enlightening and blessing many who are in darkness and uncertainty in the present age. To me it is a sign of the promised increased enlightenment of all enquirers for truth. By reading its pages to others and lending it about, I am hoping it will become widely popular, and in increased demand, and a blessing to many. I enclose subscription to *Advocate*, and should be thankful to receive also a parcel made up of kindred matter likely to prove helpful to my Bible Class, which is held weekly.

Gratefully yours,

— South Australia.

[The list of *Advocate* readers has lately been augmented by a number of new names of those who had purchased "Bible Talks" or "Everlasting Punishment" from colporteurs. The circulation of the books is one of the best ways to secure new readers for the "Advocate," and so make it self-sustaining.]

Trusting in His Help

We are pleased to be able to do a little in helping to spread the truth, and think "Bible Talks" the

best aid to Scripture study that we know of. But it is not much that we (Sister T. and I) can do at present, for we are not able to spare much time. We started work last May, but am sorry to say cannot report much progress. The people here are very hard to interest, and they are also very short of money. I feel at times that I am not at all qualified for the work naturally speaking; then I remember that the Lord is no respecter of persons, but is willing to use anyone who is fully yielded to Him. Therefore I just go forth trusting in His help and strength, for the way has been so wonderfully opened up for me to take up this work that I dare not refuse to do so. Pray that I may reach some who are hungering and thirsting for more light upon God's Word.

Thank you so much for sending the *Advocate*; we enjoy reading it, and do hope that the funds will increase, so that you may be able to continue to send forth the glad tidings of salvation. We wish we were in a position to help you more, but Sister T., my father and myself send the enclosed, asking you to receive it as a thank offering for the light that has been granted unto us. My father is over 81 years of age, and up to about three years ago would take no interest at all in spiritual things. May you and we all be kept humble and very close to the Master. Yours in His service,

— England.

Prophetic Parables

(Continued from February Issue.)

The Parable of the Faithful and Wise Servant

—Matt. 24: 45-51.—

(To the Disciples—Matt. 24: 3.)

45. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46. Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth [his coming];

49. And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50. The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of.

51. And shall cut him asunder [or severely scourge him—R.V. margin], and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The words "his coming" (verse 48) are omitted from ancient MSS. and from the Revised Version.

SEVERAL serious misunderstandings of these words of our Lord have arisen among Christians, largely through a failure to recognise them as a parable. By some it is thought to be a literal statement of our Lord's intention to have upon the earth at the time of his second presence but one servant, who should be set absolutely over all the other servants, whatever might be their nationality or language, and that all these servants should receive "meat in due season" from this servant only, and from no other source. One strong exponent of this view expressed his belief that though the passage states a possibility of that one servant going astray, "to eat and drink with the drunken," yet the Lord would be so desirous of retaining "that servant" in his stewardship that He would throw about him so many safeguards and guide him so clearly in judgment that *he would not err*; consequently, anyone differing from "that servant" in any particular, whether of doctrine or practice, must be in error, and should be avoided by all true adherents of the "one servant" theory.

To bolster up this contention, not only is the parabolic character of the passage disregarded, but a false meaning is attached to the word "then" (verse 45), as though our Lord meant to say, "at that time," thus causing the Lord to express a sentiment like the following—"At the time of my Second Advent, who will be the one faithful and wise servant in all the earth whom I shall place over all the other servants to act as intermediary between Myself and them, to give them meat in due season; so that no particle of truth shall come to them from My hand direct, but only through this honored servant?"

Quite to the contrary, however, the word "then" in Matt. 24: 45, and Luke 12: 42, is not used as an adverb of time.

As an adverb of time, the word "then" (Greek, *tote*) is used in Matt. 24: 9, 10, 14, 16, 21, 23, 30 (twice), 40; chap. 25: 1, 7, 31, 34, 37, 41, 44, 45. This meaning of the word is made clear by referring to Matt. 26: 3, 14, where there can be no doubt that the reference is to a particular time or succession of events. But in Matt. 24: 45 and Luke 12: 42 quite a different word

occurs in the original—namely, *ara*—which is defined by Strong as "a particle denoting an inference more or less decisive," and is used when drawing an argument to a conclusion. It is unfortunate that the English language has not, like the Greek, a different word to use in connection with the drawing of an inference, thus obliging the word "then" to do double duty. But we are compelled to use the English language as we find it, and if a word has more than one meaning it is incumbent upon us to discover the way in which it is used in any given passage, and to interpret accordingly. The Standard Dictionary defines the two principal meanings of the word "then" as follows:—

"Adverb.—At that time, expressed or understood. Next or immediately afterward; as, First came the infantry, *then* the cavalry. At another time. *Conjunction.*—For that reason; as a consequence; therefore. Well then; in that case; as, You won't? *then* I will."

The latter definition, it will be seen, exactly corresponds to that of the Greek word, *ara*, which it translates. It is quite the usual thing in ordinary conversation when bringing an argument to a conclusion to say, "Now, then, what have you got to say?" or, "Now, if I am right, then you are wrong," and in neither case is a question of time involved.

The word "*ara*" (translated "then"), in addition to the two places under discussion, is found in the Authorized Version in Matt. 12: 28; 17: 26; 19: 25; Acts 11: 18; Rom. 7: 3, 21, 25; 9: 16; 10: 17; 14: 12; 1 Cor. 5: 10; 15: 14, 18; 2 Cor. 5: 14, 20; Gal. 2: 21; 3: 20; 4: 31; 5: 11; Heb. 12: 8. It is also found (translated "therefore") in Rom. 8: 1; Gal. 3: 7. The Revised Version substitutes "therefore" for "then" in Matt. 17: 26; 2 Cor. 5: 14, 20; and "wherefore" in Gal. 4: 31. The R.V. incorrectly omits the word "then" from Rom. 10: 17, for the word "*ara*" occurs in the Greek text. Rotherham here translates "hence."

That the word "then" is not an adverb of time when used as a translation of the Greek *ara* is shown by an examination of all the above references. Our Lord's use of it to conclude an argument is recorded in Matt. 12: 28; 17: 26. "If I cast out devils by the spirit of God, *then* the kingdom of God is come unto you." If tribute or custom is taken of strangers, "*then* are the children free." The Apostle Paul's fine argument of Romans 7, culminating in Rom. 8: 1, also shows the use of the word. Truly if all he says in Romans 7 is true, then what he says in 8: 1 is established—"There is, therefore [then—*ara*], now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." The combination of the words "now" and "then" in this passage, as in the similar use of both words together in modern English, again shows that "then" (*ara*) is not used as an adverb of time, but in the sense of "therefore," in the conclusion of an argument.

History, Sacred and Secular

Furthermore, secular history is falsified to give credence to this theory, it being claimed that at no time throughout the age has the Lord had in the earth more than one "faithful and wise" servant in a generation—Martin Luther being cited as a brilliant example of one-servant-at-a-time, giving out meat in due season. All

the other prominent reformers contemporary with Luther—Melancthon, Zwingli, Calvin—are ignored, as well as hundreds of lesser lights, who before Luther and during his lifetime protested against Rome. True, Luther was a striking figure, who did a wonderful public work in exposing the Roman "dunghill," and in preaching "justification by faith," but Luther himself was glad to acknowledge, as may be seen by his biographies, that light on this subject, and others as well, came to him from fellow monks and from the followers of Huss and others who had never conformed to Rome. Furthermore, on one important subject, the doctrine of the mass, or transubstantiation, Luther was behind his colleagues, rather than their leader. We commend to our readers Mosheim's History of the Christian Church, which shows the part played by each Reformer in that great drama—the Reformation—in order that they may see for themselves how the Lord honored and used many humble and faithful servants to give to "the Beast" its "deadly wound," and to give "meat in due season" to the multitudes liberated from bondage.—Dan. 7: 19-26; Rev. 13: 1-8; 14: 6-9.

Sacred history also is falsified by such a claim, for during his ministry our Lord chose twelve disciples and afterward seventy, and instructed and endowed them individually, that they might heal the sick, cast out devils and do many wonderful works in His name. At Pentecost a hundred and twenty received the spirit, and spoke the words of eternal life to the assembled multitudes, Peter being the chief, but not the only speaker. The Apostle Paul, subsequently appointed an Apostle, received special visions and revelations, but his first knowledge came through a very humble messenger. Twelve Apostles were thus contemporaneous, none being set over the others, but each taught of the Lord, sometimes through each other, and sometimes by the Holy Spirit direct. (Matt. 23: 10-12.) And even these specially qualified Apostles, while earnestly defending their individual apostleship, loved and esteemed, and worked with their fellow apostles, and even the lesser brethren.

We do not of course contend that any disciples now have the authority of the Apostles, or receive revelations, but we do recognise that the Holy Spirit is still given to the truly converted believer, and that its office still is to bring to remembrance the things learned from the Scriptures, and to enable God's people to understand prophecy as it fulfils under their eyes. (Matt. 24: 15, 30, 32, 33.) If twelve apostles, with their helpers, were in order at the beginning of the age; if a host of leaders, preachers and evangelists took part in the Reformation movement, why not many servants (comparatively speaking, for it is still true that while the harvest is great the laborers are few) "faithful and wise" at the end of the age, when a great ingathering work is to be done? Just as every scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of heaven, in our Lord's day was like a householder, able to bring forth out of his treasure things new and old (Matt. 13: 52), so every believer in the Gospel since is similarly like a householder bringing forth things new and old, that is, a variety of appropriate food, for those who are, so to speak, his guests, whether he entertain them in his own mansion or cottage, or merely speak a word in office or factory or by the wayside. And blessed is he whom the Lord finds so doing.

Another of the misunderstandings arising from

failure to recognise this passage as a parable is the placing of it exclusively at the time when our Lord is to return to receive the Church unto Himself—whether His return be considered as a period of "presence" during which certain events are to be brought about by His guiding hand, or whether it be viewed as a sudden revelation with instantaneous retribution upon unfaithful servants. This view ignores the application of the parable to the disciples and others who heard the parable, and who we believe the Lord intended should receive a lesson from it, as well as its application to watching servants throughout the age.

Examining this parable of the Faithful and Wise Servant carefully, and comparing it with the parable of the Faithful and Wise Steward, we see that, as a story, it is constructed on the same lines. An oriental household is pictured, over which a house steward has charge, his chief business being to serve out daily rations for the family and servants. The story opens with the steward left in possession in his master's absence, with liberty and possibilities for either good or evil. When given this stewardship he is presumably "faithful and wise," else the master would not entrust him with the stewardship; the test remains to come, however, as every employer of labour can understand. There are many time-servers who do only as much work as their "boss" or foreman can extract from them, and never lose an opportunity to "loaf" when the watchful eye is engaged elsewhere; were the "boss" to be away many hours, but little work would be done in his shop. Will the "faithful and wise" servant continue faithful and wise when left on his own responsibility, or will he prove to be a shirker, and as time goes on, and still his master does not return to take account of his stewardship, will he say in his heart, "My lord delayeth," and begin to smite his fellow-servants and to eat and drink with the drunken? That is the question.

If he remain steadfast through every test, truly "faithful" to his master's interests, and truly "wise" as to what is expected of a slave in his position, his master on his return will promote him to the position of "general manager"; but if he be unfaithful and unbelieving, self-indulgent and tyrannical, he will assuredly not be promoted to higher honors; on the contrary, he will be scourged, and cast out of the household, exposed to all men as the hypocrite he is, and receiving the contempt of all right-thinking people. There he will bewail his lost position, its ease and comfort, its perquisites and ready access to the larder, and there he will gnash his teeth at his former master, hating him openly as he previously did in effect.

The Interpretation

The inspired lesson of this parable may well be that of the parable of the Faithful and Wise Steward (Luke 12: 41-48)—

"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."

Another inspired lesson in this parable may well be that of the parables of the Men that Wait for their Lord, and The Goodman of the House (Luke 12: 35-40; Matt. 24: 42-44):—

"Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

The aspect of our Lord's first advent which most affected the scribes and Pharisees was that He came to judge their stewardship and to cast the unfaithful, the

gluttonous and the drunken, out of their office. Others, less prominent, but "faithful and wise," like the disciples, were exalted from the humble position of uneducated Galileans to the greatest learning possible to man; namely, the knowledge of divine things. Here was the beginning of the Gospel age application of the two parables. The Lord was about to go away, and would leave His disciples in charge of the evangelistic work of the age, those who would become believers being entrusted to their care, to be given spiritual nourishment, milk for babes, strong meat for those of full age, and so on, as already referred to in the parables of the Talents and the Pounds. To Peter the Lord said, "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs"; and Paul commanded the elders of Ephesus to feed the flock over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers.

But the conditions under which the servants of the Gospel would find themselves would be far from pleasant. Just preceding the giving of the parable our Lord had explained that there would be wars and rumors of wars, a great desolating abomination (spoken of by Daniel the prophet), "great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time," false Christs and false prophets arising to deceive many, "the sign of the Son of man in heaven," and the tribes of the earth mourning, while the saints are gathered with a great sound of a trumpet from one end of heaven to the other. Who, *then*, in view of all these things, out of all you who hear my words, will continue faithful and wise in this stewardship entrusted to you? See how the whole chapter works up to this question! It is not an easy thing I am asking of you, for you yourselves shall be afflicted and killed, hated of all men for my name's sake. (Verses 9-12.) But, notice this: "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." (Verse 13.) Faithful stewardship means therefore to endure to the end through all the tribulations, persecutions and discouragements, and to have always at heart the work which must be done in spite of these hindrances, for "This gospel of the Kingdom must be preached in all the world for a witness" (verse 14), and the disciples were the only ones who could do it—the disciples who heard the great discourse, and their successors who received it from them. To be "saved," therefore, corresponds with the reward which the parable suggests, when the master is represented as making the faithful servant "ruler over all his goods." Recognizing every consecrated believer who has received the Holy Spirit and accepted the gospel as a sacred trust to be testified to the best of ability, and looking back over the history of the age, we can see that there have been many "faithful and wise" up to a certain point. Like the seed sown in stony ground or among thorns, which sprang up and made a good show for a time, these began well. (Mark 4: 15-19; Gal. 5: 7, 8; 2 Cor. 11: 3.) They had hope of a good reward, joint-heirship with Christ, a Kingdom, glory, honor and immortality, and they readily agreed as stewards or servants to perform their duties. But they did not endure. They said, in effect, not necessarily in the words of the parable, My lord delays; that is, I am getting tired of the responsibilities of the gospel; I am weary of all this persecution and turmoil; I am a marked man, and instead of being advantaged by the truth, it seems only to bring me into unnecessary trials and troubles with friends and neighbors, and even in my own family. I

am here in a world of good things; why should I not enjoy myself as other people do?

One servant or child of the Kingdom thus becomes choked with the thorns—the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches; another "withered away" when the sun of persecution arises. Shall such receive the reward which the Master has to give? Shall such sit down with Him in His throne, as He sat down in His Father's throne? Certainly not.

But there are others not so easily discouraged by the persecution which arises, nor yet readily overwhelmed by the ordinary cares of this life. They seem to thrive on persecution, and the good things of this life appear for many years at least to have no special attraction for them. But they err in another direction. Finding themselves, as they believe, unchecked by the Master's hand, and with growing influence and power in the Church, these begin to *smite their fellow servants*. Instead of using whatever position of influence they occupy in the Church as a means of uplifting and blessing the less favored among the brethren, they oppress and afflict them in various ways—like the Pharisees placing grievous burdens upon the people, or like the ancient bishops of Rome and the East, not to speak of those of a later date, bringing many peoples into a bondage of superstition and fear. Professing to give up all for Christ's sake, they yet see in their fellow-believers only so much material to minister to their vanity and pride; many of whom become their servants instead of Christ's and so are beguiled of their reward, by a voluntary humiliation to and serving of messengers, the latter being puffed up in their fleshly minds, or they would not accept the homage.—Col. 2: 18-23.

Those who thus "lord it over God's heritage," whether a titled bishop or arch-bishop swaying multitudes, or an insignificant brother imitating them on a small scale over a dozen or two followers, generally go from bad to worse; they "eat and drink with the drunken"; that is, they cater to their own appetites, are gradually drawn into fellowship of interest if not actual companionship with others of similar tastes, and they *neglect to do the work the Master gave them to do*. The apostle describes some such—"Whose god is their belly," who mind earthly things, etc. (Phil. 3: 19; Rom. 16: 17, 18; Titus 1: 10-16.) Let not such think that the Lord approves of them, notwithstanding their apparently flourishing condition and large following.

Great Babylon has a mixed wine with which she has made all nations drunk. But the cry has gone forth. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18: 1-5.) Accordingly, there has been a great exodus from Rome, and many organizations have been formed on more liberal lines and with more Bible truth. But the temptation is strong to continue drinking of the same wine. The Church of Christ is represented in Scripture as a chaste virgin eagerly awaiting the consummation of her hopes in the return of the Bridegroom, living separate from the world, and engaged in good works. Whatever, therefore, of doctrine or practice draws God's people away from a life of humility and separateness from the world is part of the Babylonish "wine." Wine is exhilarating, it makes words flow freely, it deprives its victim of his sense of

responsibility, it brings him into strange company. So false teachers, unfaithful servants, become self-inflated, they become talkative, giving vent to many vain theories, they forget their commission as evangelists and messengers of the glad tidings, they practise the same

methods as others drunken on the same wine, even though they belong to different organizations and are ostensibly in opposition. Love of titles and display is a characteristic of all.

(To be continued.)

Catholicism in America

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH may see herself effective in building up the Protestant denominations as well as her own hierarchy, if the call of a leading Protestant organ is answered by the efforts of its church. *Zion's Herald* (Boston), New England's Methodist paper, thinks "the time has come for the Church as a whole to awaken to the situation" of a militant Catholicism. "In every hamlet and in every city there must be intelligent, consecrated work for the building-up of the local churches," this journal declares. Where foreigners are to be found—and where are they not?—"we must reach out in every possible way to save them to a pure Biblical Christianity." The alarm here indicated may not be felt in like measure by all who observe the exciting causes. These causes are, of course, the recent public demonstrations over the Papal honors recently bestowed upon three leading American ecclesiastics. But to *Zion's Herald*: "unless all signs fail, the last stand of the Roman Catholic Church for supremacy is to be made in the United States of America." "All the power of the great organization built up under Hildebrand and developed throughout the years by his successors is to be concentrated upon this country." We read further:

"This is the explanation of recent events and of announcements that have found their way into public print. The elevation of American prelates is significant. So is the statement that the country is to be divided into eighteen ecclesiastical provinces, or subdivisions, for convenience of administration. These straws all indicate the direction of the blowing of the wind—Rome is determined to conquer in the United States.

"As a matter of fact she must. Her power in the Old World is all but gone. France has left her, Portugal has repudiated her, Spain has broken with her, Italy openly defies her. What is there left? Austria? Yes, but hardly anything else. If Rome is to continue a power, then she must become supreme on this side of the Atlantic. And here in the United States of America is to be made the last stand.

"Is this simply a fantastic statement? Not at all. Within a few weeks there has appeared from the press of a leading American publishing-house a book written by Abbe Felix Klein, of France. It is called 'America of To-morrow.' In the course of the work the learned French author, already known to the American reading public by his volume, 'In the Land of the Strenuous Life,' discusses the growth of Roman Catholicism on this side of the Atlantic, and dwells upon the work of the Catholic Extension Society. He concludes by saying:—

"With the increase of funds the power for good of the young society is rapidly augmenting, and it will not be long before the Church of Rome will have nothing to envy the Protestant Churches, as far as their home missions are concerned; and if already, without this means of diffusion, it has developed two or three times as fast as the most prosperous of the Protestant sects, what will not now be its progress! It may in a quarter of a century prevail over all the other confessions combined; it may make of the United States, according to a dream that is no longer merely visionary, the first Catholic nation of the world." (The italics are ours.)

"There you have it, spoken right out in the open. Here on American soil would the Roman Catholic Church establish itself in mighty power. It may be making virtue of necessity, as there is nowhere else for Romanism to go. But, be that as it may, the fact is the same.

"Even here do we find a challenge to Protestantism. It means that here on American soil is to be fought to a finish the battle of the Reformation."

The Methodist journal, disclaiming all suggestions of "bigotry," asks its followers if they "believe that our fathers were right in breaking with Rome years ago;" furthermore, do they "believe that the doctrines promulgated by Protestantism are the proper interpretation of the Word of God?" While declaring its purpose to fight, this paper finds in the organization of the Catholic Church the best examples for its emulation.

"Do we want a Roman Catholic America? If not, we must be prepared to meet the challenge of the present. We must meet statesmanship with statesmanship.

"One of the most significant steps in connection with the new program that Romanism is enunciating in this country is that of dividing the United States into great subdivisions in order to get adequate leadership. Romanism has always made much of this. In every great centre in the country she has her strong men, bishops and archbishops known to all, who by continuity of residence acquire influence and power and are in a position to lead their forces to great victories. It is upon this leadership that the Pope counts to make the United States of America 'the first Catholic nation of the world.'

"May we not learn a lesson here? That we have gained notable victories under our present system of leadership is not to be gainsaid; but the time has come to adapt our system of work to the newer condition. Let us determine as a church what are the strategic centres of the United States, and then let us station there strong, inspirational leaders—men who will be able to touch the life of the entire section, and by continuity of residence will come to exert a mighty influence.

"We have as strong men in our connection as are to be found in the Roman Catholic Church. But what man is there among us who can command the attention that do some of these prelates? Ireland, Farley, O'Connell, Gibbons—these, and many more that might be named, have, by the very fact of their residence in certain places, acquired power for Roman Catholicism, and through their leadership have built up their Church in the parts of the country where they are stationed. We, on the other hand, have kept our leaders in the saddle, moving all over the country, and all over the earth, and as a result some are hardly known in the city of their residence. All of which is not so much to be charged to them as to the system under which we have operated.

"And now the time has come for us to meet the issue squarely. We are face to face with a situation. Methodism, as perhaps no other church among the Protestant denominations, is fitted, by its aggressiveness, its inheritance, and its natural genius, to meet and resist Roman Catholicism. It must do its full share, and perhaps more, to save this country to Protestant Christianity.

"The time has come for the Church as a whole to awaken to the situation."—*Literary Digest*.

[Is the consumption of the Papal system by our Lord Jesus Christ, as predicted in 2 Thess. 2, overlooked by *Zion's Herald*? Ed. N.C.A.]

Readers, Attention!

FRIENDS are asked to kindly take notice that the fourth volume of the "Advocate" begins with this, the issue for April, 1912. Nearly all subscriptions expire with the March issue, and this reminder is given so that friends may take the necessary steps to have their subscriptions for the next twelve months sent in good time. This is the only method we have of giving you this notice, and we shall be greatly obliged, and the good work materially assisted in what is very necessary, by your prompt attention thereto. A few friends have not yet taken notice of the word on this subject published a year ago, so that they are now twelve months in arrear. Ever welcome renewals and new subscriptions may be sent either to Melbourne, London, or Brooklyn, whichever office is most convenient for you. Do it now!

The "Advocate" can also be introduced to your friends by means of our plan of trial subscriptions for three months: Send four names and the price of a year's subscription to either of our offices, and the "Advocate" will be sent to each address for three months. At the end of the three months you can send other four names, or, if you like, the original four again.

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, 1910, "Advocate." It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way.

No. 111, 17/6; 112, 7/6; 113G, 5/-; 114G, 6/-; 115G, 6/-; 116G, 6/-; at Brooklyn, 84, \$5.00; 85, \$2.75; 86, \$10.00; 87, \$3.30; 88, \$3.75; 89, \$3.80; 90, \$4.71; 91, \$4.25; 92, \$4.25; Sundry, \$0.05; total at Brooklyn, \$38.86—£7:19:11; total for month, £10:7:11 (\$50.52); previously reported, £83:9:9 (\$405.73); total for nine months, £93:17:8 (\$456.25).

The New Covenant Advocate and . . . Kingdom Herald

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EXPOSITION OF BIBLE TRUTHS



E. C. HENNINGS, EDITOR

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Memorial Supper, 1912

According to the Jewish method of reckoning which is still identical with the method in vogue in our Lord's day, the first day of Nisan will correspond this year with March 19, beginning at sunset, March 18. The fifteenth of Nisan will, therefore, fall on Tuesday, April 2, beginning at sunset of April 1. 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 Monday, April 1, 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 ME."

The "Advocate" Sustaining Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report. As the "Advocate" is regularly published at a financial loss, it is obliged to depend upon the loving co-operation of its friends until it shall become self-sustaining. Let the good work continue!

No. 126G, 1/-; 127G, 2/-; 128G, 6/9; 129G, 1/-; 130G, 1/6; 131G, 1/-; 132G, 5/-; 133G, 2/-; 134G, 10/9; 135G, 1/-; 136G, 1/-; 137G, 2/-; 138G, 4/-; 139G, 12/6; 140G, 2/-; 141G, 15/6; 142G, 13/6; 143G, 3/-; 144G, 1/-; 145, £2; 146G, £1; 147, 16/3; 148G, 16/9; 149G, 2/-; 150G, 1/6; 151G, 1/-; 152G, 3/-; 153G, £10; total for month, £19:7:0 (\$94.04); previously reported, £202:15:9 (\$985.50); total for nine months, £222:2:9 (\$1079.54).

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No 2

Messianic Prophecies and Their Fulfilments

THE EASTER CONFERENCE of believers in Jesus and the New Covenant was held at Melbourne, April 5 and 7, the general topic, "Messianic Prophecies and their Fulfilments," being divided into sections, and dealt with by different brethren. We are sure our readers will enjoy these "talks" as much as those who had the pleasure of hearing them. And may we all take to heart the good lessons they contain, of faith in God and His Word, and of devotion to His dear Son, our Saviour, Mediator, High Priest, Advocate, and Lord, the King of Life and Glory.

Prophecy in General

Its Purpose and Interpretation

IT IS WELL for us to have the meaning of the word "prophecy" clearly before our minds, because in our day it has come to be used popularly with but one meaning, that is, to foretell; whereas the meaning of the English word, as given in the dictionaries, as well as the use of it in Scripture, is not only to foretell, but also to publicly declare or expound. If we understand it with only the meaning "foretell," we will get into difficulties with certain Scripture passages; for instance, Luke 22: 64. When the men who held Jesus had blindfolded him, they struck him, and said, "Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?" They did not mean by this that He was to foretell, but rather to "publicly declare." Also (Matt. 7: 22) we have our Lord speaking of those who would be publicly declaring Him, but not according to the Father's will. Our Lord did not mean to say in this instance that they would say they had been foretelling, but rather preaching. Again, in Acts 19: 6, the Apostle Paul had laid his hands on certain of the believers at Ephesus; they spake with tongues, and prophesied. We do not understand from this that they foretold, but rather that they publicly expounded the truth. Also in Acts 21: 9 the Apostle tells us of four daughters of Philip the evangelist which prophesied. This is understood by many to mean that they foretold, but if we take this in conjunction with 1 Cor. 11: 4, 5, we see that the reference was to their public expounding of the truth. The Apostle enjoins the attitude of both a sister and a brother when so doing, the one with the head covered, and the other with the head uncovered. In 1 Cor. 14: 19 the Apostle is exhorting the believers to covet (to desire earnestly) to prophesy. In this he was not exhorting them to foretell, for this was something which could not be coveted; it was a special gift from God. In 2 Peter 1: 21 the Apostle tells us that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. We might turn to many other passages on

the same line, but this will be sufficient to show the meaning of the word. See also Young's Analytical Concordance.

We do not wish to say that to prophesy never means to foretell, but that to prophesy or to publicly declare embraces both the foretelling of the future and the presentation of present truth.

Examples of Fulfilled Prophecy

The reason that we should be anxious to "prophesy," is because it is not something of man's imagination; "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (1 Peter 1: 21.) The Apostle Peter also tells us (2 Peter 1: 17-20) how he considered we had the prophetic word more confirmed by the heavenly witness, declaring Jesus to be God's beloved Son, Him by whom so much prophecy was fulfilled. If we read verse 19 according to the Emphatic Diaglott, we will perhaps get a better understanding of what the Apostle meant. He says, "We have the prophetic word more confirmed; to which you do well taking heed—in your hearts (as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day star arise)." Here the Apostle not only gives us the reason that we should take heed, but also tells us how it is not to be a mere head knowledge, but it is to be in the heart.

We will now give some outstanding proofs of prophecy fulfilled, and see that the Old Testament prophecies were not cunningly devised fables of man, but that they "publicly expounded" and foretold what should come to pass in later times. First we will mention the destruction of Babylon:—

"And Babylon, the glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; etc."—Isa. 13: 19-21.

The prophet here not only predicts the destruction of the city, but also describes very minutely how it shall be accomplished, and this we see has been fulfilled. First, that it shall be the abode of wild beasts. When the people deserted the city the King of Babylon selected the city within the ancient walls to be his hunting ground, which it continued to be for many years. Deserted by its population, the upper stories fell into ruins, and the cellars of houses, halls, and palaces came to be the habitation of hyenas, wolves, and other wild beasts. Second, that the Arab should not pitch his tent there. Although the Arab is a wanderer, and cares not for wild beasts, still it is true he does not pitch his tent in old Babylon, on account of the serpents and adders and other venomous reptiles which make their abode there. Third, that it shall never be inhabited. This we find literally ful-

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filled. Jerusalem was destroyed and subsequently re-inhabited, but this Babylon remains a howling wilderness.

This one instance of the remarkable fulfilment of prophecy should give all people an earnest desire to give heed to the prophetic statements of Scripture.

A Strikingly Literal Fulfilment

Now turn to Ezekiel 26: 4 and see a prophecy concerning Tyre. *Not only was its destruction foretold, but precisely the way in which it was to be accomplished:—*

"I will also scrape the dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea."

Here we have such circumstantial details that we have a test of the prophet's inspiration, or his imposition. History relates that Alexander laid siege to Tyre. He resolved to construct a line of communication between the island and the mainland, and found plenty of material to do so in the ruins of old Tyre. Thus he literally scraped the dust from her. Volney, the sceptic historian, writing faithfully without reference to theology, says:—

"The whole village of Tyre contains only fifty or sixty poor families; the houses are wretched huts ready to crumble into ruins." "A few families, a little ground, a trifling fishery."

We might turn to prophecies concerning other cities; such as, Ezekiel 29: 14, 15, relating to the captivity of Egypt; the desolation of the land of Israel (Ezekiel 6: 3); also the captivity of the Jews (Lev. 26: 33), with the same result; namely, to find that each was fulfilled as predicted. Infidels who know not prophecy, sceptics who believe it not, have equally unconsciously recorded its fulfilment, thus proclaiming "Thy word is truth."

How the Lord and the Apostles Quoted and Applied Prophecy.

We will now turn to see the frequent reference made by our Lord and the Apostles to the prophets, and see for what purpose. Matt. 11: 5, a quotation from Isaiah 61: 1. In this our Lord sends back the answer to John the Baptist: not stating that he was the one promised, but go show John again the things which ye do hear and see. This was sufficient proof that he was the one promised, because He was doing the work foretold of him. Also in verse 10 of the same chapter our Lord refers to a prophecy of Malachi 3: 1, concerning both Himself and John the Baptist, "a messenger before thy face." These quotations were intended to help the people to

understand who He was; and if they had been in the right attitude of mind, believing as many of them did that John was a prophet, and knowing the prophecies, they should have been ready to receive Jesus. But they had made up their minds for a certain thing, and because it did not come to pass as they expected, they rejected Him. This should be a warning to us, not to have our minds so made up as not to be convinced when our thoughts and Scripture statements differ, as did the Jews.

In Matt. 21: 13 our Lord brings to their notice Isaiah 56: 7. The temple was to be made a house of prayer, but they had fulfilled another prophecy (Jer. 7: 11), and had turned the house of God into a den of thieves. They had made a regular market place of the temple, and instead of it being the God appointed place of worship, they were using it as a means of making money. In this instance, to show them how far they had departed from God, and in Matt. 23: 39, our Lord refers to another prophecy (Jer. 22: 5), saying, "Your house is left unto you desolate." Thus did our Lord remind them of what had been written, and show them what shortly afterwards came to pass.

The Apostle Peter made reference to prophecy (Acts 2: 14) when he and the rest of the brethren had received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Although it was something out of the ordinary, and the people were amazed, Peter proceeds to tell them that it was but a fulfilment of what the Prophet Joel had foretold (2: 28, 29), and this should cause them to examine themselves and see if they were in the right way. Here were the men who had been associated with Jesus, although rejected by the Scribes and Pharisees, yet so highly favored of God as to fulfil this prophecy, to pour out His spirit upon them, so that they could perform such wonders. Truly this should have caused them to look more carefully into the prophetic statement, and see if they were in the right way. Then they (and we also if we come to it in the same manner) would have realized it to be a light shining in a dark place, lighting the way so that we need not be in darkness, knowing that whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scripture might have hope.—Rom. 15: 4.

The Apostle Paul reminds us that in olden times the people had the words of the prophets to guide them, but now we have the words of His Son, making plain what the prophets foretold; and may we be as were the disciples of old. When our Lord opened the Scriptures to them, and showed them from the Scriptures that these things must come to pass, their hearts burned within them. So may ours, and may we be caused to have greater zeal for Him and His service.—H. S.



Prophecies concerning the First Advent of Messiah

IF WE INQUIRE the reason of the advent of God's Son to earth, the answer must be—primarily on account of sin.

Inquiry into the origin of sin reveals the fact that the charge cannot be laid against the first pair. Yet they sinned and brought upon themselves the penalty decreed.

In John's gospel we have it recorded that the devil was a murderer from the beginning. (John 8: 44.)

This identified Satan with the Serpent in the incident of the garden recorded in Genesis, by which serpent he was represented.

On that occasion the serpent said, "Ye shall not surely die"; so there was at least one sinner living before the fall of man.—Gen. 3: 4, 5.

Yet a study of Job 38: 7 seems to show that at the time the foundations of the earth were laid there was complete loyalty amongst all the sons of God, for they all "shouted for joy" on that occasion.

Whether such outward show of loyalty would find its full counterpart within may be a question, but in view of the facts of the incident in the garden, it is but reasonable to say that

Disloyalty to God

existed amongst the angels at least immediately before the fall of man.

The question of sin then was not a new one to God when man fell, having already existed amongst the angelic beings.

Later on in the history of time (viz., at the flood) we are told that other angels sinned. When the opportunity arose they proved themselves disloyal. God did not condemn them to death at once, but reserved them in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day.—Gen. 6: 2, 5; Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2: 4.

God graciously allowed that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus should be a sermon preached to them while they were in their prison.—1 Pet. 3: 18, 19.

The sermon was designed to show them how the obedience of Jesus had brought Him great reward in contrast to what they were enduring for their disobedience.—Phil. 2: 8-11.

So we perceive that the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to earth was designed to benefit angels as well as men.

If the disobedient angels are rightly exercised by God's dealings with them, doubtless they shall receive a blessing; and beyond question this is also true of man.

It is sin then that becomes the primary cause for the First Advent of the Sin Bearer—of Him who should put away sin.

Our subject for the present is a consideration of the Prophecies concerning the First Advent.

A Prophecy In God's Mind

Strange as it may seem, we are not to look in Genesis for the first of these prophecies, but in the Book of Revelation—

He was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."—Rev. 13: 8.

A study of this prophecy should effectually remove any ideas we may have of an offended God angrily condemning men to death; of a loving Son stepping in between, and by receiving the blow Himself satisfying the angry God so that He could forgive man and raise him from the dead.

Rather than this vindictive view, the prophecy shows that from the beginning, long before man was made, the Father foresaw the sin and its just consequences, and with wisdom and grace arranged the Remedy.

It was in the Father's mind that all the arrangements for the salvation of the race originated; it was the part of the Son to fall in with all that the Father proposed to do.

And this he did: He was the Lamb, the submissive Lamb, who, when the foundations of the earth were laid, readily coincided with the Father's will to die for sinners.—Matt. 20: 28.

And had it been in God's purpose to do otherwise than this: had he purposed to give all the race a fair trial in the person of the first man, and after his failure to make no provision for his salvation—

Even this would have been quite consistent with the strictest justice. No charge of injustice could then be laid against man's Maker on this account.

But viewing it in the light of the fact that the way of sin was man's deliberate choice, we come to see something of the depth of the Divine love for His creatures, now His deliberate enemies, in providing a sacrifice efficacious to the removal of sin, which sacrifice was to involve His only begotten Son in suffering and agony beyond our power to conceive.

And all this done without any request for help being made from the condemned race. It was entirely out of His own abundant grace.

Such considerations as these may be applied also to the angels which sinned, for God might, without any injustice, have caused them to forfeit their lives at the moment of their disloyalty.

But we are not intending to pursue the possibilities; we are not to consider what *might have been*.

The fact is before us that God intended to rescue the race, and His Son was the Lamb slain for the purpose. This prophecy in effect says that the Lord Jesus was the *acceptable offering* for sin. It was essential that such an offering should be made before the requisite power and authority to remove the sin could be granted.

Having then, in the Divine Mind, fore-ordained the Acceptable Offering, the next prophecy, in point of time, shows something of its crushing effect on him who our Lord says is the murderer of the race, since by his subtilty and deceit man transgressed, and thus "by man sin entered into the world, and death by sin."—Rom. 5: 12.

The First Prophecy to Mankind

This prophecy is found in Genesis 3: 15.

From these words we get the thought of hostility—warfare—and it is all over the man.

A command had been given him by God; an attempt was made to subvert the command by Satan, which attempt was successful. By the success of the attempt Satan gained the allegiance of the man; but he also manifested his disloyalty and proved himself to be man's chief enemy.

The presence of this new creature, man, in the Universe, who did not know both good and evil, provided a test for this wonderful spirit creature, whom we know as Satan, in which his fall was fully established. His trial was over: the sentence was immediately passed on him, and in due time it will be brought to pass. Heb. 2: 14.

It is perfectly clear that in this passage figurative language is used, and the figurative significance of the word "bruise" is "to overwhelm."—Strong's Concordance.

This curse upon the serpent being pronounced within the hearing of the first pair would convey to their minds the hope that their great enemy would one day be "overwhelmed," and that this should come about in some mysterious way through the "Seed of the woman."

It was all very vague, yet it was hopeful and it was kind, that they should be allowed to hear it first, in view of what

punishments were next to be pronounced upon themselves.—Gen. 3: 16-19.

We get the thought also from this prophecy that the condition of sin is not always to abide, but is one day to be "overwhelmed."

If the good promise made to our first parents was sufficiently explicit as to God's purpose only in regard to the serpent and sin, further details of the process come to light about 2,000 years after, in the call of Abraham.—Gen. 12: 1-3.

Preparation for the reception of the Lamb who was to be slain, who was to make war with Satan, begins.

The Prophecy to Abraham

A nation is to be prepared to receive Him, and that nation is to have its beginning in Abraham.

To him is to belong the honor of being the progenitor of the "seed" which should do these things and become the blessing of all the families of the earth.—Gen. 22: 18; 26: 4; Ps. 72: 17; Acts 3: 25; Gal. 3: 8, 16.

In the course of time the nation sprang up, and this grand promise became its heritage. It was treasured up and pointed to by them as the distinguishing feature of their national life. Speaking generally, it kept them severely distinct from other nations, and thereby retained the original purity of the nation and provided the birthplace for the promised Seed.

The Prophecy to Judah

The nation was divided into twelve tribes named after the twelve sons of Abraham's grandson, Jacob. The Seed was to come of one of these tribes, but up to the death of Jacob it was not known of which.

In Gen. 49: 8-12 the tribe of Judah is indicated as that from which the Seed should come. All these figurative expressions are full of significance, and while the prophecy contains much that has to do with the domestic life of the tribe, there are some specific statements made to the effect that the Seed would come out of it.

And the genealogy of the Seed shows this to be so, while the writer to the Hebrews says that "It is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda."—Luke 3: Heb. 7: 14.

There is something said about Judah being a lion's whelp, having all the strength and power and vigor of youth, and again he is spoken of as having all the cunning of that ferocious creature when in the act of stealing upon his prey. The prey shall not escape the lion.

In Rev. 5: 5 the Lord Jesus is called the "Lion of the tribe of Judah." His prey shall not escape him! He has the power, the strength, the wisdom to conquer the enemy!

The Sceptre, that is, royal power or authority, lies with this tribe, and it shall remain there; for the Lion of the tribe shall take it when He comes, and unto Him—Him with the Sceptre—shall the gathering of the nations be.

The Prophecy to David

Over 600 years pass away now, and nothing is said as to from which particular family of the tribe of Judah the promised Seed is to come, until Nathan the prophet appears. In 2 Sam. 7: 13-16, after saying that Solomon should build a house for God's name, Nathan proceeds to state (vs. 14-16) that—

The Seed was to come of one of the descendants of David, and He was to occupy the throne upon which David then sat; viz., the Lord's throne, forever. These are the "sure mercies of David" mentioned by Isaiah (55: 3) and in Acts (13: 34).

His Birthplace Foretold

About 300 years after this, mention is made by Micah of the town in which He was to be born; and again mention is made of His throne—His rulership over the people who shall eventually be gathered unto him according to the prophecy of Jacob just considered; and here is mentioned the fact that He which was to come is from of old from the beginning.—Micah 5: 2.

The prophecy positively identifies the Promised Seed with the First Born of every creature who was in the beginning with God, in order to establish this fact in the minds of the nation being prepared for His Advent.—Col. 1: 15; John 1: 1-3.

The Prophecies Begin to be Fulfilled

About 700 years after this again the Mother of the promised Seed is found. It was Mary, of the tribe of Judah,

of the line of David, of the family of Nathan*, David's son, living, and probably born, in Nazareth, but properly belonging to the town of Bethlehem—The city of David.

On this occasion the name and titles of the promised Seed are announced, both of which are of deep significance.—Luke 1: 26-33.

Thus all these prophecies made centuries before were accurately fulfilled in the Babe of Bethlehem, for—

"In Due Time" "God Sent His Son,"

the "Seed of the woman," the Seed of Abraham, the Son of David.

"A Saviour and a Great One!"

Thus entered into the world the greatest personality the world has ever seen or shall see—heralded by angels, immortalised in sacred song, prophetically announced in language of the most sublime and lofty eloquence, pictured in the ceremonial observances of the law, standing in the heart of a great nation as its central theme!

The greatest personality in the whole universe of God, a visitor from the highest heaven, He took upon Him the lowly estate of man.

Earth could not have had a greater visitor.

Earth could not have treated one worse.

His great work, but vaguely understood now, will, like the prophecies of old, gradually but rapidly unfold to the understanding of men until they shall see Him in all His glory. Then He shall be worshipped and greatly admired by all.

Simeon's Prophecy

The presentation of the child in the Temple after the custom of the Law was the occasion of that prophecy of Simeon recorded in Luke 2. In verse 30 he declares that in looking upon the babe Jesus he had seen the Salvation of God. This salvation not he only, but all people, were to see (vs. 31), for it was a light for the Gentiles, and the people of Israel would glory in it. (vs. 32.) This salvation which all were to see was to come through Jesus (the Babe then in his arms), Simeon says, and John the Baptist also said, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God."—Luke 3: 6.

From these assertions about the child Jesus, from Simeon first, and in later years by John, the prophecy of Isa. 52:10, "All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God," is seen to take its beginning in Jesus, and in Him the prophecy is fulfilled.

Zech 9: 9 says that He (Jesus) who is the salvation of God is a King, and the prophecy says that He will present Himself to His people in that capacity. This was fulfilled by Jesus. (Luke 19: 29-40.) The prophecy also designates Jesus as the rightful and the promised heir to the throne of David (2 Sam. 7, already considered).

This prophecy (Zech. 9: 9) is connected with Jer. 23: 5, where the King is described as a Branch.

The same Branch is again alluded to in Zech. 3: 8, where

* For further information re our Lord's descent from this insignificant line of David, rather than from Solomon, see "Advocate," January, 1911.—Editor.

the Branch is spoken of as "My Servant," whom it was Jehovah's determination to "bring forth." That is to say, that "my servant the Branch" was then being held in reserve, so to speak, until the appointed time.

In Isa. 42: 1-7 the "Servant," his characteristics, and his future work are fully described. The prophecy says that the Servant was "elected" of Jehovah to this work (vs. 1); or, as stated in vs. 6, "I, Jehovah, have called Thee . . . [to] give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles."

The "elect servant," the "called one," of Isa. 42: 6 is referred to by Matthew, who quotes this prophecy (ch. 12: 18) as the "chosen" of God.

This prophecy by a long step thus connects with the one at the first considered, Rev. 13: 8; and thus through a backward chain of prophecies which describe the offices, functions, and personality of the Messiah, we arrive at the point from which we started: viz., that the child who would be a "light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of My people Israel," was none other than the Lamb fore-ordained of God from before the foundation of the world to be slain—an acceptable offering for sin. For He was elected, called, chosen, at that time.

All these terms indicate a preference over some others—others of the heavenly creatures—who on account of their sinless and untried lives were eligible to become the "Lamb slain." The subsequent history of the angelic beings, however, and their fall into sin when they were permitted to come into contact with the race, fully justify the choice of His Son, and show forth the unerring wisdom and foreknowledge of God.

The Old Testament abounds with prophecies which point out many details of the life of the promised Seed for which the Jews were looking and the world awaiting.—Isa. 53: 61, etc., etc.

But something of the sweetness of the personal knowledge of Him seems to be pointed to in the Song of Solomon.—Cant. 2.

There He is poetically described as the Rose of Sharon, waiting His sweet refreshing odors in the desert places which His virgin, the church, should be privileged to enjoy.

Nor is she to be forgotten when in the deep valley of sorrow, for God planted His Lily there, and He will not forget the Virgin, the Bride, who follows Him. Of all things beautiful in the earth He is the most desirable, and His fruit the most abundant and luscious, and the Virgin the Bride who seeks Him shall find Him as an apple tree among all the trees of the wood.

He is the "Star that shall come out of Jacob" (Num. 24: 17; Rev. 22: 16), giving the needed light for the Bride "in the morning."

Do we "look for another"?—Matt. 11: 3.

The testimony of the "Seed" Himself shows that we need not; for even now it is true that the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.—Matt. 11: 5, 6.

—F. S.

Prophecies concerning the Ministry, Miracles and Teachings of Messiah

THERE IS NOTHING in this world so potent to give offence as a religious fact. (Facts as we have had them given to us this morning. Having seen the reasons, purposes, and usefulness of the prophetic writings, our attention was drawn to the prophecies concerning the first advent of Messiah, and their fulfillment in fact.) The average man of to-day, though professing to desire the truth, will not receive it, unless it agree with some notion of his own. And if you endeavor to prove it to him, and do prove it, in most cases, he is much annoyed, and will turn somewhat bitter against you.

But we have much to be thankful for, in being able to look back upon the prophecies and their fulfillment. And though

there is yet much to be fulfilled yet we have so much data upon which to establish our faith, that we are enabled to accept with implicit confidence, that all other prophecies will be fulfilled as written, because our confidence is grounded on the sure word of God which cannot be broken.—John 10: 35.

I will thank you to return to Isa. 42: 1-9. This prophecy is direct from Jehovah, and gives us the very foundation on which our Lord's office or ministry would be and was established. I would like you to keep this text in mind.

Isa. 61: 1-2. This, as you will see, is spoken through the same prophet, but is represented as the words of the One who is to be the Anointed of Jehovah to fulfil this ministry or office. In Luke 4: 16-19 our Lord lays claim to and

appropriates this very office, as the rightful Owner. It behoves us then to search the Scriptures, to see if this Jesus was the One referred to, that He is the Promised One.

Messiah's Mission Foretold

Isa. 61: 1, 2. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me." Compare John 1: 29-34. Here John is testifying that our Lord was anointed by the Holy Spirit from heaven. I would like here to mention that the anointing of our Lord is spoken of by some critics as nothing more than that which many of the prophets, including John the Baptist, received, who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. But they are not spoken of as having been "anointed" by the Spirit, the ceremony of anointing being confined among the Jews to their priests and kings. The anointing of our Lord was something very special—so great that all the prophets, all the books of the Scriptures, wrote of it from first to last. But to establish the fact that Jesus was the Anointed One referred to in this prophecy, we corroborate it by the words and works of our Lord.

"Because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek." Compare Matt. 11: 5. This was the message that our Lord sent to John the Baptist, giving a powerful testimony, that the anointing was making good, and that John could rest assured that our Lord was truly the Christ.

John 10: 25. Keeping the texts in Isaiah 42 and 61 well in mind, we see that here our Lord is pointing out to the Jews that His works bear witness of Him because they fulfil the prophecies. Nevertheless, they did not believe Him. Again, in Matt. 5: 5, we see the meek specified, to whom He was sent to preach.

"He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted." We cannot think that the prophet here had any thought but that of the symbolically brokenhearted; that is, those whose hearts were "broken" because of their grief concerning Israel's down-trodden and sinful condition (Dan. 9: 3-20; Luke 2: 25, 38); and none of that day but the Jews would properly understand this brokenheartedness. Indeed, the vast majority of the Jews all through their age did not seem to understand, nor even care, except when they got into great straits, when they would turn again to the Lord.

But the real Jews, who were seeking to keep the law, realizing their utter helplessness, would cry out like Paul—"O wretched man that I am!"—Rom. 7: 24-25.

This broken-hearted condition also applies to us now. When we heard something of the love of God, and desired to approach Him, but knew not how, we could make this cry too—"O wretched man," etc. And when we go a little farther our broken hearts are bound up, and we come to say, with rejoicing—I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord. For then we know the way, the only way.—John 14: 6.

"To proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." To be a captive of any man, or body of men, is a sad and humiliating experience, as the Jews found in their various captivities. But both they and we were captives of something worse than that—Sin. The Law gave Sin a power over the Jews it would not otherwise have had (Rom. 6: 14; 7: 7-11; 8: 2), while the Gentiles were under a like bondage, being dead in trespasses and sins, and fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind. (See Eph. 2: 1-3.) But through God's Holy Anointed One we see, we feel, we know we can be free from the captivity of Sin. We can thank God through Jesus Christ. He whom the Son makes free is free indeed. (John 8: 33-36; Rom. 6: 17-23.) And captivity to Sin means to be captives also of Death.

These prisoners of Death our Lord came to release. During His ministry He raised several from Death. He promised that in due time all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and come forth.—John 5: 24: 31.

"To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." What do you think this would mean—"the acceptable year of the Lord?" Would it be that Jehovah had set apart a particular time in which to accept something; or would it be that that something was now present, and was acceptable. I think that is it. The blood of bulls and goats, etc., could not be acceptable as a sin offering, but the great offering of our Lord could take away sin. It was a perfect offering, acceptable to the

Lord Jehovah—and from that time forth, the forgiveness of sins was preached.

We have seen that, "the Spirit of the Lord God is upon me;—because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek. He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." But this was not all the message. He was also anointed to give a warning of "the day of vengeance of our God," and to comfort all that mourn.

Our Lord told the people of the overthrow of the Jews and the loss of their country; also of the great time of trouble, which is, we think, now near at hand. (Matt. 24.) Also He has left us great words of comfort—"My peace I give unto you."

The Effect of Messiah's Teachings Foretold

But what effect had prophecies, miracles, and teachings on the Scribes and Pharisees and leaders of the people? Let us look at one or two texts concerning His ministry. (John 11: 47, 48, 53.) We have all understood that the Jews did not appreciate the day of their visitation, as they should have done, and they given their attention to the prophecies concerning Messiah. But the fact remains, they did not, and they thought that the success of Jesus' mission would bring the Romans down upon them, and they would lose their positions.

Now is this not just what the Prophet said they would do? (Isa. 53: 1-6.) "Who hath believed our report?" (see margin.) Hardly anybody, just a few. "And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Just a few, a little mock, the meek, the brokenhearted, the nobodies from a Pharisaical standpoint. He grew up "as a tender plant," "as a root out of a dry ground." He had nobody in common with Him. He was alone.

"He hath no form nor comeliness." No, His doctrine did not suit them; it did not take the form that they would have liked. Perhaps a big army to conquer the Romans and the rest of the world, and big positions for them, would have been more of the form and comeliness they would have desired. But when they saw Him? No! He told them the truth, and therefore they did not desire Him. They despised Him. They rejected Him. They saw this man of sorrows who was acquainted with grief, and they hid, as it were, themselves from Him. And they saw, as in ver. 4, Him stricken and smitten of God. What for? Why, for their sins!

But what did they think of His miracles? One text will be enough to show this. (Matt. 12: 24.) Could we find anything worse than this to say in the face of the mighty works that He was doing that He did them by Beelzebub, the prince of devils?

And His teachings: How did the rulers receive them? (See John 8: 37-40; 10: 31-39.) Their hatred was intense. They seemed to have but one object in view, to slay Him; which they finally did. And how did the "common people" receive Him? John 10: 40-42: "And many believed on Him there." Mark 12: 37: "And the common people heard him gladly." John 7: 31: "And many of the people believed on Him." John 12: 12, 13: "... and cried, Hosanna, Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." These verses speak for themselves; they record the fulfilment of the prophecy of Zech. 9: 9, and had the people been silent, the very stones would have cried out, for no prophecy was to lapse unfulfilled.—Matt. 21: 15, 16; Luke 19: 38-40.

What effect had the ministry, miracles, and teachings of our Lord on the true believers among the Jews? See John 1: 43-51; and on the Gentiles, see Acts 13: 47, 48.

And was all this prophesied of our Lord? Yes, and early, for in Gen. 49: 10, Jacob, in blessing his sons, foretold that the sceptre should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John 12: 32.

—S. S. W. B.

Prophecies concerning the Example Set in the Life of Messiah

"Leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.—1 Pet. 2: 2.

THE PROPHECIES regarding the first advent of the Messiah have, as we have been hearing to-day, been fulfilled according to the Scripture; and we are now come to the consideration of prophecies concerning the example set by Him, for us to follow in His steps. Knowledge always brings responsibility, and as this example is brought up before us, to our very door, we will each one endeavour to pay particular attention thereto.

Prophecies have been quoted relating to the offices and work of the Messiah as the deliverer of Israel, the King of the Jews, and concerning His miracles and teachings. We find also a number of prophecies describing His personal character, and it is His personal character that we are told to imitate, that we may be "conformed to the image of His Son." (Rom. 8: 29.) We are also told that the same mind should be in us which was in Christ Jesus.—Phil. 2: 5.

An Example in Humility and Obedience

We find from the latter passage (Phil. 2: 5-8) that "the example set in the life of Messiah," on earth was in accord with the example set by Him to both angels and men when in His pre-human state. We learn from the wonderfully comprehensive statements of Scripture that—

"All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."—John 1: 3.

"For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers. All things were created by Him and for Him [or, through Him and unto Him. Am. R.V.].—Col. 1: 16.

Therefore, all the works of creation as given in the first chapter of Genesis are the result of the commands of the Almighty God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, and carried out to a successful completion by the Messiah in His pre-human estate.

The Divine approval of His work is expressed in Gen. 1: 31; God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good. And God rested from all His work that He had made; not resting as if wearied, but resting as satisfied.—Gen. 2: 2.

Taking each of the six days of creation as a long period or epoch, we have thousands of years of approved and tested obedience of our Lord Jesus. In humility He was also an example to all—

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; [or, according to the Am. R.V.] "counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped."—Phil. 2: 5, 6.

To grasp anything gives the thought of seizing with a view to possession and holding as our own. Our Lord Jesus did not entertain such a thought, nor did He presume in the least degree upon the goodness of the Almighty, notwithstanding such a close and wonderful association during a great period of time. Humility went with Obedience, and that was the Mind of Christ. Whatever gifts the Almighty graciously purposed to give, He would not presume to grasp or usurp, but would willingly await the right time and the expression of Divine approval. Furthermore, He gladly left that glorious estate, and made himself of no reputation, in order to become a man, and obediently carry out another purpose of the Father.

This, then, is the character which His people should seek to develop; a mind of loving obedience, of making one's self of no reputation, a mind to carry out God's will at any cost to ourselves.

The Example set in Galilee

The passages thus far referred to are not prophecies but statements of fact, from both Old and New Testaments, showing the character and work of our Lord Jesus in His pre-human existence. Concerning His character during His life on earth, we find a clear prophecy in Isa. 42: 1-4, quoted by

Matthew (12: 18-21), and applied by him to Jesus as He went about Galilee—

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law."—Isa. 42: 1-4.

These words also testify to God's approval of Him up to the time He began His earthly ministry. Future favors and responsibilities are based on work already performed. What more emphatic declaration could be given to show God's complete sense of pleasure, trust and approval. This prophetic utterance was confirmed again in later days, as well as at His baptism—

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." "Hear ye Him!"—Matt. 3: 17; Luke 9: 35; Matt. 17: 5; Mark 1: 11.

God was well pleased with Him because of His continued humility and obedience. He came to do the Father's will, always. We find this very plainly declared in John 6: 38; 5: 30; 3: 17; 4: 34. And if we wish to have the Divine approval, if we wish God to be well pleased with us, it will be only because we follow in His footsteps in humility and obedience.

The Servant of the Almighty

An ambassador among men is one sent on a mission from one government to another, and entrusted with the responsibility of representing those who send him, and also the interests committed to him; and upon the faithful and careful attention to the details of the work would depend the approval and support of his government. An ambassador's mission is not generally a pleasure excursion; it is often full of dangers and difficulties, not at all to do as he likes, but to do the work, to carry out the instructions given. So our Lord Jesus proclaimed—

"I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me; I seek not mine own will."

The attitude of this great Messenger is clearly expressed in another prophecy—Psalm 40: 7, 8. "I delight to do Thy will, O my God." No laggard action or attitude this; things in which we delight we make haste to attend to. So the Apostle says, applying this Psalm to our Lord Jesus, when an offering for sin was needed, this servant or ambassador said—

"Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God."—Heb. 10: 7.

In this also He set us an example, that we should not only desire and strive to do God's will, but that we should *delight* in it, and be ever eager to do whatever work our Heavenly Father apportions to us, however painful and humbling the performance of it may be.

What the Father's will was for Messiah is expressed in many passages—to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matt. 4: 23; 9: 35; Mark 11: 15), to reveal the Father's will, which will is expressed in John 3: 10; 1 Tim. 2: 3-6, and to give His life a ransom for many.—Mark 10: 45.

This great Messenger came presumably to a friendly people, to his own chosen and select from all the world (Amos. 3: 2), and He surely would be warmly received and get a great welcome! Did it work out so? "He came to His own," and He was rejected by them; they would not own Him, nor have either Him or His message. Instead of that, those in authority amongst the people from the very first determined to oppose Him and His work in every shape and form; and, further than that, those who would be friendly to Him they also would oppose, and cast them out from their assemblies. What do I say? A truly religious people rejecting the Sent of God? Surely not so! Well, read Matt. 12: 10-24; John 9: 1-34; 5: 16, "They took counsel together for to put Him to death." What! A religious people forming a band of conspirators to accomplish the death of an innocent man, who was the accredited messenger from the King they acknow-

ledged? Even so.—John 7: 6; 5: 18; 11: 47-53; Lu. 24: 20. Were they successful in their conspiracy to put Him to death? Yes, they were successful. Through false accusation they got Him arrested, brought before Pilate, took upon them and their children the blood of this just man, and succeeded (as they thought) in staying His work, by putting the Worker Himself to death on the cross. (Matt. 27: 23-35; Mark 15: 24; Luke 23: 33; 24: 19-20.) But did it avail? No, the report of the faithful Messenger is given in John 17: 4—

"I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work, which Thou gavest me to do." And on the cross He said, "It is finished."—John 19: 30.

Did He fail, or was He discouraged by the strength of the opposition? or did their fierceness fill Him with fear?—Luke 13: 32.

No, He was obedient to the Divine will right through His ministry, and even to death itself. Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name above every name.—Phil. 2: 9-11.

Here, therefore, is another noble example set for us in the life of Messiah, and foretold in the ancient prophets—"faithful till death;" faithful in the last dying agonies of the cross! Neither should we fail nor be discouraged until we have done—not what God gave the Messiah, His Servant, to do, but what that Servant, our Lord and Master, gives us to do; for to His people He now proclaims, "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.

Another example set for us in the life of Messiah, and which the prophets foretold, is that of patient suffering under wrong—

"He is despised and rejected of men. . . . He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not His mouth."—Isa. 53: 3, 7.

Concerning the fulfilment of this we have not only the accounts of the evangelists, but also the exhortation of Heb. 12: 3—

"Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

This position is from the heart toward God, and those who have had sweet experience of His goodness, of His loving care over us, of His matchless patience, and how He doeth all things well, and that all things work together for good to them that love Him, those who truly love and reverence His great name, shall humbly submit, with thanks, to whatever the Lord in his goodness permits to touch their lives.

"For this is thankworthy if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently, but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."—1 Peter 2: 19, 20.

Who amongst us could attain to such patient endurance? Who even entertain the thought of continuous suffering for righteousness' sake? and yet our great Example has shown us the way, and we are to follow His steps. If we would be with Him, and see Him as He is, we must take up our cross daily and follow Him.

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him." It is written as though the Father Himself had bruised Him. This He did, however, only indirectly; for it was inevitable that the holy and just One, living among sinful men, should suffer at their hands. But Messiah not only endured it all patiently, He even gave thanks for it, for we read that after the pass-over Jesus took bread and *blessed* and break it and gave to His disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body; and he took the cup and GAVE THANKS, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. Our Lord, here, gives thanks for what He is about to suffer on our behalf, for the remission of sins. (Matt. 26: 26, 28.) So also are His people (Col. 1: 11, 12) instructed to be "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering *with joyfulness*; GIVING THANKS unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

But our Lord's life consisted not altogether in passive suffering, as referred to by the prophets and apostles, having no guile in His mouth, when reviled reviling not again, and when caused to suffer threatening not, but committing Him-

self to Him who judgeth righteously (1 Pet. 2: 22, 23); it consisted also in active good works, being, like His Heavenly Father, kind even unto the unthankful. (Luke 6: 35.) This also was foretold by the Prophets, and is also an example set for us to follow—

"A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench."—Isa. 42: 3.

"To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."—Isa. 42: 7.

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."—Isa. 35: 5, 6.

And the evangelists record the fulfilment of these predictions concerning Messiah. He not only preached the Gospel, and thus opened the eyes of the mentally blind, and opened the ears of the figuratively deaf, but he also—

"Went about all Galilee . . . healing all manner of diseases amongst the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them all."—Matt. 4: 23, 24.

"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people."—Matt. 9: 35.

Of this Peter bore witness before Cornelius and his household—

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem."—Acts 10: 38, 39.

The Messiah, not only did good to those who came to Him, but He went about wherever suffering was found, to help all who were afflicted who would in faith receive His help, even by touching the hem of His garment. A good example surely for us to follow. Not that we can, as He did, heal the physical complaints of all around, but that we may by the exhibition of the same spirit of loving kindness manifest that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him—binding up the broken-hearts of contrite sinners (Acts 13: 46-48), lifting up the hands which hang down, and strengthening the feeble knees, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, and preaching the glad tidings of salvation from sin and death.—Heb. 12: 12, 13.

And what was it that enabled our Lord to endure affliction patiently? Isaiah (53:11) says, "By His knowledge;" Heb. 5: 7 says by reason of his "piety."

Our great Leader had previous and practical experience of the goodness of the Lord, of Jehovah's endless stores of knowledge, and wisdom, and power, and of the riches of the Father's love, but when He came to earth this knowledge partook largely of the nature of *faith*, for His heavenly Father was unseen, and the visible enemies were numerous and persistent; even Satan striving to draw Him from His mission by the offer of glittering, but false, rewards.

What is faith? It is belief in God and His promises, the conviction of things unseen. (Heb. 11: 1.) And the test of faith is given in Jas. 2: 18, "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." "Faith without works is dead." (Jas. 2: 20.) Our Lord Jesus showed His faith, His knowledge, His confidence in God, in all His works. What could require more faith or demonstrate a more certain reliance upon God as the hearer and answerer of prayer than to bid the sick to rise up and walk!—for these miracles were done, not by His own power, but by the Father's. What faith and confidence in God were required when He rebuked the winds and the waves! When He cried to God at the tomb of Lazarus to hear Him, and called upon Lazarus, who had been dead four days, to come forth!

May our faith also be strong, that it may amount like our Lord's to positive knowledge, that we may be able to say with the Apostle, "I know whom I have believed."—2 Tim. 1: 12.

Let us then follow the example set for us in the life of Messiah, as foretold by the prophets, and as fulfilled in the presence of many witnesses—

Let us follow Him in faith, in patient suffering, in humility and obedience, in going about doing good, and finally may we be faithful till death, that we may enter into His glory.

"Being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him."—See Heb. 5: 7, 8.

—T. V. S.

Prophecies concerning the Death of Messiah

THE JEWISH MIND was far from expecting that the Messiah should die. The sentiment prevailing among them was that "Christ abideth for ever." (John 12: 34.) They claimed to have heard this out of the law, and they were quite justified in their claim, for David by inspiration had said in a prophecy recognised as Messianic, and so admitted to be by Jesus—

"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand,
Until I make thine enemies thy footstool."
—Psa. 110: 1, 2; Matt. 22: 41-46.

The disciples of Jesus were no exceptions to this. They had the same ideas as their co-religionists. Even Peter, the foremost among them to acknowledge the Messiahship of Jesus, took it upon himself to rebuke the Master when He foretold that He must travel up to Jerusalem, there to be delivered into the hands of the chief priests and to be crucified. They were all at one in their belief that the beloved Master should be the Deliverer of Israel there and then, and they were alike dumbfounded when He died.

Although the expectation that Messiah should reign gloriously was fully authorized by Scripture, the Jews were greatly at fault in overlooking the prophecies of Messiah's death. There were a number of these, some of them in language too plain to be misunderstood. For example—

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off."—Dan. 9: 26.
"He was cut off out of the land of the living."—Isa. 53: 8.
"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death."—Isa. 53: 9.
"He hath poured out his soul unto death."—Isa. 53: 12.

These prophecies showed that Messiah should die, and showed this so plainly that there should have been no misunderstanding on the part of the Jews. But it is very easy to be wise after the event, as has been said to-day, and Christendom is living in a very fragile house of glass if it throws stones of reproach at the Jews for overlooking even such plainly stated prophecies as those of Isaiah and Daniel. Christendom needs to examine itself, whether it be in the faith, and great would be the astonishment in many quarters at the result of such an examination; for it has become true of Christendom, as it was of Judaism, that their fear toward God is taught by the precepts of men, and not by the truth of the sure Word. In Christendom, as in Judaism, tradition has been allowed to supersede truth.

Other plain prophecies than the above of Messiah's death could be referred to, besides which the words of the Saviour Himself might be cited, but the above will suffice as specimens.

Action Prophecies—The Sin Offering

Besides these prophecies in words, there were prophecies of Messiah's death continually being enacted in the rites of sacrifice at the altars in tabernacle and temple. Failure to apprehend the import of these ceremonies was perhaps not as surprising as the failure to understand the prophecies in plain words. Yet a Jew, meditating on these sacrifices for sin might have come to the conclusion that their constant repetition argued that sin had not been taken away*; else where were the need for the same sacrifices to be offered again, and yet again? This is the conclusion expounded in Heb. 10: 2-4.

But the Jews must have been culpable for their failure to apprehend the meanings of these sacrifices, because they were alluded to in the spoken word. Isaiah said—

"Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." "He bare the sin of many." "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isa. 53: 10, 12, 6.

These words undoubtedly allude to the prophecy that was acted on the great Day of Atonement, when the national offering for sin was made. The full description of this ceremony is given in Lev. 16. The animals that appeared most prominently in this service were one bullock and two goats.

* By the yearly offering of bullocks and goats the sins of the Israelites were taken away for the time being, but only for the purposes of the Covenant, which Covenant as repeatedly condemned them afresh, as may be seen in the fact that the sacrifices had to be repeated.—Lev. 16: 30; Heb. 10: 1-4.

The bullock and one of the goats were slain as offerings for the sins of priesthood and people respectively. (Lev. 16: 6, 11, 15.) This, according to the prophet, was fulfilled by Messiah, in that His soul was made "an offering for sin," and was "poured out unto death."

The other goat was not slain, but the high priest confessed over him all the sins and iniquities of the children of Israel for the past year. Thus figuratively laden, the live goat bore away these transgressions into the wilderness. (Lev. 16: 21, 22.) This, according to the prophet, was fulfilled by Messiah in that Jehovah "laid on him the iniquity of us all," and "he bare the sin of many."

Thus we have in the Old Testament a plain explanation foretelling that Messiah in His own person was to accomplish the atonement for and carrying away of sin, which the sacrifices of bulls and goats only made remembrance of. The New Testament corroborates this. John the Baptist pointed to Jesus as the one that should bear away the sin of the world (John 1: 29); while John the Apostle speaks of Him as the One who is the propitiation for the sins of all.—1 John 2: 2.

The Passover

Another acted prophecy of Messiah's death was the killing of the Passover lamb. The instructions for this service are given in Ex. 12, and some of the details are mentioned in other parts of the Old Testament. The result of this service was to preserve the firstborn of the children of Israel from the destroying angel that passed over Egypt, and to deliver the whole of the nation—firstborn and others—from the bondage of Egypt. The annual observance of this feast as subsequently practised under divine command was to commemorate the great deliverance wrought on the first occasion.

The New Testament explicitly identifies Jesus, the Messiah, as the antitype of the Passover lamb by (1) direct reference to one of the details of the feast and (2) by use of the word "Passover" in speaking of our Savior's death.

(1) When Jesus and the two thieves had hung for several hours on the crosses the Pharisees desired that they might be killed, in order that the bodies hang not on the crosses over the following day, which would be the Sabbath. When the soldiers came to execute the commands of Pilate, they broke the legs of the two thieves, but coming to Jesus, and finding Him dead already, "they brake not his legs."

"And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."—John 19: 31-36.

The Scripture thus fulfilled is found in Ex. 12: 46, where it was commanded that not a bone of the Passover lamb should be broken, and a reference to this is made in Psalm 34: 20.

(2) "For even Christ [Messiah] our passover is sacrificed for us." (1 Cor. 5: 7.) Thus again is the Jewish ceremony shown to have been a prophecy of Messiah's death.

The Covenant Sacrifice

This was offered in order that the Law Covenant might be formally ratified, some of its provisions having already gone into effect. The description of this ceremony is given in Ex. 24: 1-8, while we learn from Heb. 9: 18-20 that the blood used was that of "calves and goats." In this sacrifice, as in that of the Sin Offering, the distinction between the two classes—firstborn (whose place was afterward taken by the priestly tribe of Levi) and people—is emphasised by the use of the blood of the two sorts of animals, thus showing that both classes entered into the same covenant with God.

That the Covenant Sacrifice was a prophecy of the death of Jesus, the Messiah, is shown in Heb. 10: 9, 10—

"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

He takes away the first, the Law covenant and its sacrifices, that He may establish the second, the New Covenant, by the sacrifice of Himself, and so confers the New Covenant blessing of forgiveness of sins upon each one who forsakes

the world and the service of Satan to come unto God by Him. —John 14: 6; Eph. 2: 1-3; Acts 26: 18.

When instituting the Memorial Supper, our Savior, after blessing the cup, said—

"This is my blood of the new testament [covenant], which is shed for many for the remission of sins." "This do in remembrance of me."—Matt. 26: 28; Luke 22: 19.

Thus in a few words did our Lord indicate that His death was prophesied by the great national sacrifices of the Jews. Instead of memorializing the deliverance from Egypt, believers were henceforth to memorialize Him, showing forth His death till He come. (1 Cor. 11: 23-26.) Instead of sacrificing bullocks and goats on the tenth day of the seventh month as offerings for sin, believers should esteem His sacrifice, offered once for all when He offered up Himself, as the complete and ever efficacious sacrifice for the sins of all, so that, as the Holy Spirit witnesses, "there is no more offering for sin." (Heb. 7: 27; 10: 13.) Instead of looking back to Mt. Sinai, where law and people were sprinkled by Moses, the Mediator, to establish the Law Covenant between God on the one side and all the people of Israel on the other side, we who have believed in Him look back to the inauguration of the New Covenant, and to "Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." (Heb. 12: 22-24.) Therefore, "SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND ALL THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU." (Matt. 6: 33.)

Afterwards, when explaining some things about Himself to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, the Lord did not in any way seek to disparage the prevalent idea of a glorious Messiah, but He did rebuke them for overlooking so much that Moses and the prophets had written.

"O fools, and slow of heart to believe ALL that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ [the Messiah] to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"—Luke 24: 25-27.

The same rebuke is still appropriate to unbelieving Jews, and in some degree to many in Christendom. May it not apply to any of us? May we be ready to receive "ALL that the prophets have spoken?"

The Purpose of Messiah's Death

This has already been alluded to in the prophecies cited, "Not for Himself," but for others was Messiah to be cut off. Not as a penalty for sins of His own, but as an offering for our sins, was His spotless soul to be "poured out unto death." But the whole purpose of Messiah's death is stated in a few words by the Apostle—

"For Christ [Messiah] also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, THAT HE MIGHT BRING US TO GOD."—1 Peter 3: 18.

By "us" the Apostle shows that the "royal priesthood," to whom his letter is addressed (1 Peter 1: 2-5; 2: 9, 10), were before believing a part of the unjust and sinful race. There was a serious difference between God and us, and Jesus died on the cross that He might be the Mediator to effect the reconciliation (1 Tim. 2: 4-7) and bring us to God so that we might obtain mercy. (1 Peter 2: 10.) Notwithstanding this plainness of speech by the Apostle, there are those who dare to claim that they were never out of harmony with God in their minds, and therefore never needed the Mediator to

reconcile them to God. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe ALL that the prophets have spoken!"

When did Messiah Die?

We have already seen that Christ was crucified and that He died on a Friday, the day before the Jewish Sabbath. (John 19: 31; Luke 23: 52-54; Mark 15: 42.) It is also clear that this particular Friday, beginning at sunset Thursday, was, according to the Jewish calendar, Nisan 15, the day when the Passover Supper should be eaten, of which our Lord had partaken with the twelve just before His betrayal. And the lambs for this feast were killed on the Thursday afternoon (Nisan 14) before sunset.* Can the year of the Crucifixion be determined? On this point I shall read the interesting statement of Thomas Lewin, published in his book, "Fasti Sacri."

"In A.D. 33, the full moon of the vernal equinox, when the sun was in Aries, i.e., between 17th March and 17th April, was at Jerusalem on 3rd April at 5h. 12m. p.m."

"The 15th Nisan then was from sunset on 2nd April to sunset on 3rd April. The paschal sacrifices were killed the day before, i.e., on 2nd April, between noon and eventide, and the paschal supper was eaten the same evening. On what day of the week, then, did the 2nd of April fall in A.D. 33? We consult the Book of Almanacs and we there learn that 2nd April was a Thursday. This, then, agrees with the narrative of the New Testament, for the Evangelists tell us that the Crucifixion occurred on the day preceding the Sabbath, that is, on a Friday, and that the paschal supper was eaten the evening before, that is, on a Thursday. It is stated by Mr. Mann, in his Essay on the time of our Savior's Passion, that the paschal feast did not fall on a Thursday from A.D. 26 (exclusive) to A.D. 35 (inclusive) except in the year A.D. 33. What is the result? That the year A.D. 33, and no other, was the year in which our Savior was crucified."

"Can this date of our Lord's crucifixion be confirmed by any external testimony? We learn from the Evangelists, that on the day of our Lord's crucifixion occurred a supernatural darkness from 12 o'clock at noon to 3 p.m. Now Phlegon, a heathen writer, the author of the Olympiads, and who flourished in the reign of Adrian, records the fact of an eclipse of the sun at noon in the fourth year of the 202nd Olympiad. The fourth year of the 202nd Olympiad was from midsummer [June 21] A.D. 32 to midsummer A.D. 33, and on referring to the Table of Eclipses which will be found in "L'Art de Verifier les Dates," it will be observed that from midsummer A.D. 32 to midsummer A.D. 33, there was no natural eclipse of the sun. Phlegon, therefore, records what never happened, unless the occurrence mentioned by the Evangelists be true. If the Gospels be authentic, and if, as we have shown, the crucifixion of our Lord was at the Passover of A.D. 33, the Evangelists and Phlegon confirm each other."

Let us, dear friends, as we consider the prophecies of Messiah's death, both written and acted, and their wonderful fulfillment recorded in the New Testament, give thanks to God, who so loved us as to give His Son to die for us; and let us trust Him that with Jesus He will also freely give us all the good things He has promised.

—E. C. H.

* For further explanation, see "Advocate," Feb., 1912, page 167.

Prophecies concerning the Resurrection of Messiah, particularly, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." (Psalm 16:10.)

What is this "hell" in which Christ's soul was not left?

MORE THAN USUAL interest attached to this address, which was given on Easter Sunday afternoon. The weather was very boisterous, but the hall was nearly filled, and great interest—even to the extent of opposition by some—was taken by the listeners. This shows that the teaching of eternal misery for the unsaved still has a strong

hold upon the minds of many earnest Christian people, and fully justifies the wisdom of the special efforts that are being made to demonstrate the unscripturalness of the teaching that it is part of the divine purpose to torment some to all eternity. Let all take hold of the work and prosecute it with more energy than ever! Remember the darkness from which

you were delivered, and do what you can to deliver others from the same!

In connection with this topic, the Conference Program Committee sent out the following letter on March 11, 1912:—

Letter to Melbourne Ministers

"Dear Sir,—

"The Conference will D.V. be held this year in the Hall, 470 Bourke-street, Melbourne, and the general subject for the Conference is to be 'Messianic Prophecies.' Various speakers will discuss the details of this great subject in a manner that it is hoped will be both entertaining and profitable to all hearers.

"The subject appointed for Easter Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock is that grand Messianic Prophecy—'Thou wilt not leave My soul in Hell.' (Psalm 16: 10.) This is to be taken by Mr. E. C. Henningses, editor of 'The New Covenant Advocate,' and author of 'Bible Talks for Heart and Mind,' 'Everlasting Punishment,' and other works for Christian students. He will endeavour to show that the testimony of Scripture is against the teaching of eternal torment for the unsaved, and it is considered to be very timely that such effort should be made just now, since the subject of the penalty for sin bids fair to be a prominent one in Melbourne this year.

"Having this in mind, the program committee thought it would be interesting to the public and particularly helpful to Bible students to have the other side of this question presented at the same session (Easter Sunday afternoon, April 7), hence this letter, which is sent to all the Protestant ministers of Melbourne and suburbs whose addresses could be secured. If you believe that everlasting torment is the penalty for sin, you are hereby cordially invited to express your willingness to follow Mr. Henningses' address with one of equal length (45 minutes) in which you will set forth what seems to you to be the Scriptural evidence in favor of the doctrine of everlasting torment as the penalty for sin. After the two principal addresses, each speaker will be allowed another fifteen minutes for rebuttal.

"Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testaments is the only authority on the subject of the penalty for sin recognised by us, but any published version of the Scripture may be referred to.

"This invitation is directed to all ministers of standing in Melbourne and suburbs, and all Salvation Army officers ranking Captain or higher, and located in Melbourne and suburbs; but an acceptance from a Melbourne layman, endorsed by a Melbourne minister, would not be excluded from consideration.

"Early sending in of acceptances in writing is desired, as the program committee is to meet March 20 to complete its arrangements.

"Finally, the Committee does not wish it to be understood that you are invited to a debate, in the formal sense of that word, but rather to friendly interchange of thoughts on this most important Scriptural question which involves so much to so many. The acceptor of this invitation who shall be chosen by the Program Committee to take part will be considered our guest for the occasion, and is assured in advance of respectful attention."

This letter was sent to 373 addresses of Protestant ministers in Melbourne and suburbs. One was returned from the dead letter office; one was replied to by a retired minister who said that age and ill health hindered him; from the other 371 there was received absolutely no response, not even acknowledgment of receipt. It is not to be supposed from this that all the Protestant ministers have discarded the idea of eternal misery in one form or another for the wicked. The Program Committee therefore arranged that the time that had been placed at the disposal of the ministers should be occupied by Readings, with comments, from the writings of ministers who believed that "hell" was a place of torment, and who have attempted to describe their ideas thereof. The readings were duly given, but space will not permit us to reproduce them here; therefore our report is restricted to the discourse on the subject announced, in which it was attempted to show from the Scriptures what the "hell" is in which Christ's soul was not left.

Messiah not left in Hell

PROPHECIES concerning Messiah's death occupied our attention on Good Friday evening. This afternoon we are to consider something of the Scripture teaching concerning His resurrection. It is not our part at this time to consider the glory to which Christ was raised (that being otherwise provided for in the program), but the fact of His resurrection and, more particularly, that from which He was raised, namely, the "Sheol" in which His soul was not left.

Old Testament Predictions

In the Old Testament there are not many direct prophecies of Messiah's resurrection. Psalm 16: 10, our text, is perhaps one of the plainest spoken of the Old Testament prophecies on this subject. But Isaiah 53, wherein His death was clearly foretold, contains some statements that could not be understood otherwise than as referring to life for Him who died—

"When thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."—Isa. 53: 10.

It is manifest that the one who had died childless as the offering for sin (Isa. 53: 8) could not realize the blessings predicted unless He were raised from death. Again—

"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; BECAUSE he hath poured out his soul unto death."—Isa. 53: 12.

Here is a prediction that Christ's obedience unto death was to secure for Him a great reward; but it is quite clear that He must have been raised from death in order to receive the promised benefit. These statements by the prophet Isaiah must therefore be numbered among the prophecies of Messiah's resurrection.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the apostles were able after Pentecost to understand some of the Old Testament prophecies that were less direct on this subject than these already mentioned. Psalm 2: 7 and Isaiah 55: 3 are among this number.

"And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David."—Acts 13: 32-34.

These must be allowed for this time to suffice for the purpose of showing that Messiah's resurrection was foretold in the Old Testament, and we shall now proceed to the other part of the question—"What is this 'Hell' in which Christ's soul was not left?" The inquiry will be along two lines, one an attempt to define "hell" by the use of some other scriptural terms showing what Christ was raised from, the other an attempt to define "hell" by noting the Scriptures in which the word "sheol" employed in Psalm 16: 10 is used. Both these lines of inquiry lead to one end.

Christ's Soul not left in Death

Our first line of inquiry might be considered as sufficiently followed if we think of Isa. 53: 12—"He hath poured out His soul unto death," and that when the prophecy said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol," it was tantamount to saying, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Death." And so it is. But, since there is a great deal of evidence in the Scriptures on this point, it will be both interesting and helpful to read more of it.

"The Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the DEAD."—Acts 3: 15.

"Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the DEAD."—Acts 4: 10.

"But God raised him from the DEAD."—Acts 13: 30.

"We believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the DEAD."—Rom. 4: 24.

"He that raised up Christ from the DEAD."—Rom. 8: 11.

"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."—Rom. 10: 9.

"His [God's] mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the DEAD."—Eph. 1: 19, 20.

"And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the DEAD, even Jesus."—1 Thess. 1: 10.

"Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from DEATH."—Heb. 5: 7.

"Christ being raised from the DEAD dieth no more."—Rom. 6: 9.

"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the DEAD according to my gospel."—2 Tim. 2: 8.

From the foregoing it is seen that our Lord was brought back from DEATH, and the conclusion is easily reached that "Hell," in which His soul was not left, means "Death." This shows the falsity of the fearful tradition which has hidden so much truth from Christendom, and which still is believed by a great number of earnest people. The testimony of these texts is fully sustained by the text for the day which, after the frequent usage of Hebrew poetry, expresses its thought twice, using different terms.

"For thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol;
Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption."
—Psalm 16: 10.

In these lines, "my soul" in the first member of the sentence corresponds to "thy holy one" in the second; and "Sheol" in the first member corresponds to and is defined by "corruption" in the second member. This meaning is enforced by the inspired comment of the Apostle in Acts 13: 34, 35, where the last part of Psalm 16: 10 is quoted.

Texts containing the word "Sheol"

The word "Sheol" occurs sixty-five times in the Old Testament. Its Greek equivalent, "Hades," occurs eleven times in the New Testament. "Sheol" is translated, in the Authorized

Version, "grave" 31 times, "hell" 31 times, "pit" 3 times. "Hades" is translated "grave" once, "hell" 10 times, two of the latter being Acts 2: 27, 31, which, being quotations of Psalm 16: 10, show that the Greek word "Hades" is the equivalent of the Hebrew word "Sheol." As the word occurs so many times in the Scripture, it is obvious that we shall not be able to-day to refer to each of the places, but must select a few representative texts.

"In death there is no remembrance of thee:
In the grave ["Sheol"] who shall give thee thanks!"
—Psalm 6: 5.

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

While alive, God's people take pleasure in thinking upon His name, and the Lord takes pleasure in their thoughts of Him (Mal. 3: 16); but when they are dead, and in the grave ("Sheol"), they are not able to remember God's goodness nor to give Him thanks.

"Let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave ["Sheol"]!"—Psalm 31: 17.

If God's people cannot give Him thanks, neither can the wicked curse Him in "Sheol." Evidently it is a great mistake to suppose that "Sheol"—"Hell"—is constantly resounding with the shrieks and curses of the wicked dead. That doctrine should therefore be put away by all who love God and His Word.

"Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave ["Sheol"], whither thou goest."—Ecc. 9: 10.

All this and the foregoing being true, it must be evident to every one that "Sheol" means nothing more nor less than the grave, or the death state; it is a condition of absolute zero; and but for the divine promise of resurrection given because Christ died for our sins, and already illustrated in His case, "Sheol" would have an ever-enduring triumph over all our race. The identity of death with hell is further expressed by another prophet—

"Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell ["Sheol"], and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations, and heapeth unto him all people."—Hab. 2: 5.

And yet again—

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave ["Sheol"]; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."—Hosea 13: 14.

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave ["Hades"], where is thy victory?"—1 Cor. 15: 55.

"Sheol" not a place of "Departed Spirits"

In some quarters the idea is advanced that "Sheol" is a place divided into two compartments. They think that the disembodied spirits of the good dead are in the one compartment, not entered into their reward, yet conscious and able to enjoy themselves in the society of others there. The disembodied spirits of the wicked dead are supposed to occupy the other compartment. It is not supposed that these are suffering a full measure of torment, though it is understood by the believers of this theory that the wicked will be tormented everlastingly after the day of judgment. For all this elaborate theory there is not a scintilla of Scripture. All the texts already cited are clearly against the theory, and are doubtless sufficient; nevertheless, it will be interesting to read a few more portions, which seem specially adapted to overturn this device of man's imagination.

"And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him [Jacob]; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave ["Sheol"] unto my son [Joseph] mourning."—Gen. 37: 35.

"And he [Jacob] said, My son [Benjamin] shall not go down with you; for his brother [Joseph] is dead, and he is left alone; if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave ["Sheol"]."—Gen. 42: 38.

"And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave ["Sheol"]."—It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die; and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave ["Sheol"]."—Gen. 44: 29, 31.

From the standpoint of the theory now being examined, it would be expected that Joseph and Benjamin would be in the

"good" compartment of "Sheol," and that Jacob would ultimately be there too, and that he would have the society of these his best-loved sons continually. If that were true, why should Jacob go down to "Sheol" to his sons in sorrow and mourning? He should have gone down with the most joyful and pleasant anticipations, and with the light of gladness shining in his countenance. Evidently Jacob knew nothing of this modern theory about "Sheol," or he could not have spoken as he did about the prospect of being restored to the company of his favorite sons. Jacob's idea of "Sheol" was exactly that which we have already seen in other parts of Scripture, viz., that "Sheol" (hell) is a state of unconsciousness—"there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave ["Sheol"], whither thou goest."—Ecc. 9: 10.

Further Corroboration

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

At the time Job was praying in this manner, he was covered with boils from head to foot. To have one boil is bad, but to be covered with them must be unspeakable misery. Is it likely that Job would have prayed to be delivered from this misery to something indescribably worse? It is certain that Job's understanding of "Hell" would not agree with what some of our moderns think of it; and this is still further indicated in the following words concerning

Restful "Sheol"

"They shall go down to the bars of the pit ["Sheol"]
When our rest together is in the dust."
"There the wicked cease from troubling;
And there the weary be at rest.
There the prisoners rest together;
They hear not the voice of the oppressor.
The small and great are there;
And the servant is free from his master."—Job 17: 16; 3: 17-19.

But, even though "Sheol" provides rest from present unequal and often very burdensome conditions, this is not the rest that remaineth for the people of God. The "rest" in "Sheol" cannot be enjoyed, because those who have been swallowed up in death know nothing and can feel nothing. As stated before, "Sheol" corresponds to the absolute zero. It is death; and death came upon the race on account of the sin committed in Eden. (Rom. 5: 12.) But Christ Jesus by the grace of God tested death for every man; He therefore must needs enter "Sheol," the death condition. From this He was raised—not by His own power, for He had no power while dead—by the power of the Father, according to the testimony already cited. Having been raised from "Sheol," "Hades," or "Hell," He has now "the keys of hell ["Hades"] and of death." (Rev. 1: 18.) This signifies that He has the power and authority to call forth all that are in the graves, as He said He would do. (John 5: 28.) Those who have "done good" will enter at once into their reward, which they will be able to realise and enjoy. Those who have not done good will be otherwise dealt with in the day of judgment with a view to their learning the truth, obeying it, and also ultimately being delivered into the liberty of children of God. (Rom. 8: 19-21.) But I must not enter into details of the day of judgment, as it is to be taken up later in the day.

In conclusion, let me mention that the literal meaning of "Sheol" and "Hades" is the covered, hidden, or concealed state. The English word "Hell" had anciently the same meaning, as may be seen by reference to any unabridged dictionary of the English language. Some hundreds of years ago, this word and its derivatives were in ordinary use in England among agriculturists and mechanics. The farmer "helled" (modern "hilled") his growing crops of potatoes, beans, etc. Having gathered the harvest, he "helled" or buried or concealed the root crops in a pit, to preserve them from the winter frosts. The carpenter "helled" the house; that is, he covered it by putting a roof on it. It remained for theologians, preaching the love of God, to attach to the words "Sheol," "Hades," and "Hell" the thoroughly discreditable and totally unjustifiable meanings which make void what they would like to have men believe about the goodness of God and His love for us. Shall not we give thanks to God that in His goodness He has permitted us to see the truth on this tremendously important subject? Shall we not also show

our gratitude by something more than words, which are very, very cheap? Shall we not devote all our powers to His service, and use every opportunity to remove from the minds of men the awful misunderstandings prevalent concerning the character of God, who is Love in deed and in truth? A great privilege is ours, to speak on behalf of our very best Friend.

to put His character in the right light before the minds of men. A duty devolves upon us to give out the Truth far and wide, as our Lord commanded us. The privilege we gladly embrace, and the duty we shall, by His grace, do our utmost to perform. Amen.

—E. C. H.

Prophecies concerning Christ's Present Glory

THE GREAT THEME of the apostles' preaching, as recorded in the Acts, and the great subject of the various epistles is the resurrection and exaltation of our Lord, with all the consequences that it entails, both to the Church which is His body, and to the yet unbelieving world without. It is often said that all history leads up to and away from the cross, that from that supreme event all movements take their source. That is true, but it is well also to remember that the Cross of Christ, without the Resurrection to the right hand of God the Father, would have been nothing more than a glorious failure. Had Christ not risen from the dead, all men would yet be in their sins, there would be no Church, and there would be no hope in the future. "He was delivered for our offences," says Paul, "and he was raised again for our justification." (Rom. 4: 25.) And in 1 Corinthians 15 he expounds this truth:—

"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. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."

And this is not all.

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."—1 Corinthians 15: 22-26.

The Christ we worship and trust in for salvation is not a dead martyr, nor a religious teacher, but a living Lord, who is with us always, and to whom has been given all authority in heaven and on earth. We give thanks unto the Father, "who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. 1: 13.) Here we have something which no other than Christianity can offer us—salvation in a personal Saviour, discipleship of a personal Lord and Master.

"Sit Thou on My Right Hand"

Of His life and ministry on earth the Gospels treat from several standpoints, so that we can view Him as the Jewish Messiah, the world's Saviour, the messenger of God, the great Exemplar. After His departure from earth His disciples began to announce His new position as Lord and Christ (Acts 2: 36), exalted to the right hand of God the Father. And at once we perceive that their message is firmly based on prophecy, and that they disclaim any intention of preaching contrary to those oracles of God which were so dear to the Jews. They "witnessed both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." (Acts 26: 22, 23.) Turn again to Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 32-36): "David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord [Jehovah] 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." The prophecy is found in Psalm 110, one of the clear prophetic Psalms which carefully distinguishes the coming King from Jehovah Himself, making him an associate in the throne, as our Lord Himself explained: "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.

This is the very prophecy with which our Lord confounded the Pharisees, as recorded in Matt. 22: 41-46, and it is quoted again in the first chapter of Hebrews, as showing the infinite superiority of Christ to the angels. (Heb. 1: 13, 14.) Thus

there is clear proof that this prophecy has found its fulfilment in the ascension and exaltation of Christ, who is now reigning as King, a Prince, and a Saviour.—Acts 5: 31.

"Jehovah and His Anointed"

Take another important prophecy which treats of the exaltation of our Lord, and which is bound up with important questions of the interpretation and scope of prophecy. Read Psalm 2, and note the vivid and emphatic language. In v. 2 we have again the distinction of persons, "Against the Lord, and against His anointed;" this is worth observing, because we do not find it so clear in all the prophecies. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine [or meditate] a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." Before going further, turn to the beginning of the fulfilment, as given in Acts 4: 23-30. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done." The reference here is to the crucifixion of Christ, in which all were implicated, Jews and Gentiles, rulers and priests. But this is not all. "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings." Resistance to the truth and persecution of its bearers still continues, and is as much rebellion against the Lord and His Anointed, as the slaying of Christ Himself was. Thus He warned His disciples: "They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake." (Luke 21: 12.) And, again, when the glorified Lord met Saul on his errand of slaughter, He said to him, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." (Acts 9: 5.) That the authority of the risen Christ extends not only over the chosen people, but over all the nations of the earth is plainly stated in prophecy, and is the acknowledged teaching of the New Testament. It will be sufficient to refer to Romans 14: 9:—"To this end Christ both died and rose and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living," and to the several prophecies quoted in Romans 15: 10-12: e.g., "There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles: in him shall the Gentiles trust."

Reading on in the Psalm, notice the keen sarcasm of the declaration, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Jehovah is King of all the earth, He removeth kings and setteth up kings (Psa. 47: Dan. 2: 21); for all the mutterings and opposition of the kings and rulers of earth He has anointed His own king, and He shall reign. They may persecute and seek to destroy His subjects here on earth, and may endeavour to suppress and exterminate His Word, which convicts them of sin and righteousness and judgment, and is mighty to the pulling down of strongholds, but they can avail nothing against the might of Him who is "Ruler of the kings of the earth." (Rev. 1: 5, R.V.) The gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church (Matt. 16: 18), and the word of the Lord abideth for ever.—1 Pet. 1: 24, 25.

"Thou art My Son"

Passing on, we find the speaker changed. The king, established in his kingdom, declares the decree: "Jehovah hath said

unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Turning to Acts 13: 32, 33, we find the fulfilment once more in the resurrection of Jesus. "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee." And again in the first chapter of Hebrews, to which we will presently return. And the moral of all this is: "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

We will now examine that wonderful opening chapter of Hebrews, in which the prophecies are brought forward to prove to Jewish Christians the unbounded superiority of Christ, the Son, to all that went before Him and to the angels of God who are mentioned with the winds and flames of fire which are sometimes used as messengers. (v. 7.) We have already examined two prophecies quoted here, and there are still other important ones.

Heir of All Things

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds: who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, 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 more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son!"

This latter prophecy is taken from the promise given to David (2 Sam. 7: 12-16), concerning his son Solomon who should be established in the kingdom. "He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever." The reference is primarily to Solomon, but onwards to all the successors of David; ultimately, owing to their wickedness, the throne of Israel was overturned (Ezekiel 21: 25-27), till He should come whose right it was. First the ten tribes were rent away from the line of David, and given to Jeroboam (1 Kings 11: 11-13, 31-32), then these were carried away into Assyria (2 Kings 17: 18-23), and finally Judah also was sent into captivity, under the hand of the Gentiles. Through all it remained the throne of David, and the throne of the Lord, and when Christ came, it was given to Him. This was the announcement made by the angel to Mary: "He 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 there shall be no end."—Luke 1: 32, 33.

Continually in the prophecies the coming One is designated as a branch of David's house, a rod out of the stem of Jesse. (Isaiah 11: 1.) "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." (Jer. 23: 5.) The throne of the Lord, on which David sat, was now to spread its jurisdiction over the whole earth—

"God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—Acts 17: 30, 31.

"A more Excellent Name"

But the relationship of Father and Son was still retained, and it was into this great title that our Lord entered on His resurrection and exaltation. The importance of this title is shown by its description here as "a more excellent name," no doubt also in Phil. 2: 9: "God hath highly exalted him and

given him the name which is above every name." (R.V.) So also in 1 John 4: 15—"Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God," and 1 John 5: 5—"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" It is not that He was not the Son of God before, but, as Paul explains: "He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared [for determined] to be the Son of God WITH POWER, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."—Romans 1: 3, 4.

Again, the name of Son is closely associated with the office of High-Priest to which our Lord Jesus was appointed after His resurrection. Thus we read in Hebrews 5: 5, 6—"So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." The Christ, as man, being sprung from Judah and not from Levi, could not be a priest after the order of Aaron, but, as Son of God, He was made a priest after the order of Melchizedek, "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life."—Hebrews 7: 14-17.

In Hebrews 1: 6 we meet a prophecy which does not appear in our Hebrew Bible, the nearest approximation being found in Psalm 97: 7—"Worship him, all ye gods." The identical words are, however, found in the Septuagint version of Deut. 32: 43, at the close of the song of Moses, although they do not appear in any shape in the Hebrew version. The time of the fulfilment is rendered ambiguous by the rendering of v. 6 in the Authorised Version. The marginal reading has better support, and is adopted by the Revised Version. "When he again bringeth in the firstborn into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him." In this connection, we meet with the characteristic property of many prophecies, that they do not clearly distinguish either persons or times. Whichever passage be the one here quoted, the reference is to Jehovah Himself; but we must not infer from this, as some have done, that Jesus is identical with the Jehovah of the Old Testament. The previous prophecies we have studied should have rendered such a mistake impossible, even without the plain teaching of the New Testament, given in such passages as 1 Cor. 11: 3—"I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God;" in our Lord's own words to Mary at the empty tomb, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God" (John 20: 17); and in the grand prophecy of final triumph, 1 Cor. 15: 28, R.V.—"And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all." The doctrine of the equality of the Father and the Son could scarcely be given the lie more direct than it is in the passage last quoted. It constitutes an emphatic denial of the false teaching that the Father and the Son are equal in power and glory, as well as the further development of the doctrine of a Trinity of equal persons, on a basis of heathen philosophy, and on the analogy of the degraded religions of India and Egypt.

Jehovah and Christ

Some other examples may be given of the application to Christ of passages which in the Old Testament refer to Jehovah. In Psalm 68: 18 we read—"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men," where there is no apparent reference to anything but God's dealings with Israel. Yet it is quoted in Eph. 4: 7, 8 as referring to the ascension of Christ and the grace given to men according to the measure of the gift of Christ. There is another very familiar instance, which may serve also to point a lesson. One of our Lord's most used and most beautiful titles is that of Shepherd. He spoke of Himself as the good shepherd, who lays down His life for the sheep, and in Hebrews 13: 20 He is described as "The Great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant." Now, in the favourite 23rd Psalm, the "Lord" spoken of is Jehovah, "Jehovah is my shepherd, I shall not want," although I suppose Christians in repeating it as in the English versions almost invariably think of Jesus, not the Father. This fact should be a help to some to realise that God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, was never and is not now a stern tyrant, needing to be prevailed upon by Jesus before He will suffer any to escape from wrath. That idea has been prevalent in the past, and its effects still linger in a disposition to

refer all thoughts of kindness and gentleness and love to Jesus, the Son, and all thoughts of judgment and terror and wrath to Jehovah. The truth is, it was "the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man," which was "shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Titus 3: 4-6), and on the other hand we need only to read the Revelation to perceive that our Lord can be a stern and unbending judge and opponent of sinful men. The Father and the Son work harmoniously together in the plan of salvation: "I and my Father are one," and it was the prayer of the Son that His Church might likewise be one: "That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."—John 17: 22, 23.

The King of Glory

Just one more example of a familiar term applied both to Jehovah and to Christ. In Psalm 24, "Who is the King of Glory? Jehovah of Hosts, he is the King of Glory," and in Acts 7: 2 Stephen speaks of the God of glory who appeared unto Abraham. But in the New Testament Christ is the Lord of glory, who was crucified by the princes of the world. (1 Cor. 2: 8; Jas. 2: 1.) In all these cases we observe that the prophetic application is not apparent in the prophecies themselves; and we should no more dream of identifying Jesus with Jehovah because of the prophetic application than we should of identifying Jesus with David or with Moses. Under the old Covenant Jehovah is the prominent one, and there is no god beside Him; to Him all praise and all glory are ascribed, and Him only should men worship. The Messiah is one to come in the future, and, if he does appear at all, it is as the angel of Jehovah's presence, scarcely distinguished from the actual presence of Jehovah Himself. But, on the exaltation of the Son to His Father's throne, all judgment was committed unto Him, "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which sent him" (John 5: 22, 23), and it was proclaimed: "Let all the angels of God worship him." This great truth, that the Son is henceforth associated with the Father as the object of worship and adoration is confirmed by Phil. 2: 9-11.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him the 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."

Also Rev. 5: 13, 14 (R.V.): "And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped."

Messiah's Glory as Mediator

We have now studied many prophecies depicting the Messiah as King, "far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. 1: 21, R.V.), and as exercising His great power as "Ruler of the kings of the earth." (Rev. 1: 5, R.V.) Incidentally we have seen Him foretold as Judge, as Shepherd, as Priest, as Saviour. Now, remembering that He was also foretold as "the Prophet like unto Moses," and was identified as such by Peter (Deut. 18: 15-19; Acts 3: 19-26), we may learn something more by comparing Him with Moses, who was the leader and law-giver of the children of Israel at their entrance into national life. "Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together." ((Deut. 33: 4, 5.) It was Moses who inaugurated them into the covenant with God, reading to them all the words of the law, and then confirming the covenant with the blood of calves and of goats. In all these respects he foreshadowed Christ, who instituted a New Covenant, ratifying it by His own blood, and who gave to His disciples the law of love. This New Covenant was foretold through the prophet Jeremiah, proving that the old one was not faultless, and relegating it to the prospect of decay and abolition. (Hebrews 8: 6-13.) Under it a continual repetition of sacrifices was necessary, and yet they could never take away sins nor purify the worshippers. But Christ, the Mediator of the

New Covenant, having "offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin."—Heb. 10: 12-18.

As High Priest

Moses was not a priest in Israel, that is, he was not appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins, nor permitted to enter the sanctuary, but it was under his direction that the tabernacle was built, and the initial rites of Consecration were performed by him. (Exod. 25: 31.) His brother Aaron was associated with him as his mouthpiece, and after the ratification of the covenant Aaron was installed as high priest, with his sons to succeed him. Thus the offices of Ruler and High-priest were separated until they became reunited in Christ. But Christ was not a priest under the law, serving unto the example and shadow of heavenly things (Heb. 8: 4, 5); He was not a priest on earth at all, but a priest set down at God's right hand, as foretold in Psalm 110. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. . . . The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." The seventh chapter of Hebrews is devoted to proving the superiority of this priesthood to that of Aaron, and the allied superiority of the covenant which he instituted. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." (Heb. 8: 6.) This more excellent ministry is described in chapter 9, being compared with the unavailing and continuous rites of the law. By His one sacrifice, He has put away sin, and His blood avails to purge the conscience from dead works. And that men may receive this blessing He has become the mediator of a New Covenant, "that, by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."—Heb. 9: 14, 15.

By the separation of the typical offices we are better enabled to perceive their scope and importance, and to realise the greatness of Him who fills them all in their grander and more extensive character. Their union in Christ, "the Apostle and High Priest of our profession" (Heb. 3: 1), was foretold in Zechariah 6: 9-13.

"Take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua, the son of Josedech, the high priest; and speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

Just in the same way we are helped to see the various aspects of our Lord's sacrifice by the typical separation of the pass-over, the covenant sacrifice, and all the sin-offerings and thankofferings. The shadows of the law all pointed to the one great sacrifice on Calvary; and the prophecies all centre round the one great figure of the Messiah. But when we seek to discover the details of our Lord's work during this present time, we are met by the difficulty that the prophecies do not distinguish between the work of the Gospel and of the Kingdom age. We may be sure of this, that the work of Christ as Mediator, King, Judge, and Priest extends over both ages, and we also know that a special work is being done now in gathering out a people for His name, to be associated with Him in the continuation of the work. This is the calling of the present age, as we read, "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Thess. 2: 13, 14.

Christ our All In All

The Jews failed to appreciate the distinction in time between the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. They knew that Christ must reign on earth, and, to reconcile

the thought of His death with this, some suggested that there were two Messiahs, one to reign and one to die; while others claimed that the Jewish nation itself in its sufferings was fulfilling the prophecies of a suffering Messiah. There are many prophecies still awaiting their sure fulfilment, and we would do well to be careful in our consideration of them that we do not neglect any in an endeavor to assign their fulfilment to one time or even period. And if this study has enabled us to appreciate perhaps a little more than we did before what a glorious Saviour we have, it will have served its purpose of glorifying the word of the Lord. To the Christian his Lord is all in all; when he falls into sin, Christ is the propitiation; when he wishes to approach the throne of grace, Christ is the high-priest and the advocate, one who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; when he hesitates or strays, Christ is the shepherd to guide and protect; when enemies threaten, Christ is the reigning King with power over the nations.

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but

delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea more, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

"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 our Lord."—Romans 8: 31-39.

Truly, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."—Rev. 5: 12. Amen.

—G. S.

Prophecies concerning the Second Advent and the Judgment Day

THIS SUBJECT being a large one, we shall confine ourselves to one or two aspects of it only, and much that would be essential to its wider consideration must be taken for granted.

We must be agreed that the Lord has been once, before we could speak of His second coming. On these two matters Christians generally are agreed, and it is not at all difficult to demonstrate their scripturalness.

The Old Testament prophecies consist largely of references to both the First and Second Advents. The facts of the New Testament testify the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies concerning the First Advent, while the prophecies of the New Testament are mainly allusions to the Second Advent. Secular histories obtainable which deal with the period of the First Advent add their weight of testimony to the Biblical records.

We should have no difficulty therefore in accepting the Old Testament prophecies or the New Testament facts concerning the First Advent, and faith should be stimulated in the same Scriptures when they say there is to be a Second Advent.

In respect of both *time* and *substance*, the predictions of the First Advent have been most faithfully fulfilled. And so we may believe all that is said of the Second Advent, both in respect of *Time* and *Substance* will also come to pass.

At the First Advent the Saviour vanquished the great Arch Enemy as for Himself, and laid the foundation for the work of the Second Advent.

The Second Advent will completely undo all the destructive work of the Adversary in the earth in the hearts and minds of men.

Thus we discern that the Second Advent is designed for the purpose of finishing the great work of the First Advent. It is but a *phase* of the Saviour's work, as the first has been, and as the intermediate work of taking out from among the Gentiles a people for his name now is.

In limiting ourselves, then, to a few features of the Second Advent, we observe first that there are three prominent points which characterise it, and these three points mark the boundaries of two spaces of time.

(1) The moment He arrives would necessarily give the first point. That this is to be a secret is well advised in the Scriptures; that it will be kept so for quite a length of time seems also to be well indicated.—1 Thess. 5: 2; 2 Pet. 3: 10.

(2) But the secrecy of His Presence is not always to remain. We have it clearly established in both Testaments that He is to be "revealed" to the eyes of all—even of the dead, who are to be raised that they may "see" Him. Then the secrecy of His presence will have gone, for "every eye shall

see him."—2 Thess. 1: 17; Lu. 17: 30; Dan. 12: 1; Rev. 1: 7.

(3) After this revelation will come, in the course of time, the end of his reign, or his "day," and the great work designed to be accomplished by his second coming will have been completed.—1 Cor. 15: 24-28.

The first space of time—between the moment of his arrival and his revelation—is therefore to be the secret period of his presence. The second space—between the time of his revelation and the end of his reign—will be characterised by the fullest knowledge of the fact of his presence. Some "eyes" will "see" him before his revelation, but this will not be the rule.—1 Thess. 5: 4-6.

Signs of His Presence

A point of interest attaching itself to our Lord's return is its *manner*. A right understanding of this important feature is essential if we desire to know the day of our visitation.

Failure to appreciate rightly the manner of the First Advent brought upon the Jews an overwhelming calamity—"wrath to the uttermost" (1 Thess. 2: 16)—so that instead of their hopes, for a place of power and authority in the earth under the leadership of their Messiah, being realised, their nation was utterly destroyed and the people themselves underwent untold sufferings and miseries which have endured unto this day.

None of these things would have happened unto them, we are told, had they but known the day of their visitation, and ordered their conduct accordingly toward the Great Personality who was present amongst them then.—Matt. 3: 5-12.

And the Jews should have known their day of visitation. The sacrifices of their law should have pointed out to them that the real Sin-Bearer must suffer and die; and attention is on many occasions drawn in their Scriptures to the humility of His birth and life. Even the birthplace of their Messiah was foretold, and they must often have read of it.

Further, the great signs and wonders attending His ministry were all foretold, and that generation were witnesses of these things, and they should have perceived that in Him all the Messianic prophecies were fulfilled.

There were Signs in those days of His Presence. But they were not keen in their search for truth. They preferred to fall into the traditional beliefs of their fathers, being an easier course, and without independent inquiry they accepted theories of the First Advent of Messiah which were inconsistent with the Scriptural accounts.

And so it is at the present. Many erroneous ideas are held by Christians respecting the manner of His Second Coming,

so that to them His arrival and presence will not be understood.

The basis of these misconceptions lies in failure to appreciate our Lord's heavenly condition. As they believe He is still a human being, or partly so, and therefore fleshly, or partly so, since His resurrection, that estate implies the immediate visibility of His Person to all the living when He arrives.

Many have been driven to strange acts, which, however, are consistent with the ideas held in regard to this manner of His return.

Comparatively modern history records that many on certain dates have watched the skies expecting to see them cleave asunder and the Lord and all His holy angels appear to their sight. And the view that He will come in this way is still held by many.

Others again have determined that He will appear in Palestine in the flesh at His Second Advent; and, believing in the imminence of His return, they are there in expectation of Him.

This Same Jesus

In support of the view that Jesus is still a human being, the words of Acts 1: 11 are sometimes taken—

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

But it must be observed that it is not here *stated* that Jesus is a human being, nor is it, on the other hand, stated that He is a Spirit being. Nothing at all is said about His nature. The statement of the angels on this occasion merely referred to the fact of His *identity*. It was not necessary for the angels to tell the disciples that the body in which they saw Him go was not His real post-resurrection body; they knew that. They knew that these bodies had been used at different times in order that they might see Him with their natural eyes. Yet Jesus appearing in the flesh after His resurrection and Jesus in His real Spirit body were the same identity. Whichever way He appeared, or as He was at His disappearance, He was the same Jesus who was once a babe in Bethlehem, and who, before that, was with the Father in glory. They were quite sure that the resurrected Jesus was the One who had died, and now as they saw Him go into the heavens they were assured by the angels that He, the same Jesus, would return again. And it seemed necessary to tell the disciples this, for while they had seen Him *ascend* in human form, it was not His purpose to *return* in that way. Yet at the return it would be the same Jesus.

That our Lord since His resurrection is no longer a human being or has the slightest degree of humanity in His nature is made plain in many of the apostolic writings.

John the Apostle, for example, who of all the twelve was the most intimate with our Lord, and who was witness of His appearances after His resurrection, did not know what the resurrection body of our Lord was like; he had never seen it. Yet he saw the Lord. Some years after the Ascension, he writes:—

"It 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."—1 John 3: 2.

A more literal rendering of the passage is: "It was not yet made manifest what we shall be; not yet made manifest; *not yet*."

It is to be understood from this and many other Scriptures that believers during this age are to be at the resurrection "like Him;" then they shall "see Him as He is." And John is here telling the believers that he could not give them any idea of what they were to be like, for he did not know what Jesus was like. It was "not yet made manifest." Yet John was present at the Ascension; and if the body in which Jesus ascended were His real resurrection body, then most certainly it would have been made manifest what the believers would be like, for John *would* have seen Him as He is. But the Apostle assures us that we shall not see Him as He is until "He shall appear," that is, at the Second Advent.

But the Scriptures which are said to "thoroughly furnish" the believer do not leave us to deduce whether our Lord in His heavenly place is flesh or not by a process of reasoning.

Rather, the last grain of doubt, if we have any, on this important matter, is set aside if we are willing to take what the Apostles, under inspiration, SAY about it.

The Apostle Peter in his first letter (3: 18) says: "He was put to death flesh: he was made alive spirit." This is a plain declaration that when He was made alive at His resurrection He was a Spirit being.

The Apostle Paul, in his great letter to the Corinthians, in which he deals with the subject of the resurrection, after saying that the first Adam became a living soul (that is, a human being), who first gave life to the race, institutes a contrast between him and the last Adam—the Lord from heaven—who, he says, is not a human being, but a "life-giving SPIRIT." The first Adam was a life-giving *human being*; the last Adam a life-giving *Spirit*.

In view of these considerations, we are bound to conclude that the "manner" of Acts 1: 11, in which he ascended, has no reference to the body in which they saw him go, but refers to something else.

The text tells us that the manner in which He went is the manner in which He is to come again.

If we look at some Scriptures which plainly describe the manner of His return, they will leave us without any doubt as to what is intended by the manner of Acts 1: 11.

All these Scriptures say that He will return quietly, stealthily, without commotion, while all the world is unaware of the fact. And was not this *precisely* the manner of His going?

The absence of anything like a demonstration was the striking fact of the Ascension. There was no noise, no commotion, no blowing of trumpets, loud shouts, or the sound of a great voice; no earthquakes, whirlwinds, or fires. The whole land of Palestine and the city of Jerusalem were ignorant of the event, and were attending to their usual occupations.

That the conditions existing at the time of His arrival at the Second Advent will be of the same sort is fully confirmed.

Several illustrations are given in the Scriptures which should leave no doubt in the mind of the believer as to the manner of His arrival, and of all the circumstances of His presence after His arrival.

"The day of the Lord will come as a thief" (2 Pet. 3: 10)—that is, his day will begin at a time not expected—quietly, stealthily. As the householder being asleep at night does not see the thief come, so the world would not see the Lord come, nor be apprised of the fact at that moment. Paul the Apostle assures us of the same thing in much the same words.—1 Thess. 5: 2.

But the illustration of Matt. 24: 27 lends its force to the idea that the work which the returned Lord will be doing during the first period of his presence will call the attention of the children of light (Eph. 5: 8; 1 Thess. 5: 5; 1 Pet. 2: 9) to the fact that He has arrived—is present—

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west so shall also the presence of the Son of Man be."

When the sun rises he exercises his power and influence as far as his rays extend; the darkness is gradually and swiftly driven away until all that was characteristic of the night is gone, and what belongs to the day is ushered in.

The Son of Man during the days of His presence will exercise His power and authority over all the affairs of earth to the driving away of the darkness of ignorance, and the bringing in of the light of the full day.

The illustration which begins at vs. 37, however, shows that not many will believe the signs of the above named period as indicating the Saviour's presence, and consequently not many will know the nearness of the day in which He is to be revealed.

As the ark was a sign to the people in Noah's days before the flood, so there would be signs given in the Saviour's day before the disaster. As the people did not believe the sign in Noah's days, neither would they believe the signs in the Saviour's days, and *would not know* until the disaster came. Then the fact of His presence would be revealed. "Watch, therefore;" watch for the signs.

These illustrations, taken together, show that the secrecy of the Lord's presence would be due first to the manner of His arrival, and also to the unbelief of the people; while this plain Scriptural teaching becomes intelligible to us only when we recognise that other Scriptural fact; viz., that our Lord is now a Spirit being and cannot be seen by natural eyes.

The manner of His coming, therefore, is not in the flesh, for then He would be at once visible to every eye, whereas the Apostle says that but a few shall know that He is present, and even these shall not see Him with their natural eyes; they shall know by the "Signs."

"Ye brethren are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief," for ye are not the children of darkness,

ignorance, but are the children of light, and have the requisite knowledge on the matter—all that God is pleased to give.

The manner of His coming will not be with the literal blowing of trumpets, loud shouts, and the sound of a great voice, for then all the world would at once be aware of it, whereas it is said that He is coming quietly, noiselessly, as a thief in the night, and that the people will not know that He has come.

It is said that, "Every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1: 7), but it is not at all necessary that He should come in the flesh in order that all might be made aware of His presence.

For sixteen centuries the Jewish people were being prepared for the First Advent of the Messiah; and although on that occasion He came in the flesh, nationally speaking they

Did not see Him

And doubtless it will require something more than a fleshly appearance to convince the world now.

The WORKS that He did on the first occasion were an evidence of His presence amongst them; and the WORKS that He will do on the second occasion will be the most forceful and convincing evidence of His presence again. These shall cause every man to see with his understanding what even Christ's personal presence in the flesh might fail to convince them of, as it failed in the Jewish age, and the world need never expect to see Him actually; for He said shortly before His crucifixion—

"Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more."—John 14: 19.

The privilege of seeing Him "as He is" is reserved for those who at their resurrection shall be "made like Him."—1 John 3: 2.

That privilege again is reserved for those who are kept by the power of God through faith now, in this present life and during the Gospel age.—1 Pet. 1: 3-5.

From the time, then, of His arrival up to the time of His revelation the world will lie in ignorance of the fact that He is present.

Passing over the "signs" of this period, by which the faithful are to know of His presence, what are the signs of His revelation; what are the WORKS that He will do which will convince the sleeping world that He is present so that—

"Every Eye Shall See Him"

There will be plenty of trouble in the world, and much the same kind of trouble, all over it, before He is revealed; but there is a period of trouble spoken of in the Scriptures in which the Son of Man will be revealed—"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed . . . in flaming fire."—2 Thess. 1: 7, 8.

The signal for that particular period of trouble is when "Michael the Archangel" "stands up"—

And at that time shall Michael stand up . . . 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.

Prophetic Symbols

All the great disturbances and commotions with which we are familiar in nature are used as symbols of this time of trouble in which the Lord Jesus is to be revealed.

It is the "Battle of that great Day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16: 14; 19: 15-21; Isa. 13: 4); when He shall "smite the nations" and "tread them in the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

It is a "great Earthquake," "such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great," which shall shake not only the earth, but also heaven.—Rev. 16: 18; Heb. 12: 26.

It is the Fire of "the Day of God," wherein the "heavens being on fire shall be dissolved;" in which the "earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up."—2 Pet. 3: 10, 12.

It is a Whirlwind and a Storm.—Rev. 7: 1-3; Nah. 1: 2.
It is a Tempest of Hail, a Flood of mighty waters.—Rev. 16: 21; Isa. 28: 2; Nahum 1: 4, 5, 8.

And in this day of symbolical storms, and burnings, and earthquakes, and whirlwinds, and tempests of hail, and floods of mighty waters, all the

Systems which Govern Society

—the Political, Ecclesiastical, Commercial, and Social, shall go down like a great millstone cast into the sea. God will not spare them, nor any part of them.

From this point of time the present "order of things" will have gone, and it is the Lord's purpose to set up a new order under the rulership of His Son.

And the people? Will they all be destroyed also when the old social order and ruling powers go down? No, the Prophet Daniel shows by his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream that when, after the four universal empires represented in the image have been thrown down and blown away as the chaff, the Kingdom of God is set up in the earth, the people will still be there. It is the beastly governments of this world which are to be put out of office by the Kingdom of God and its great Ruler, while the people remain to be reigned over, enlightened and blessed; for a "river of water of life" flows out from the throne, and whosoever will may come and take of the water of life freely.—Dan. 2: 44, 45; 7: 26, 27; Rev. 22: 1, 17.

This brings us in a natural way to the period of His presence after His revelation, and in this we shall see particularly what is—

The Purpose of His Second Advent

All that has transpired up to this time, the "time of His revelation," has been designed to the end that the purpose of the succeeding portion of His reign might come to pass.

For He is coming in order to cause God's will to be done on earth as in heaven; therefore the will of man and all the outgrowths of it as represented by the various systems must first be overthrown.—Matt. 7: 10.

He is coming to abolish death completely; therefore all the dead, small and great, must be raised.—2 Tim. 1: 10; Rev. 20: 11, 12.

He is coming to bestow on all the willing and obedient the more abundant life; therefore that which makes life less abundant, viz., SIN, must be put an end to.—John 10: 10.

(1) During this period all men shall be taught the wisdom of submitting their own wills to the will of God.

(2) The Great and Mighty Ruler of that time, invested with all power and authority, shall call forth the millions of the dead from the grave.—John 5: 28, 29.

(3) He will so exert His power and authority in the eradication of sin that men will not dare to oppose Him.

If any should do so it will be with the full knowledge of the penalty, "everlasting destruction," etc.—2 Thess. 1: 8, 9.

And if the people are to experience a time of severity in his dealings with them,

So also shall they experience the beauty and the joys of His love;

They shall early begin to realise something of the sweetness of knowing Him.

And this knowledge shall be increased and the work go on until the race is perfected, when it shall be delivered up to the Father, that God may be all in all.

And the grand work of the Second Advent will be finished.

The Judgment Day

The Second Advent is a time of judgment. God Himself is Judge or Ruler of the Universe, and all things are subject unto Him, whether for approval and blessing or for condemnation and destruction.

The title "Judge," as used in ancient times among the Israelites, was equivalent to the modern terms "ruler" and "king;" so when our Lord said (John 5: 22, 23) that "the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father," He meant the disciples to understand that He was the king or ruler promised in the prophets, to whom all honor and obedience must be rendered by mankind.—Phil. 2: 9-11; Rev. 19: 16.

And, as already explained in the preceding address, our Lord Jesus was exalted to His present position of Judge or Ruler of all, as well as Prophet and High Priest, at His resurrection. Consequently His Second Advent marks, not the beginning of His reign, but rather a more positive and visible interference with the affairs of the earth, and the association of His Bride with Himself to reign with Him the thousand years of the kingdom age.—Rev. 20: 4.

Being the Judge of all, the necessity of a resurrection is implied of all those who have gone into the grave; for they also are His subjects, whom He died to purchase from death,

and therefore must receive the benefits of His righteous reign.

These benefits will consist in being brought to an exact knowledge of the truth concerning Jesus as the one Mediator between God and men, and concerning what is required of them if they would receive eternal salvation at His hands.—1 Tim. 2: 4-7.

Faith in and obedience to the great Prophet, Priest and King of that day will in the end bring them to their reward.

And our Lord Jesus is anointed to these sacred offices. (Isa. 61: 1.) As Prophet he will instruct, as High Priest he will bless and be merciful, as King he will rule. Thus the people will be assisted up to full life and perfection during his reign over them. And He will exercise the further function of the autocratic Ruler or Judge, to cut off from life all

who will not submit themselves after having had full enlightenment and opportunity.—Acts 3: 19-26; Rev. 21: 1-8.

Isaiah, the prophet, seeing the end of his reign, says—

"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."—Isa. 35: 10.

John, the Revelator, who saw the "new earth," said—"The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people . . . and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."—Rev. 21: 3, 4.

"Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow!"

—F. S.



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"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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The New Covenant Advocate

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Kingdom Herald

Vol. 4

MELBOURNE, LONDON, AND BROOKLYN, N.Y., JUNE, 1912

No 3

The Salvation of Zacchaeus

—Luke 19: 1-10.—

A BLIND MAN had been healed, and the Master was continuing His journey to Jericho. This Jericho was the successor—on a slightly different site—of the ancient city, the collapse of whose walls (Joshua 6) has so greatly roused the derision of the scoffer. The Jericho to which our Lord was journeying was the city rebuilt by Hiel of Bethel, who laid the foundation thereof at the cost of his first-born, and set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son, as the Spirit had foretold through Joshua, the destroyer of the ancient city. (Joshua 6: 26; 1 Kings 16: 34.) The second Jericho was also destroyed, probably by Vespasian, and the sites of both cities are now somewhat conjectural. Both were cities of wealth and importance.

As the Savior was passing through Jericho, Zacchaeus, the chief of the publicans (tax gatherers) and a rich man, greatly desired to see Him. Being of small stature, Zacchaeus overcame his disadvantage by climbing a sycamore tree which Jesus would pass. His wealth and position, dignity and reputation were all put aside by the eagerness of his desire to see the great Teacher and worker of miracles, for he probably felt unworthy to invite the Master to his house.

Jesus evidently knew what was in the mind of the little man, for on coming to the tree, He called to him to come down quickly, intimating that Zacchaeus would have the privilege of showing Him hospitality that day. Zacchaeus, overjoyed at the honor thus bestowed upon him, at once came down, and gladly received the Lord into his house.

As usual, there arose a great murmuring among those who saw Jesus going to be the guest of Zacchaeus. Only a short time before the time of this incident, our Lord had given a series of parables (Luke 15 and 16) on this very point, but the lesson so graphically given had not greatly impressed the hearers; at least, it did not stop their hostile criticism. Nevertheless, the Lord did not permit Himself to be moved from His steadfastness by the murmuring of the people. He was not come to do their will, but the Father's, yet He must have felt the hostility and

displeasure of His critics, while at the same time He was sorry for them and tried to show them the better way.

Zacchaeus' Stand

"But, taking his stand, Zacchaeus said unto the Lord, Behold! the half of my goods, Lord! to the destitute I give; and if, from anyone, I took anything by false accusation, I give back fourfold."—Luke 19: 8, Rotherham.

Whether Zacchaeus was here speaking of his habitual practice or of a resolution concerning what he was about to do, is not easy to determine from the above very literal reading of the text. He was one of the cordially hated class of men who took contracts for the collection of taxes and customs for the Roman government. The taxes and customs being farmed to the publicans for a given sum, they sought to make out of them as much as possible for themselves. The extortion practised by the publicans to attain their ends would bring upon them the hatred of any community; but in Judea and Galilee the circumstances were greatly aggravated by the fact that the Scribes and Pharisees generally held it to be wrong to pay any taxes whatsoever to Rome, and despised as traitors the Jews who took the office of publican or tax collector.

It is possible that Zacchaeus was not an extortioner, that he always took pains to right any mistakes that were made in his office, and that in his words to the Savior he was stating this as a fact. On the other hand, it has been thought that habitual carelessness and justice in the conduct of his work as tax gatherer would hardly require Zacchaeus to use the strong words "false accusation," in speaking of what could be no more than an unintentional mistake certain to be corrected; nor would such a mistake require four-fold restitution to salve the injury unwittingly and unintentionally done. It has therefore been held that Zacchaeus was by his words intimating to the Lord the effect that His ministry had had in this case, an effect so great as to cause him to devote half his goods to the poor, and to review the affairs of his office with the purpose of making ample amends for past wrongs. Whether Zacchaeus's words be viewed

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in the one light or the other, they were very pleasing to the Master, who expressed His approval.

But while reading of Zacchaeus giving the half of his goods to the poor, one is bound to think of the rich ruler who had come to Jesus but a short time before this, and had asked what he must do to inherit eternal life. The Lord told him to sell *all* that he had, and distribute to the poor. Why should the Master have commanded *all* in the case of the man who had been very good in respect to the ten commandments (Luke 18: 18-24), while He was pleased with *half* in the case of Zacchaeus, who made no such claims? Was the Lord partial? Was He willing to take advantage of the good young man's goodness, and tax him the more heavily? Did He have various standards to accommodate the various cases?

The answer is that the Lord had but the one standard, and He was not taking advantage of the good ruler nor letting Zacchaeus off comparatively lightly. The one standard is thorough devotion to the will of God—a giving up of all in recognition that all is the Lord's and that we are His stewards. But the Master knew what was in the people He was dealing with. (John 2: 24, 25.) He knew that the rich ruler set great store by his riches. Therefore it was necessary that he be severely tested in regard to his affection for God; was it greater than his love of his possessions? If he loved God more than he loved his wealth, he would be worthy of the Kingdom; if he valued his goods more than the approval of God, so that he would not part with all in order to gain the divine favor, the rich ruler, keeper of the commandments from his youth, would not be worthy of even the least place in the Kingdom. But Zacchaeus, the despised publican, voluntarily disposed of his great wealth. Half of his goods he gave of his own free will to the poor, and with some portion of the remainder he made four-fold restitution to any person from whom he had wrongly exacted aught. And then? No doubt the Lord was willing to trust this man who was voluntarily showing so good a spirit, knowing that when Zacchaeus had completed this disposition of his goods he would do right with whatever still remained.

The rich ruler, loving his life, would lose it; the rich publican, gladly receiving the Savior and giving up all, would find life eternal.

The Commendation

"And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—Luke 19: 9, 10.

Thus did our Lord justify in the minds of His critics His merciful words to the publican. Sinner though he may have been, he is now repentant; and, "forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham," it is right that salvation be extended to him, for the Son of man is come to seek and to save the lost of Israel. But if our Lord's words justify the extension of divine grace beyond the bounds that the bigoted Pharisees would have deemed proper, they also call attention to a certain limitation that is not always recognized.

Restriction of Salvation

At the time of our Lord's first advent there were in the world many millions of people, every one of them as desperately in need of salvation as Zac-

chaeus was. A proportion of these would without doubt have exhibited the same interest as he showed. He was favored, and they were passed by. The reason? "This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham." Because of his lineage, salvation came to the house of Zacchaeus; because they were not in the line of Abraham, salvation passed by the houses of millions who were no less needy than he.

Does this seem surprising? If so, let it be well noted that the case of Zacchaeus is not the only illustration of the principle of exclusion here stated, which principle was the basis of God's dealings for many centuries before the first advent. When the Master sent forth the twelve disciples, He charged them—

"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. 10: 5, 6.

On another occasion He enunciated the principle even more emphatically—

"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. 15: 24.

Our Lord being one sent, not being in the world to do His own will, but the will of the Father who sent Him, was not at liberty to exceed the limitations of the commission given Him to seek and to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Neither did He exceed it, the very few occasions of His dealings with Gentiles being when they came to Him. In no case did He go to them or seek them out.

Moreover, it is quite clear that there was no superior goodness or greater fruitfulness in spiritual things among the Israelites that should have attracted the divine favor to them to the exclusion of others. In fact, it is stated that the Jews were much less ready to lay hold of the good things offered them than some others would have been, to whom these things were never offered.

"Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."—Matt. 11: 20-24.

What is the reason for this? Are the people of Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrha forever excluded from salvation? Was salvation to be offered to the Jews who rejected it, and not to be offered to those who would have received it?

The Special Salvation

That which was offered to the Jews and rejected by them was more than everlasting life. It was an opportunity to enter the Kingdom of God as part of the *ruling* power, not merely as subjects to be ruled over. That they should have this opportunity was promised them when they entered into the Law Covenant, and, as the Apostle says, it "pertained" to them. (Ex. 19: 5, 6; Rom. 9: 4, 5.) When Messiah came, the burden of His message was that the Kingdom was at hand (Matt. 4: 17), and He began to

make known to them the long promised opportunity. But it was not until the day of Pentecost that the door of this opportunity was fully opened to them. The opportunity, when it came to them, was not such as their imaginations had conjured up: what was offered was not acceptable to them; with few exceptions they rejected it, and as a nation they were rejected of God, who then turned to the Gentiles to take out of them the people for His name, for the tabernacle of David was to be reconstituted in Christ, the heir of David's throne. (Acts 15: 13-16.) As Paul said to the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia—

"It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation to the ends of the earth."—Acts 13: 46, 47.

The people thus taken out from the Gentiles and added to the number of the faithful and believing Israelites according to the flesh ("the remnant"—Rom. 11: 5; 9: 27) are the holy nation *instead of* Israel according to the flesh; they constitute the Kingdom of priests *instead of* those to whom it had "pertained" by promise, but who rejected the great honor when the time came for it to be offered them. (1 Peter 2: 9, 10.) This is the salvation which came that day to Zacchaus on account of his lineage, the door to it not having at that time been opened to the Gentiles; this is the honor which the rich ruler appreciated less than the wealth of temporal possessions with which he was endowed.

Unwise rich ruler! Yes; unwise to the point of imbecility is the opinion he will have of himself when he comes to realize the littleness of what he retained for a few years and then lost, and the greatness of that which he has lost for aye.

Salvation Extended

But what about the other "lost?" Zacchaus was "lost," but being a "lost sheep of the house of Israel," salvation was brought to him. There are others lost, of whom it is said, "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4: 3, 4.) These lost ones are *unbelievers*, certainly; yet it cannot be said that they are *disbelievers*, for the gospel of Christ, having never shined unto them, they have never had an opportunity to refuse it. It is certain that these "lost" can never be saved as *unbelievers*, for one must believe in Jesus in order to be saved. (John 3: 16; Eph. 2: 8.) At the same time these "lost," from whom the gospel is hid by the blinding influence of Satan, cannot, while in that state, be rejected and condemned as *disbelievers* of a gospel they never knew. What prospect lies before them?

Shall we suppose that their fate is to die like flies, and never again see life? Infidels and Christadelphians hold this view, which is repugnant alike to heart and mind, and is contrary to Scripture.

Shall we suppose that at a given time, called the Day of Judgment, all these will be brought before the bar and forthwith returned to the condition from which they have been respite for a few moments

for the purpose of this useless formality? This view of the Day of Judgment has been held by a great many Christians of all denominations, but it is quite without scriptural sanction.

Rejecting Knowledge

Or shall we suppose that God's purpose in regard to these unfortunates—constituting the vast majority of the human race—is hidden in His own secret counsel, and that it is not for us to know anything of it. Nevertheless, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" This view, or lack of view, is held by a very great number of Christians. It would do credit to the kindness of heart of those who believe it, were it not so often associated with a fixed determination to avoid the acquisition of scriptural information on this subject. The persistence with which these friends avoid the knowledge that is ready to their hand lends much color to the suspicion that the text, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right," which has no reference whatever to the subject under discussion (Gen. 18: 22-26), has been adopted by them as a convenient method of disposing of an inconvenient problem, and that they are unwilling to know God's will. Such should take to heart and seriously ponder the words, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me." (Hosea 4: 6.) While knowledge is not the only Christian virtue, the willingness to acquire knowledge of divine things—in so far as it has pleased God to reveal them—is so highly valued in God's sight that He declares that if His people reject knowledge He will reject them, will even reject them from the royal priesthood promise.

This applies not only to knowledge on the important subject of salvation, now being considered, but as well to knowledge on every feature of the divine purpose. One might, for example, have been persuaded, without scriptural evidence, into supposing that his desires to be good and do good gave him a standing in God's sight, so that he never needed Jesus Christ as his Mediator to reconcile him to God. Another offers scriptural evidence to show that this supposition is a fundamental error. The first mentioned refuses even to consider the "thus saith the Lord" offered as evidence. Does not such a course, if persisted in, amount to rejection of knowledge? Can we suppose that God would overlook it? And so with persistent rejection of scriptural knowledge on any feature of the plan of salvation—the Ransom, the penalty for sin, etc., etc. Mere difference of opinion is not necessarily rejection of knowledge. Rejection of knowledge is the closing of the mind against the statements of the Word of God—in some instances amounting to an unwillingness even to look at proffered evidence from the Bible.

Reception of Knowledge

If rejection of knowledge be fraught with consequences so disastrous, the reception of truth brings corresponding blessings, if one be rightly exercised thereby—built up and not merely puffed up. By the knowledge of the truth we learn the way of salvation, that there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, and that He is the way by whom we must approach God. (1 Tim. 2: 4-7; John 14: 6.) By the truth we are made free from Satan,

(John 8: 31-45.) By the truth we are sanctified. (John 17: 17.) By obedience to the truth our hearts are purified even unto unfeigned love of the brethren. (1 Peter 1: 22.) The living, incorruptible and ever abiding gospel truth is the "seed" by which God's people are begotten to the new life. (1 Peter 1: 23-25.) How important it is, then, to know the truth, to receive it gladly, and to obey it implicitly! May we be preserved from the sin of rejecting knowledge!

What It Means to be Lost

It should be borne in mind that the persons spoken of in 2 Cor. 4: 3, 4 are not about to be lost. They *are* lost. Zacchaeus was not about to be lost; he *was* lost. The Lord found him, and has also been finding, during the Gospel age, some of the lost Gentiles. We sometimes sing—

"The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin,"

and that expresses very well the idea. The whole of the race is involved in the lost condition, and condemned to death, on account of Father Adam's transgression, and from this lost condition it is and will be possible for all to be saved through obedient faith in Jesus.

All Men to be Enlightened

The Christian is not left to haphazard conjectures concerning the prospects of the "lost" who have died *unbelievers* though not *disbelievers*. The divine testimony is that God's will is that all shall be brought

to the knowledge of the truth, and that Jesus Christ is the Light of the World, the true light, that lighteth every man that comes into the world. (1 Tim. 2: 4-7; John 1: 9.) The prospect before these "lost" from whom the gospel has been hid by the deceptions of Satan is that there will come a "day"—the Thousand Years—when none of his deceptions will be permitted. (Rev. 20: 1-3.) In that blessed time these "lost" will be told about God and the way to approach Him through Jesus the Mediator, just as Paul was delivering the very same teaching in his day. (1 Tim. 2: 7.) The people chosen from among the nations during the time from Pentecost to the appearing of our Lord at His second advent will be instrumental, as kings and priests during the Thousand Years (Rev. 20: 4), in enlightening the hitherto "lost," and will rule over them for their blessing. If the "lost" will then believe and obey the Gospel, they shall be saved, and shall live forever on the earth. If they will not obey, they shall be destroyed, in which event they will be irrecoverably lost. But no one will be thus doomed without having had every possible opportunity to be saved, and every facility to embrace the opportunity granted.

In the mean time it is our blessed privilege to lay hold of the salvation which came that day to the house of Zacchaeus. Let us, like Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down, and gladly receive the Master as our Guest, to abide with us not only to-day but for ever! —John 14: 23; Rev. 3: 20-22.



Horrors of British Coal Strike

A tiny coffin carried up the hill to the cemetery, followed by a sobbing mother and a father with a set, dogged look on his face. Only three weeks ago those same three went up that hill for their Sunday afternoon walk, the proud father carrying his son, as bonny a boy as anyone could wish for. But there is no coal, so the factory must close, and week after week there are no wages. The idea of debt is hateful, and these two young people are not very wise, so they live on bread. Naturally, very soon the mother has no milk for her boy; he does not like bread-and-water pap, so one night quietly dies, as surely murdered by the inventors of this horrible strike as if a knife had been put to his little pink throat. Picture it, you mothers, with your darling nestled up to your bosom, and think of this young mother's feelings!

In the house a little way further down a mother lies sobbing her heart out over a stillborn boy. Starvation and worry had brought the little life into the world too soon, and now all that is left of her hopes is a wee form under a sheet. "And we were to have called him Jim, after his grandfather," she sobbed; "because he always wanted a boy, and we were all girls."

Just below a baby arrived into a fireless and milkless world, to find no garments ready to clothe its shivering little frame; they had been sold earlier in the week because "the children were wanting food badly, and I could not bear to see them."

In another street three little girls are crouching on a wooden settle, wrapped up in an old blanket—

they have got measles. "Well, there is nothing very serious in that," you say. "Keep them warm and give them milk," but there is no fire because all the coal has gone from the pit head, and there is no money to pay two shillings a hundredweight for the very little there is left to be bought, and there is no money for milk, so I suppose these three will shortly go to the "Home for little children," where they will hunger and thirst no more.

These cases could be multiplied a hundred times over; they are all within a stone's throw of one another. Perhaps you will say, "The babies are better off." Possibly so, but they were brought into the world at great cost to the mothers, and were intended by the God who made them to grow up into healthy men and women, and not to be hustled out of this world by the selfishness of their neighbours.

A middle-aged widow lives in a single room with all her treasures. She gets 8s. 6d. a week at a factory when working; now, with no wages, she gets behindhand with her rent, and the landlady suggests the workhouse. Oh! the bitterness of it, to part with the bed she has had ever since she was married thirty-five years ago, the bed she "nursed her man on" when he died, after four days' illness, ten years ago; the pictures done in cheap portraiture of herself and her husband while they were on their first "wakes" holiday, and the other poor little effects so dear and full of reminiscences to the owner—and all for the sake of two weeks' rent—3s.

Yet one more instance. A man applied for work

at one of the relief works, and after he had been started he fainted. On investigation it was found that he had had no food for three days; the five-shilling grocery order from the Distress Committee having been spent by him on his sick wife, while he assured her that he had plenty for himself.

The once prosperous and happy town is like a

stricken city, and if coal is not soon forthcoming the baby life will have disappeared, for babies under a year old do not thrive on soup!

It is this kind of thing that makes it plain that it is not only in riots that lives are lost during industrial war.—Marguerite Stuart, in "The Daily Mail," London.



Give it a Thought

How little it costs, if we give it a thought.

To make happy some heart each day!

Just one kind word and a tender smile,

As we go on our daily way.

Perchance a look will suffice to clear

The cloud from a neighbour's face,

And the press of a hand in sympathy clasps

A sorrowful tear efface.

One walks in the sunlight; another goes

All weary in the shade;

One treads a path that is fair and smooth,

And another must pray for aid.

It costs so little: I wonder why

We give it so passing a thought!

A smile, a word, a glance, a touch,

What magic is with them wrought!

—Anonymous.



Interesting Questions

Is Jesus Now a Man?

Question.—It is stated in 1 Tim. 2: 5 that the one Mediator between God and men is "the MAN Christ Jesus." As Jesus is the Mediator since His death and resurrection, is it to be understood that He is now a man?

Answer.—Our risen Savior has many titles, such as Redeemer, Mediator, Advocate, King, Lord, Son of God, Son of Man, last Adam, Man Christ Jesus, etc., etc. The title, "Son of Man" is applied to Him after His resurrection as well as before (Mark 8: 38; Luke 22: 69); but it is evident that the phrase must now be regarded as a title rather than as an exact description, because in His resurrection our Lord is in no sense derived from man: He is most emphatically the Son of God only, neither man nor woman having any part in giving Him resurrection life and being. (Acts 13: 33.) So the words "Jesus of Nazareth," while they identify the risen and exalted Lord with the lowly Nazarene (Acts 3: 6; 4: 10; 22: 8; 26: 9), cannot be taken as proof that Jesus is now in the humiliated estate of a dweller in Nazareth; He sits in the throne of the Father. Similarly, the words "Man Christ Jesus," in the above question, are used as a title, identifying the Mediator with the one who gave the Ransom, but not as a description of His present glorious personality. "In the days of His flesh" He offered prayers to God with strong crying and tears (Heb. 5: 7); but these are no longer "days of His flesh," for He was "put to death in the flesh but quickened in the spirit." (1 Peter 3: 18, R.V.) The "last Adam" is not a man like the first Adam was; "the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." (1 Cor. 15: 45.) Inasmuch as flesh is not spirit and spirit is not flesh (John 3: 6), it is evident that the use of the title "man" in 1 Tim. 2: 5 no more proves that our risen Lord is a human being than the use of "Son of man" proves that man raised Him from death, or the use of "Jesus of Nazareth" proves that He is now a Nazarene. The word "man" in 1 Tim.

2: 5 is only a title, serving to show that the one who gave Himself as the Ransom for all now occupies the position of Mediator between God and the ransomed ones. The word "man" is similarly used of our risen Lord, the "lifegiving Spirit," in Acts 17: 31, but its use there is no more proof that He is now a human being, or that these are "the days of His flesh," than its use in 1 Tim. 2: 5.

The "Seven Times"

Question.—Since writing you last, I have made a fresh study of your articles re the Second Advent. I have re-read the "Advocate" of November, 1911, and closely compared with the Scriptures, after which I could see the force of your reply in March 1912 issue to question re the order of events at the second advent, and am persuaded you are about right in your conclusions, and that you have properly dealt with that threefold time prophecy of the 1260, 1290, and 1335 "days" in Daniel 12. I now believe that at the end of the appointed "time, times and half a time," or 1260 years, our dear Lord arrived and began the consuming of the "beast." I quite fall in with your views on the subject, and am pleased to acknowledge same. Do you consider the 1260 "days" to be the half of the "seven times?" Are the "seven times" the same as "the times of the Gentiles" mentioned in Luke 21: 24?

Answer.—Our readers are at all times exhorted to prove all things and hold fast the good. It is therefore the more pleasing to hear that the views set forth in the "Advocate" find acceptance. May we all be guided by the Spirit into all truth!

The "seven times" referred to by the questioner are those mentioned in Lev. 26: 18, 21, 24, 28. They are not the same as "the times of the Gentiles" mentioned in Luke 21: 24. "The times of the Gentiles" are the years from the giving of authority to the Gentiles when the Kingdom of God as represented in Palestine was overturned (Dan. 2: 37, 38; Ezek. 21: 25-27), and Jerusalem began to be trodden

down of the Gentiles, until the time when power shall be taken from the Gentile nations, and Jerusalem, delivered from being trodden down by and subject to the Gentiles, shall again be the earthly centre of the divine government. How many years "the times of the Gentiles" are to be is not stated in Scripture.

If, as the question suggests, the 1260 "days" of Daniel (fulfilled as 1260 years) were the half of the "seven times," that would mean that the "seven times" are to be regarded as a period of 2,520 years, which we consider unscriptural, there being no connection, expressed or implied, between Daniel's prophecy of the 1260 days and that of Leviticus 26. Such a view cannot be held without very careless neglect of that consideration of text and context, the necessity for which is constantly being impressed upon all readers of these publications. The reasons for not believing that the "seven times" of Lev. 26 are "the times of the Gentiles," and that the "seven times" of Lev. 26 are not to be fulfilled as a period of 2520 years, are several, and are regarded as conclusive.

1. There is no mention in Lev. 26 of any thing that could serve to identify the "seven times" with "times of the Gentiles," and there is nothing mentioned in Luke 21: 24 that could serve to identify "the times of the Gentiles" with the "seven times" of Lev. 26. It is therefore an unwarrantable assumption to associate Luke 21: 24 with Lev. 26: 18, 21, 24, 28.

2. The word for time, as measured by years, months, days, etc., is wholly wanting in Lev. 26. Not only is this so, but the word there translated "seven times" has an entirely different significance. The Hebrew word is *shibah*, which according to Strong's Concordance is merely the cardinal number seven. If used adverbially, as in Lev. 26, it means seven times in the sense of *seven times as much*. In Leiser's version of the Old Testament it is translated "sevenfold" in this chapter, which agrees with Strong's definition.

3. There are five punishments mentioned in Lev. 26, four of these being "sevenfold" punishments, as in vss. 18, 21, 24, 28—not one "sevenfold" punishment mentioned four times, but four separate and distinct "sevenfold" punishments. That these four "sevenfold" punishments are distinct from each other is shown by the fact that the second of the series (v. 21) is threatened only in case the first one (v. 18) failed to accomplish the desired reform, and the second, in case it came, would be "seven times *more*" than the first. Likewise the third "sevenfold" punishment (vss. 23, 24) was not to come unless the second failed to reform the people. And the third "sevenfold" punishment is clearly distinguished from the others by describing it as "*yet seven times*." The fourth of the "sevenfold" punishments (vss. 27, 28) is also distinguished from the others by "if ye will not for all this hearken unto Me, but walk contrary unto Me: then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times [*sevenfold*]" for your sins."

4. The children of Israel sinned, and brought upon themselves the whole of these punishments, one after the other. The fourth of the "sevenfold" punishments, following after the first three, brought the land into desolation (vs. 32), wherein she should enjoy her Sabbaths while she lay desolate. Now,

this desolation, in which the land should enjoy her Sabbaths, is distinctly referred to in 2 Chron. 36: 11-21 as having begun in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, the first of the Gentile kings to whom God gave dominion, as already referred to in Dan. 2. The four times repeated "sevenfold" punishments of Lev. 26 were therefore all accomplished at the desolation of the land, that is to say, when "the times of the Gentiles," as represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image, *began*. This is crushingly conclusive that the prophecy of Lev. 26 shows nothing about the length of "the times of the Gentiles," for these "times" were only just beginning when the quadruplicated "sevenfold" punishments were all finished and complete.

As far as we know, there has never been adduced any thing except Lev. 26 on the subject of the length of the Gentile "times." Since the evidence above presented shows that Lev. 26 should not be used in such connection, and since there is nothing in the Scripture to say how long the Gentile "times" should endure, it follows that the teaching that the Gentile "times" are 2,520 years is an assumption which cannot be defended and should not be countenanced. You are referred also to "Advocate," Dec. 1909, p. 140.

Satan

Question.—Do Isa. 14: 12-14; Ezek. 28: 12-17; Luke 10: 18; Rev. 12: 7-9 refer to the personal Satan? If not, what scriptural basis is there for belief in the existence of a personal devil?

Answer.—Isaiah 14: 12-14 does not refer to Satan. The context, particularly vss. 4 and 22, shows that the passage is a prophecy of the fall and desolation of Babylon, the oppressor of Israel. "Lucifer, son of the morning," is a title of Babylon, illustrating its once great glory, the literal meaning of "Lucifer" being "shining one."

Ezekiel 28: 12-17 is part of a long passage that describes the wealth and beauty of Tyre and prophesies its destruction. This prophecy cannot be taken as an allusion to Satan.

Neither can Rev. 12: 7-9 be considered a reference to the great spirit-being known in Scripture as "the Satan" (adversary) and "the devil" (false accuser). Much less can this passage be understood to allude to a "war," supposed to have occurred in heaven before man was created, because the Revelation was not written until near the close of the first century A.D., and it professes (Rev. 1: 1) to deal with events future from the time of our Lord's exaltation. Without at this time going into details, we shall state that we understand Rev. 12: 1-9 to refer to events connected with the history of the early church and the development of the Papacy, and that the terms, "dragon," "serpent," "Devil," and "Satan," are in this passage symbolic of Pagan Rome.

Luke 10: 18 doubtless refers to the personal Satan, but the "fall from heaven" here mentioned is not an allusion to ancient history. Rather is it to be understood as meaning the victory over the demons which the seventy so joyfully reported (v. 17), and of which the Lord was cognizant even during their absence. After their report He intimated as much, saying, as the strict translation of the words requires—"I was beholding Satan as lightning fall from heaven."

But the scriptural proof of the existence of Satan as an intelligent entity must be sought along other lines, for a mere allusion, such as that in Luke 10: 18, is scarcely a proof, though it is both interesting and valuable as corroboration. If Satan be an intelligent spirit-being, invisible to men, the proof of his existence should be of such sort as would correspond to that which proves the existence of God. Who is an intelligent spirit-being, invisible to men. Speaking of proofs of God's existence, the Apostle says—

"That which may be known of God is manifest to them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; that they may be without excuse."—Rom. 1: 19, 20, margin.

That is to say, the existence of the invisible God is demonstrated by His visible works. Even so may the existence of the invisible but powerful Satan be demonstrated from the scriptural account of his visible works.

Satan Imitating God

When Moses and Aaron appeared before Pharaoh as the messengers of God to demand the release of the children of Israel, Pharaoh demanded their credentials. "And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent." (Ex. 7: 10.) This was the work of God, for Moses and Aaron admittedly were not able to change rods into serpents. In order to discredit, if possible, the mission of Moses, Pharaoh called in his wise men. "Now the magicians of Egypt, they also did it, like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents." (Ex. 7: 11, 12.) This miracle was not the work of the magicians in and of themselves any more than the first miracle was the work of Moses and Aaron in themselves. The second miracle was as supernatural as the first. The second miracle was in response to the *enchantments* of the magicians put forth for the purpose of discrediting the messengers of God. This second miracle thus becomes a visible proof of the existence of an invisible evil being who well deserves the name Satan (adversary), for he is demonstrated by his works to be the adversary of God, aiding Pharaoh in his determination to detain the children of Israel. God allowed Satan a certain amount of latitude, and permitted him to imitate two more of the miracles done by divine power through Moses and Aaron (Ex. 7: 22; 8: 7), in order that Pharaoh's heart might be hardened by these Satanic miracles as well as by the respite which God allowed from the several plagues. (Ex. 8: 15.) But God's power was always superior to Satan's. This was shown—even though not heeded—at the very outset, when Aaron's rod swallowed up the rods of the magicians (Ex. 7: 12), and was demonstrated to the confessed satisfaction of the magicians when they found themselves unable to reproduce the fourth credential-miracle of Moses and Aaron. (Ex. 8: 19.) The folly of the magicians who in the power of Satan withstood the messengers of God was manifest, as will be the folly of all who withstand the truth (2 Tim. 3: 8, 9), and the whole incident furnishes a striking demonstration of the existence of an evil spirit-being opposed to God—just such a demonstration as in Rom. 1: 19, 20 is given as proof of God's existence. In other words, the existence of

works proves the existence of the worker, and the character of Satan is well demonstrated by the nature of his works—opposition to God.

Satan not the Administrator of Everlasting Torment

The Scripture no where states that Satan is the prince of a region of fire, wherein wicked persons are to be tormented for ever. As before shown* the Scripture knows nothing of everlasting torments, nor of demons with pitchforks, etc., etc. Satan's influence and power are always exerted on the side of wrong, and the trend of his influence is therefore said to be towards death. (Heb. 2: 14.) But, thanks be to God, Satan's power will soon be taken from him, and ultimately he will be destroyed. In the meantime, as we come in contact with his wily devices concerning which the Bible instructs us, let us recoil from them, giving thanks to God Who is able to deliver us. Let us watch and pray, lest we enter into any of his temptations, which are sometimes presented as though by an angel of light.—2 Cor. 2: 11; 11: 13-15.

Sin before Birth?

Question.—"Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9: 2, 3.) These words are used by Theosophists to support their theory of a previous existence. It seems strange that our Lord did not correct the disciples. How are the words to be understood?

Answer.—Under the terms of the Law Covenant, the Jews were given to understand that calamities would be visited upon them on account of transgressions, and that if they were obedient, no calamity would be allowed to befall them. (Lev. 26: 3-17.) The disciples would therefore look upon the misfortune of the man who was born blind as a visitation of punishment for sin, and they were quite justified in doing so. The next point would be, what sin could bring upon a person the awful calamity of being born blind? Could a man sin before his birth? The disciples were no Theosophists; there is no teaching of the sort in the Old Testament Scriptures. The disciples are not to be misunderstood, therefore, as hinting that the man could have sinned before he was brought into existence. Rather, they were putting the question as a "poser" to the Master—How did this man happen to be born blind? He could not have brought it upon himself; and what sin could his parents have done that would warrant such a visitation upon their child? The fact that our Lord framed His reply on the lines of the question indicates that He did not consider that the disciples were hinting that the young man might have sinned in some previous state of existence, but took their question in the manner above paraphrased. His answer intimates that the case of this unfortunate was exceptional; it was not a visitation for sin. In the providence of God the young man had been born blind, in order that the power of God might be manifested in him. And so it was done, the giving of sight to this young man being accounted one of the most notable of our Lord's many miracles.—John 9: 32, 33.

*See the 112 page book "Everlasting Punishment," which treats the subject fully, examining every Scripture reference to "Sheol," "Hades," "Lake of Fire," etc. Price in cloth binding 1/- (25 cents), postage 1d. (+ cents) extra; in paper covers, 6d. (10 cents) post paid.

Prophetic Parables

(Continued from April Issue.)

—Matt. 24: 45-51.—

The Parable of the Faithful and Wise Servant.

Thus far we have seen that the lesson of this parable, as well as of the parable of the Faithful and Wise Steward (Luke 12: 41-48)*, and of the parables of the Talents and of the Pounds, is that each believer is a "servant" of Jesus Christ, the Master; that each believer or servant is entrusted with the Gospel truth, which he is to give out as "meat in due season" to the best of his ability; that each demonstrates by his life and by his activity (or lack of it) the extent of his love and obedience, and that each will be rewarded (or punished) accordingly.

Much Given, Much Required

is the basis upon which each servant is judged. If he have a little truth, he must give out that little; if he have a large grasp of God's purposes, a clear insight into the "deep things," he must give out largely. If his circumstances in life give him little opportunity for service of any kind, he must be faithful in small things; if he is able to give all his time, or three-quarters, or half, it is his duty to do it. "Faithful and wise" means not only doing all one can in present circumstances, but planning and arranging to alter or improve those circumstances, in order to give out more and better spiritual food, just as a steward in a household makes everything else bend to the important function of providing and serving the temporal food.

No Excuses Permissible

We have a loving God, and a merciful High Priest, so that faults and sins, when confessed, may be forgiven, and errors of judgment overruled for good. These are benefits accruing to those who have accepted the New Covenant, which was ratified by the blood of Jesus. The Master knows our frame, that we are dust; He knows also the limitations of strength and intellect. It is not therefore necessary to make "excuses" to the Lord. What is required is the heart-devotion of true discipleship, as shown in the similitude of the "salt," and each day to do with one's might what the hand finds to do.—Mark 9: 50; Eccl. 9: 10; Gal. 6: 10.

Just here some make a mistake, thinking that whatever the hand finds to do means any sort of service for anyone. But that is not the lesson of the parables. The parables are concerned with service *to the Lord* and the work of *spreading the Gospel*, of which the servants are stewards.

There were in Apostolic days, there have been throughout the age, and there are to-day, brethren with larger abilities and opportunities than others. It is not for them to say, Brother So-and-so is not doing much, and I will not work hard or give much to the cause while others are idle and enjoying themselves. That is the language of an unfaithful servant. A faithful servant works harder and longer when he

sees others neglectful. (Phil. 2: 21; 2 Tim. 4: 10.) Nor must the one of smaller capacity or opportunity or with less knowledge of the Word of truth say, I can do so little, it is hardly worth doing at all, or Brother So-and-so takes all the best positions, and unless I can occupy his place I will do nothing. That also is the language of an unfaithful servant. A faithful servant recognizes the importance of a little word of explanation or exhortation, or a small act of kindness, and he realizes that if he is unwilling to do the small things he is manifesting a disposition which the Master will not approve of. Where little is given, little is required, but *it is required*. It behoves all the servants to understand their position, and not to shirk their duties, whether they be large and burdensome, or small and apparently trifling. But who is justified in calling any service of the Lord "trifling"? How many large issues often hang on small things! Ananias and Sapphira may have thought it a small matter to conspire together to hold back part of the price of their own property, but in the eyes of the Lord it was a large thing, and they were severely punished; so furnishing a warning to all who come after. Says the Apostle, If every transgression under the Law Covenant was punished, how shall we escape punishment if we neglect the great salvation which the New Covenant brings to us, or any of the duties which our Master gives us to do? (Heb. 2: 2, 3; Col. 1: 10; 1 Cor. 9: 16, 17.) "If any man draw back," says the Lord, "my soul shall have no pleasure in Him."—Heb. 10: 38.

Nor will a refusal to learn more truth, or a disposition to put off obedience and faithfulness to a future date, suffice to rid a "servant" of present responsibility. Besides, knowing that eventually every knee *must* bow (Phil. 2: 10, 11; Rom. 14: 11), under heavy penalties, how much more reasonable and sensible it is to render the obedience now, and secure the Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant." How sweet are those words in the ears of the loving, devoted disciple as day by day he goes about the Master's business, his conscience void of offence, his heart soft and impressionable to the writing of the Holy Spirit, and his mind transformed by the renewing of that same Spirit! Who would not count all else but loss and dross for the privilege and blessedness of being a good and faithful servant?

But the parable relates that the lord of that servant, whether the latter be "faithful and wise," or "evil," will come

At an Unexpected Hour

to reward the one and to punish the other. How could this be applied to servants throughout the age, if as we believe the Lord's Second Advent was not due till the close of the age?

Here again it is necessary to remember that we are considering a parable, and not a literal statement. In the parable the master of the servant comes personally, when the servant is not expecting him, to

*For explanation as applied to Jewish servants at the end of their age, see February issue.

approve or condemn his work. In order that a human master may thus thrust out his evil servant or promote his faithful servant, it may be desirable that he reckon personally with the servant, but his presence is not absolutely necessary. The same purpose would be served by sending a messenger with the requisite authority. So far as the parable applies to the end of the Jewish age, "the harvest," when, as John the Baptist predicted, the Messiah would "thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner," and "burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matt. 3: 12), we see that Jesus was not visibly present among the Jews for more than about three and one-half years, the bulk of the work of gathering the wheat and burning the chaff being left to the Apostles and various other messengers and agencies, under the direction of the invisible and highly exalted Lord, to whom had been given all power and authority both on earth and in Heaven. These facts should help us to realize how the work of judging the Gospel age "servants" could proceed throughout the age, without the Lord Jesus (who is the great Judge) being visible to the natural eyes of those "servants."

Christ in the Midst

The "servants" of the Gospel age serve not a human employer but a divine Master. His relation to them is shown by several passages—

(1) He is the founder and builder of the Church. "Upon this rock I will build my Church."—Matt. 16: 18.

(2) Though bodily invisible, He promised to be always "in the midst" where two or three were assembled, and "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age."—Matt. 18: 20; 28: 20.

(3) Throughout the age He "sanctifies and cleanses" the Church "with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."—Eph. 5: 26, 27.

(4) John the Revelator saw a vision of the Lord Jesus "in the midst" of a seven-branched golden candlestick or lampstand. In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. And it was explained to John that the seven (symbol of completeness) lamps represented the seven Churches, that is, the whole or complete Church, and that the seven stars represented the seven angels of the Churches, that is, the complete teaching and guiding element in the Church. The sharp two-edged sword was for use throughout the age.—Rev. 1: 12-20.

This dual capacity of our Lord, as caretaker and upholder of the Church and its faithful teachers, and as critic and destroyer of the reprobate, is enlarged upon in the second and third chapters of Revelation, where rewards and blessings are continually offered as incentives to faithfulness, and where threats of punishment are given as warnings against unfaithfulness. These threats consisted not only of punishments to be meted out at the end of the age at the time of His second advent, when He would reckon in a large and special sense with great Babylon, but also of those smaller and continuous judgments which have been meted out to individual "evil" servants

throughout the age.—Rev. 2: 4, 5, 14-16, 20-23; 3: 1-3, 15-19.

If then the Lord Jesus is in the midst of the Church, in what sense does He "come" unexpectedly to reckon with the servants? The Scriptural answer appears to be, (first) by His providences, and (second) by His representatives, the fellow-servants.

Reckoning with the Servants

It will be observed that it was by these two means that the individual was called out of the world to become a believer in, and a servant of, the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to convince the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He sends the disciples as living witnesses and exponents of the truth, and those who believe and obey their message are accepted by Him as members of the Church and as servants of the glad tidings. But the Lord does not visibly visit and by audible voice accept and commission these servants: He "visits" them by His providence and by His representatives, and they realize themselves as accepted and commissioned on the basis of the written Word, which sets forth the terms and conditions of discipleship. (1 John 5: 20; 3: 23, 24; Luke 14: 26-33.) After being accepted they must demonstrate their fitness or unfitness to continue as servants.

A similar use of the terms "visit," "come," etc., is found in the Old Testament in connection with God's dealings with Israel. Joseph said to his brethren, "God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land." Jehovah said, "I am come down to deliver them, . . . and to bring them up." (Gen. 50: 24; Exod. 3: 8, 16; 4: 31.) When Israel sinned God visited them "with thunder, and with earthquake and great noise;" when He blessed them he is said to have "come down" like rain upon the mown grass, and when their enemies came against them, He fought for them. (Isa. 29: 6; Mal. 3: 5; Psal. 72: 6; Josh. 10: 8-11, 43.) The prophecy concerning His dealings with Egypt represented Jehovah as riding upon a swift cloud and coming into Egypt. John the Baptist prepared the way of Jehovah, who visited Israel by means of His Son, to fulfil the promises to the fathers.—Mal. 3: 1; Luke 1: 54, 67-79.

Faithful or Unfaithful?

Will it be possible for the brethren to distinguish between faithful and unfaithful servants? Yes, though all the brethren may not be able to do so as quickly and readily as others, partly through inexperience. The "babes" are not as able as older Christians to distinguish between good and evil teachers, or between true and false doctrine. (Heb. 5: 13, 14; Phil. 1: 10, R.V.) The Apostle John (3 John 5-12) had reason to call attention to two good, trustworthy brethren, Gaius and Demetrius, and to express disapproval of an unfaithful servant, Diotrephes, who so loved to have the pre-eminence that he refused to receive the Apostle, prating against him with malicious words, and ill-treating his fellow servants, even to the extent of casting them wrongfully out of the Church. John purposed to deal publicly with Diotrephes on his next visit to the Church or assembly to which he and Gaius and Demetrius belonged. Other faithful brethren are recommended in Col. 4: 7-17; 1 Cor. 4: 17; Rom. 16: 1-16; etc.;

unfaithful are cited in 1 Tim. 1: 20; 2 Tim. 2: 17; 4: 14, etc.

At the time the Apostle wrote Diotrephes had evidently already been dealt with by the Lord's providence. Having been allowed to go the full length of ambition and tyranny, he had been ejected from the light of truth in which presumably he at one time walked, having fellowship with the Father and with the Son and with the Apostles and other true believers. The very fact that he was now an opponent of the Apostle was evidence that he had been cast out of the light. The Lord Jesus had come upon him suddenly, in an hour of which he was not aware, for he continued to assert authority among the brethren. It remained for the Apostles and the disciples generally to point out his evil character and works and to reject him from their assembly. No doubt Diotrephes would continue to have a following, persons who would flatter him, join him in denouncing the Apostles, and generally help him on the downward track. But the true believers would stand aside, and take him as an object lesson in what to avoid, convinced that he that continually and persistently does evil is not of God.—Verse 11; 1 John 4: 20; 5: 17; 3: 8.

But it is not necessary to be a prominent leader like Diotrephes in order to be guilty of eating and drinking with the drunken and smiting the fellow servants. A very insignificant servant can smite fellow-servants with bitter words, conspire against those who are faithful in feeding the flock over which God had made them overseers, or by slanderous hints injure the reputations of fellow-believers. Let such beware how they thus offend the Master, for sooner or later He will deal with them.

That the Lord himself has all through the age come suddenly upon the "evil" servants and cast them out of the household of faith, and that the true disciples must make that rejection known to those of their fellow servants who do not understand His methods, is clear from a number of scriptures. (Rom. 16: 17, 18; 2 Cor. 11: 13-15; 13: 5; Gal. 1: 8, 9; 3: 1-4; Eph. 5: 5-7; etc.) The manifestation of the Lord's displeasure against them is not their loss of popularity, or their poverty, or their affliction with painful diseases or other physical injury. Their temporal state may be prosperous or otherwise, but their nominal spiritual condition will be rather that of the Laodiceans—"I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." The Apostle Paul complained how the Corinthians allowed false apostles to domineer over and make merchandise of them (1 Cor. 4: 8-10; 2 Cor. 11: 12-15, 18-20), showing that these false teachers flourished, while he, a true apostle, suffered reproach and want. Nevertheless, he says, their "end shall be according to their works."

The Casting Out

The exact moment when the Lord's displeasure against an "evil" servant culminates in his irretrievable casting out from divine favor and from the light of truth into the outer darkness of error, unbelief and corruption, may not be openly manifest to the fellow-servants; but there must be such a moment. Granted that none can be a member of the Church until He is a sincere believer, and that the Lord, hav-

ing accepted him, will tenderly care for and instruct him, there must come a time when the sincerity of the faith is tarnished, the heart grows cold and disobedient, and the truth is no longer given out with zeal and gladness. In the parable of the Faithful and Wise Steward the servants worthy of many or of few stripes are considered. But the present parable concerns itself only with two classes, the "faithful and wise" and the "evil" who have passed through the intermediate stages requiring stripes, ignoring the disciplines received and persisting in a course of pride and disobedience. Does not this narrowing down of the servants to two kinds give a solemn warning to all the servants? Can they not see that once started on a course of indifference and disregard of the duties of servants, they may go the whole length of indulgence, and in the midst of their rioting be cut off and given their portion with the hypocrites? Let us give heed to the Master's warning, and watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation.

A hypocrite is one who professes to be what he is not. Sainly brethren are sometimes called hypocrites by those who do not understand them (2 Cor. 10: 2-12); but the Lord makes no such mistake. (2 Cor. 13: 5-7.) And sooner or later it is made manifest to the really spiritual-minded who are approved by Him as faithful and who are rejected as unfaithful. This open manifestation is made in times of trial and stress, when evil practices or a murmuring spirit or false teachings on fundamentals have been insidiously introduced among God's people. A division becomes necessary, and it is found ultimately that the true-hearted and faithful are on one side and the "false brethren" on the other side of the questions at issue. Our Lord said, "It is impossible but that offences will come, but woe be unto him through whom they come!" (Luke 17: 1.) And the Apostle says, "There must be also heresies [margin, "sects"; Var. "factions"] among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest."—1 Cor. 11: 19. Compare 2 Thes. 1: 6; 2 Tim. 3: 9; 2 Pet. 2: 1-3, 9.

It is the Lord who admits to the light and blessing of the household, and it is the Lord who rejects the unfaithful. It becomes therefore the duty of the faithful to acquiesce in the Lord's decision, and to withdraw from these reprobates their sympathy and fellowship, as shown in the parables of the Wedding Garment, the Talents, and the Pounds. (Matt. 22: 13; 25: 28, 30; Luke 19: 24-27.) This withdrawal of fellowship is accomplished without spite or bitterness, but with great sorrow, after every reasonable effort has been made to instruct and reclaim the wrong-doers. (Matt. 18: 15-20; 2 Tim. 2: 24-26; Jude 17-23.) No doubt the object in commanding the faithful to withdraw from the manifestly unfaithful is to maintain the purity of the teachings and practices of the various gatherings of believers. (Titus 3: 10, 11; 1: 16; 2 Tim. 2: 14-17; 3: 5, 8, 9; 1 Tim. 6: 3-5.) In this way also the reproaches which may be heaped on the faithful by unbelievers on account of the wrong-doing of the unfaithful will be shown to be undeserved. Furthermore, in such times of trial and division the good characters and deeds of the

faithful may be so manifest as to influence favorably some who had up to that moment hesitated to embrace Christianity.—1 Pet. 2: 15, 11, 12; 3: 16, 1, 2.

"Because of Unbelief"

The secret spring of unfaithfulness is *unbelief*. Israel in the wilderness questioned whether the Lord was among them or not, while on other occasions they asserted His presence but denied the manifestations of His providence in the Leader and priesthood He had appointed. (Exod. 17: 7; Num. 16: 3.) The evil servant said in his heart, "My Lord delayeth"—He is not here, perhaps He will not come at all, I will do as I please—I can judge for myself. He becomes in fact an unbeliever, and his portion is allotted with the unbelievers in outer darkness. (Luke 12: 46.) Each act of unbelief is a departing from the living God, each disregard of the duties of a servant is an act of rebellion against the Lord and Master whom God has appointed. Let us then take heed, brethren, "lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, . . . but exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end."—Heb. 3: 13, 14; cf. Heb. 10: 39.

The Parable of the Uttermost Farthing

—Matt. 5: 25, 26.—

(To the Multitude.)

25. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

This parable also occurs in Luke 12: 58, 59.

GASTING into prison for debt was a common method of punishment in ancient times; indeed, up till recently in such enlightened countries as Britain and America. As no money could be earned in prison, it meant in many cases imprisonment for life, the bankrupt's only hope being that some friend would pay the debt and thus secure his release.

The parable states two alternatives—imprisonment for the debt, or coming to some understanding with the creditor before the case has gone too far and the judge has pronounced the irrevocable sentence. As advice in worldly affairs, the parable points a good lesson; as applicable to the Jews in their relations to one another, for under the Law they were instructed to be merciful to their debtors, its lesson would be appreciated by the multitude. But there was a far deeper lesson in the parable, which is better manifest when the context is read, as recorded in Luke 12: 31-57. These explanatory words of our Lord the Jews did not appreciate as they should have done.

Following on a series of parables intended to arouse the listening Jews to a sense of their responsibilities as stewards of God's good things and to remind them that all their hopes centred in the Messiah promised in the prophets, for whose coming they

were to be continually on the watch, he explains his mission. As the coming of the Lord in the parable caused a division and trouble in the household, because of the unfaithfulness of some of the servants, so His coming to the Jewish people was to bring not peace but division, not preservation of the *status quo* but a destructive fire, the whole Jewish institution being condemned, as previously declared by John the Baptist—

"He that cometh after me is mightier than I, . . . he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."—Matt. 3: 11, 12.

This fire the Lord declares was already kindled (Luke 12: 49)—not the fire of eternal torment, for the Bible nowhere teaches that modern invention, but the fire of trouble, disintegration and destruction, which was to put an end to the Jewish system, and make way for the New Covenant which Jesus came to inaugurate. This fire had been kindled in part by John the Baptist, in part by the actions of the Jewish people themselves in their constant friction with their Roman rulers. It was not our Lord's mission to reconcile these opposing elements, but rather to make still more apparent the irreconcilability of the Jewish aspirations and promises with the hypocrisy of the Pharisees or the worldly prosperity of the nation, either as an independent polity or as a colony of Rome. The division which the Lord Jesus wrought was more searching than any previously known, separating the closest family relations and the most intimate friendships. (John 7: 43; 9: 16; 10: 19.) The sword with which these divisions were effected was sharp and two-edged, piercing to the very thoughts and intents of the heart, and separating between the spiritual and the sensual. (Heb. 4: 12, 13; John 6: 45; 12: 46-50.) There were no half measures. No half-hearted service would satisfy the Messiah. "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man will serve me, let him follow me."—John 12: 25, 26.

The Messiah did not say to the Jews, "Accept me if you like, but if you do not care to, it will be alright: God will be just as well pleased with you." No: His teaching was clear cut and decisive. They must be either one thing or the other; they cannot serve God and mammon also. In other words, He was their *Adversary*. As in the similitude of the King going to War, He had come against them with superior force, and if they did not wish to be overwhelmed they should enter into negotiations for peace.*

"Kiss the Son"

"Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him." A similar exhortation is given in Psalm 2: 12, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little." The intimation is, that as long as the King, the Lord Jesus, can be personally approached, the applicant for mercy and forgiveness may hope for the annulment of his debt and the

*For full explanation of the Parable of the King going to war, see "Advocate," March, 1911.

removal of all fear of punishment. The Lord graciously extended an invitation to the Jewish people to receive the required forgiveness, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden," "He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (Matt. 11: 28-30; John 6: 35-37; 14: 6), but they despised His offer. They foolishly thought they could do so with impunity, and they suffered the consequences, for "the wrath came upon them to the uttermost." (Matt. 3: 11, 12; 1 Thes. 2: 14-16.) They did not come out of the prison of unfavorable national circumstance until full vengeance had been taken for their long unfaithfulness and neglect.—Mal. 4: 1-6; Isa. 61: 2.

Oh, what anguish rings in the rejected Messiah's last words to Jerusalem—

"That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zecharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

"Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."—Matt. 23: 35-38.

"Agree Quickly"

The same principles of dealing are in vogue during the present age, and will culminate in vengeance upon every one who despises the King of kings, who is constituted the adversary or opponent of all evil institutions and practices. The King's Son is honored, not only because He loves righteousness, but also because He *hates iniquity*. Therefore He has been anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows, and therefore the Psalmist prophetically addresses Him—

"Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty,
With thy glory and thy majesty ride prosperously
Because of truth and meekness and righteousness;
And thy hand shall teach thee terrible things.
*Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies,
Whereby the people fall under thee.*"

—Psa. 45: 3-5, *Variorum*.

The Book of Revelation contains many pictures of the Lord Jesus in His capacity as King and Judge meting out punishment to those who wilfully and persistently oppose Him. (Rev. 14: 14-20; 17: 18-21; 18: 21; 19: 11-21.) Let us then be wise, and sue for mercy, and join ourselves to His standard in His great conflict with the forces of evil. And this latter we may do, not by the use of carnal weapons (for he that grasps the sword shall perish by the sword—Matt. 26: 51; 2 Cor. 10: 4), nor yet by joining the great organizations of men which in various ways of their own are seeking to graft grapes on thorns and figs on thistles, but by *ardently hastening to perform the work He has given us to do*; namely, to preach the gospel, to be good stewards, faithful and wise servants, giving out meat in due season to the household and sounding out with no uncertain sound (as did the Thessalonians) the glad message of salvation in all the region round about. "The field is the world," and "This gospel of the Kingdom must be preached in all the world as a witness."—1 Thes. 1: 8; Matt. 13: 38; 24: 14.

The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins

—Matt. 25: 1-13.—

(To the Disciples.)

1. Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

2. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

3. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

4. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

6. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom [the word "cometh" is omitted by the two oldest Greek MSS., the *Sinaitic* and the *Vatican*]; go ye out to meet him.

7. Then all the virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out [A.V. margin].

9. But the wise answered saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

11. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

12. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

13. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour [wherein the Son of man cometh" is omitted from the *Sinaitic*, *Vatican* and *Alexandrine* MSS.].

The Revised Version margin reads "torches" instead of "lamps" in vss. 1, 3, 4, 7, 8.

IN SOME interpretations of this parable an attempt is made to bring in the bride, the other party to the marriage; since the church is in the Scriptures spoken of as a "chaste virgin" espoused to Christ, and as the "wife" of the Lamb (2 Cor. 11: 2; Eph. 5: 24-26; Rev. 19: 7), it is thought that any explanation of the parable omitting reference to the bride is faulty. But it is a mistake thus to try to improve on the parable as the Lord himself gave it. Neither is it correct to say that the wise virgins who waited with oil in vessels and lamps triumphed and burning afterward became the bride. To do so is to destroy the symmetry and consistency of the parable. As a parable it is perfect. It is a story in harmony with the details of a custom common among the Jews, and consequently fitted to convey to the Jewish hearers (and to us Gentiles who are willing to look into the Jewish customs of that day) a particular lesson.

Marriage among the Jews consisted of two parts, the betrothal and the marriage proper. The former was entered into with the sanction and generally under the direction of relatives, and during the period of betrothal the contracting parties saw little of each other, though the betrothal was considered almost as sacred and binding as the actual marriage. When the time came for the bridegroom to take the bride to his own or to his father's house, a wedding procession was formed, consisting principally of his companions, and headed by a band of musicians, which called at the house of the bride, whence she was conveyed, often accompanied by her relatives and friends, to her future home. The procession generally started in the evening, and sometimes it was late in reaching its destination. In the meantime

the virgin friends of the bridegroom and his family were waiting at a convenient spot not far from the bridegroom's house, ready, when the music of the approaching company was heard, to go out to meet them with torches, and to go joyfully in with them to the feast. These virgins were specially invited guests, and when they and the happy throng which accompanied the bridegroom and bride had gone in, the door was shut and no other guests were expected or admitted.

This description of the ancient custom enables us to place ourselves among the listening disciples and to receive the same impressions which the graphically told parable stamped on their minds. It is our part, not to devise an explanation of our own, but to seek that meaning which our Lord intended to convey. We follow therefore with breathless interest the fortunes of the wise and foolish virgins, rejoicing with the wise over their forethought and prudence and subsequent enjoyment of the festive occasion, and sympathizing with the foolish over their disappointment, yet recognizing that they receive only their deserts for their half-hearted interest in the proceedings.

The Kingdom of Heaven

Again we have to notice that as with the parables of "The Good Samaritan," "The Rich Man and Lazarus," and others, our Lord does not use the word "parable" in connection with the story of the virgins. Nevertheless verse 1 gives us to understand it as such, the words "shall be likened unto" indicating that a comparison or similitude is being made. Furthermore, the comparison is not that the kingdom of heaven is like unto "ten virgins," but that "the kingdom of heaven is like unto ten virgins which took oil in their lamps and went forth" and experienced all that the story describes to the end of verse 12.

A number of parables was employed to set forth the different aspects of the Kingdom of Heaven, otherwise called the Kingdom of God. Seven of these have already been examined,* in which the kingdom was likened to seed sown on four kinds of soil, wheat and tares growing together till the harvest, a net cast into the sea and gathering fish of every kind, etc. The present parable is unique in that it is introduced by the adverb "then," representing that at a certain time the Kingdom of Heaven would be comparable to ten virgins having certain experiences.

In connection with the Parable of the Faithful and Wise Servant it was shown that the English word "then" is used in Matt. 24: 45 as a connective, emphasizing the logical conclusion of an argument.† In the present instance the original word is *tot*, an adverb of time, as in Matt. 24: 9, 10, 14, 16, 21, 23, 30 (twice), 40; chap. 25: 7, 31, 34, 37, 41, 44* 45. The question therefore arises, *When* did our Lord mean the Kingdom of Heaven would be likened unto ten virgins who took their lamps, etc.?—At the beginning of the age? at its close? at some particular period during the age? or all through the age? The answer depends on two considerations; (1) the context preceding and (2) the context following.

The Context Preceding

First. If the above numerous occurrences of the word "then" in chapter 24 form a chain, indicating a certain succession of events, each event following in order the one just previously described, we should doubtless be obliged to consider the word "then" which introduces chapter 25 as another of the chain; and in that case the lesson of the parable could not be considered as applying until after all the events of chapter 24 had been fulfilled. But it is only necessary to read verses 5-13 of chapter 24 to see the absurdity of such a view, for one should then be compelled to say that "many shall be offended and betray one another" after the nations had finished warring and had ceased delivering up and killing the disciples (vss. 9, 10); or that "two shall be in a field," etc. (vs. 40), after all the elect had been gathered (vs. 31). Likewise verse 23 would need to be taken to mean that no one would say, "Lo, here is Christ, or there," until after the great tribulation (vs. 21), whereas vs. 5 shows that the claim to be Christ would be set up immediately after our Lord's departure. Many were to come in His name, and to deceive many, and such impostors have been known to flourish all through the age, from apostolic times to our own day. Likewise wars and rumors of wars have been constant, and the hating and delivering up of the disciples have been incessant. False Christs, false prophets and teachers (systems and individuals) and "false brethren" have flourished, and would deceive if it were possible the very elect.—2 Pet. 2: 1-3; 2 Cor. 11: 26.

A careful study of Matthew 24 therefore compels the conclusion that while a sequence of events is undoubtedly foretold, other words are sometimes used to describe their succession, as in verse 29, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days;" and while the word "then" may be used in connection with such sequences, it may also be used in reference to the High Calling age as a whole, that is, the period covered by the prophecy as a whole.

The Context Following

Second. Following the parable of the ten virgins comes the parable of the Talents, an exposition of which has already been given. It was because the parable of the Talents was given by our Lord as an enlargement upon and partial explanation of the parable of the Virgins that we examined it first. Just now we desire to call attention to the connective "For," which connects the parable of the Talents with the parable of the Virgins, and to emphasize its importance as an aid to the understanding of the latter. In the one, ten virgins await a bridal procession; in the other, ten servants of a nobleman await his return from a far country. (Compare Luke 19: 12, 13.) In the one, the period of waiting seems long, the virgins fall asleep, though it is only from sunset to midnight. In the other, the length of the period is emphasized by the fact that the servants are enabled to buy and sell and get gain. In the one, the virgins have a pleasure and privilege to perform out of love to the expected bridegroom; in the other, the pleasure becomes a duty and obligation to an absent Master. In the one, the virgins supply their own equipment of lamp and oil; in the other, it is shown that the Master himself supplies all that

*See "Advocate," July, 1910.

†April "Advocate," page 12.

is necessary in the way of equipment. In the one, the unfaithful are described as "foolish" or stupid, in not having brought the oil which they should have known would be required; in the other, the unfaithful is plainly called "wicked and slothful" for making no use of what he had in his hand. In the one, the foolish virgins *never enter in* to the light of the bridegroom's presence; in the other, being in, and personally dealt with, the wicked and slothful servant is cast out.

The interdependence of the parables of Matt. 24: 42-51; 25: 1-30 is further shown by the warning thrice repeated in but slightly varying language—

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."—Matt. 24: 42.

"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."—Matt. 24: 44.

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour."—Matt. 25: 13.

"To Wait for His Son from Heaven"

The duty of the Church from the beginning is thus expressed by the Apostle. (1 Thes. 1: 10.) The true believer in Jesus turns from idols of one sort and another to serve the living and true God, to whom he has access through the one Mediator between God and men. (1 Thes. 1: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4-7.) He lives as in the presence of God, and awaits the promised Second Advent in which the Son from heaven will receive the saints to Himself, that where He is they may be also. Though hints were given, such as 2 Thes. 2: 2-12, that the day of Christ in which the dispensation would be wound up could not come until after the great falling away and the manifestation of the "man of sin," yet no definite date was given, and the disciples were therefore not to cease their vigilance, but to be ready at any time to be reckoned with and to enter in to the joys of the Lord. Those who "wait for His Son from Heaven" cannot set their minds upon earthly things; their affections are set on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; their heart is in heaven because their treasure is there. They are a distinct and separate people from the rest of the world—a people for His possession, not for their own aggrandizement or profit.—Col. 3: 1-3; Matt. 6: 19-21; 1 Pet. 2: 9, 10, R.V.

It is not absolutely necessary in interpreting a parable to find a correspondence for each detail of the parable. To attempt to do so would often draw attention away from the intended lesson. For instance, one might attempt to show that because all the persons waiting with lamps were "virgins," all the people who have ever professed interest in the Lord's second coming were pure persons in God's sight; but this is to draw more from the parable than is warranted, for the term "virgin" was commonly used for a young unmarried woman, and is even in one instance applied symbolically to men. (Acfs 21: 9; Rev. 14: 4.) The custom of the time was for the young female friends to wait for the coming of the bridal procession, and these would likely include some who were not real friends of the bridegroom. The parable in fact makes it plain that the "foolish" young women were not genuine friends because the bridegroom disclaims their acquaintance. Any person worthy to be called friend would not be careless on the greatest day of rejoicing in human experience.

One might also seek to build a theory upon the statement that "at midnight there was a cry made," that the Lord would come at a time corresponding to "midnight," and bury the point of the parable under a mass of chronological calculations; or speculate as to the love or lack of it manifested by those saints who wait for the Lord and who refuse to give "oil" to the "foolish" in their extremity of need; or find fault with the wise virgins for sleeping at all, or wonder how the lamp held by a saint would illuminate the Lord's path. But all these things are beside the question. The Lord explained His meaning when He said to the disciples, "Ye know not the day nor the hour," therefore do not allow yourselves to be caught unprepared, and so miss what *you* are looking for, but prepare yourselves for a long wait, "for the Kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling to a far country," and therefore to be away for a long time. (Verses 13, 14.) Moreover, the preparedness or unpreparedness of another watcher will not either prepare you or excuse your negligence. Each must answer for himself, and all who are mere professors and unable to endure the tests will be shut out of the Kingdom.—Compare Matt. 7: 21-23.

Should this explanation of the parable appear too simple to be attractive, let us remember the warning given elsewhere to those who indulge in vain speculations and contentions, and let us contend for the *simplicity* of the Gospel.—Titus 3: 9; Gal. 1: 7-9.

The Reward of Watching

As before stated, from the very beginning of the age the saints were exhorted to watch and pray and wait. Did those saints who fell asleep before the Lord's return and who were faithful unto death enter in? As the parable was not given as an illustration of the time or method by which the faithful enter the kingdom, but merely as a lesson on the necessity of being always prepared, the fact that some saints have died before the second advent does not invalidate the application to the entire age. No saint can do more than be faithful unto death; nothing less is acceptable to Him whose Name is professed. Therefore the tests must be applied to all, and he that endures to the end of his life or to the end of the age shall be saved.—Matt. 24: 12, 13.

All through the age the sincere believers and faithful watchers have had in their company the half-hearted and careless professors who in any time of stress are found a hindrance rather than a help, and nothing has proved more potent as a separator than the going out to meet the Lord, implying as it does the forsaking of all things, with no other guide than the light of divine truth. And so it is to-day. It is in vain to say Lord, Lord, and not to do the things which He says, to make a show of waiting His return and yet live inconsistent with the profession; ready always to impose upon the generosity and good nature of the faithful, but never ready to lend them a helping hand in an emergency. No opposition is more seductive than that endeavor of indifferent professors to take from the earnest and sincere their faith and devotion and light, which would result, were they successful, in plunging all into darkness, and leave none with a light to welcome and acclaim the ex-

pected Lord. The Apostle Paul prayed that he might be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, and no doubt many other faithful workers in the same gospel have similarly expressed themselves. (2 Thes. 3: 2.) But, thank God, the indifference and detrimental influence of the unprepared cannot deprive the faithful of their light nor despoil them of their reward.—Col. 2: 18; Rev. 3: 11.

The Door was Shut

But undoubtedly a peculiar joy comes to those saints who are living during the time when the "man of sin" is being destroyed by the active manifestations of the Lord's presence (2 Thes. 2: 8; Matt. 24: 30, 31), when the time is fulfilled of which the prophet Daniel wrote, "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days" (Dan. 12: 12), and of which the Revelator said, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." (Rev. 14: 13.) Their faith is quickened by prophecy fulfilling all around them, the

things of this world no longer charm, nor can they slumber on in indifference or self-indulgence. There is work to be done in arousing others and telling them the glad news! And finally, when their labor is done, the last detail of character development attained, they shall receive the promised glory. And the closed door, which means the exclusion from the High Calling of the careless and indifferent, will mean to them security and felicity in the Master's presence for ever more.

"Forever with the Lord!

Amen; So let it be;

Life from the dead is in that word,

'Tis immortality!"

In conclusion it must be remarked that this parable is limited in its application to professed believers in the Lord and His return to reward His saints. The majority of mankind, knowing nothing of the Savior and His great Salvation, are not dealt with. They are concerned, however, in the parable of "the Sheep and the Goats," which will now have our attention, the last of the Prophetic Parables.

(To be continued.)

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Kingdom Herald

Vol. 4

MELBOURNE, LONDON, AND BROOKLYN, N.Y., JULY, 1912

No. 4

Prophetic Parables

(Continued from June Issue.)

The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats

—Matt. 25: 31-46.—

31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 Then shall they also answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

REMEMBERING that this combined prophecy and parable is in continuation of our Lord's answer to the disciples' question, "What shall be the sign of thy presence, and of the end of the

age?" we study it with a view to seeing in what way it answers that question, or, rather, the two questions. That the Messiah should deliver the Jews from their Roman masters, and Himself reign over them at Jerusalem as their King, was still the impression of the disciples; and this impression was so strong upon them that even after His resurrection they again brought the subject before Him (Luke 24: 21; Acts 1: 6), having apparently failed to appreciate the force of another of the Lord's statements, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more."—John 14: 9.

The Son of man was indeed King, not of the Jews only, but of all nations; it was not, however, as a human king that He would reign over them. Though they had known Him in humiliation and suffering, betrayed by the Jewish rulers and crucified by the Roman world-power, the time was coming when positions would be reversed, when He should sit upon a throne, and all nations be His inheritance. (Psa. 2.) But the disciples, knowing that He had been present unrecognised among the Jews for thirty years before His ministry proper began, and that even during His ministry the majority of the nation knew Him not (John 2: 26, 27, 31-33; 19: 15), naturally desired some signs by which they might know of His presence following His crucifixion and subsequent glorification, of which He had told them, though they only imperfectly apprehended that the Messiah must die.

"The Throne of His Glory"

"When the Son of man shall come in His glory." One could wish that the Lord had definitely stated when this should be, but evidently it was not His purpose to make knowledge on the subject too easy of attainment. He wishes His people to watch and pray, to observe transpiring events, and diligently to study the Scriptures in order that their thoughts may be ever actively engaged on the things pertaining to the Kingdom. We therefore search the Scriptures in order to ascertain when the Lord entered

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upon His glory, and when he should "come" in that glory.

First we have the Lord's own statement to the two disciples going to Emmaus—

"Ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?"

The "glory," then, was to follow the suffering. But how long after? The evidence is abundant that He entered into His glory when He was raised from the dead—

"... the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."—1 Pet. 1: 3.

"... that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory."—1 Pet. 1: 21.

"Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities and powers being made subject to Him."—1 Pet. 3: 22.

"Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church. . . ."—Eph. 1: 20-22.

Here the glory of dominion and power over every name that is named in this age is certified as belonging to Him as truly as that over every name in the next age, and as truly as His present headship over all things to the Church. Concerning the latter there has been no question among Christian people; concerning the former there has been some doubt as to whether His "all power" over the nations was given at His resurrection or is still to be given in a future age. But the above and other similar passages of Scripture should settle all controversy. Our blessed Saviour's present position as Lord of glory, and Ruler over the kings of the earth, is described in a number of expressive titles—

Lord and Christ.—Acts 2: 36.

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.

A Prince [or Ruler] and a Saviour.—Acts 5: 31.

Judge of the living and the dead.—Acts 10: 43.

The Lord Christ.—Col. 3: 24.

Prince [or Ruler] of the kings of the earth.—Rev. 1: 5, R.V.

God—"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."—Heb. 1: 8.

If it be objected that Jesus has not entered into the glory of dominion over the earth, because men do not see that glory, and do not see His will done on earth, we can but remind ourselves that Jehovah is supreme Ruler of the universe, and yet evil flourishes on the earth. The fact that He allows evil does not prove that it exists in spite of Him, but rather that in His eternal purpose it can be made to work out good to those who are rightly exercised by their experience with it. The fact that the militia do not surround our house and make us prisoners does not prove that they are not able to do so, but rather that it does not suit the authorities to exercise their power in that way. The point to be noticed in considering our Lord's present position is that He possesses "all power in heaven and in earth," and that He is exercising it now, and will exercise it in the future, in accordance with a definite plan.—Matt. 28: 18; Eph. 1: 9-12; 3: 9-11.

From other Scriptures we learn that, having entered into His glory, He sent the disciples among all

nations, to call upon all men everywhere to repent, and to take out from among them a people for His name. (Acts 17: 30; 15: 14; Rom. 1: 16.) When all had been gathered out, these should sit with Him in His throne, and exercise authority with Him over all the peoples of the earth.—Rev. 3: 21; 20: 4.

This Kingdom of God to be established on the earth was prophesied of by the beloved Daniel, who saw representations of four universal empires—the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman—which should successively hold sway over the known world, and who was shown that the God of heaven would set up a Kingdom which should overthrow all these, and it should stand forever. (Dan. 2: 36-45.) The cutting of the stone out of the mountain was not the setting up of the Kingdom, neither was the growth of the stone the establishment of the Kingdom. It was not till the stone was developed to a certain extent, and till it had smitten the image on its feet, that the Kingdom was considered as "set up." From this we learn that it is necessary for earthly governments and institutions to be smitten by the Kingdom of which Jesus Christ is Lord, and the Church joint-heirs, before that Kingdom can be considered as "set up" in the earth as a recognized and triumphant power, as universal and as powerful as the four great empires which preceded it, but differing from them in that it shall have no successor.—Dan. 2: 44.

Further, according to the New Testament, the chief ruling authority, Christ and the Church, should be in heaven, but (according to Daniel) the kingdom should be established "under the whole heaven." (Isa. 45: 18; Dan. 7: 27; John 16: 28; 14: 2, 3; Rev. 21: 1-4.) Our Lord taught His disciples to pray—"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6: 10.) And when all mankind have been fully dealt with, when God's will is done on earth as it is done in heaven, then the beautified earth shall be the eternal abode of the redeemed and perfected race, as it was intended at the beginning (Gen. 1: 26), and the authority of the Kingdom shall be delivered by the Son to the Father, that God may be all and in all.—1 Cor. 15: 24-28; Rev. 21: 1-4, 23-27.

"Shall Come in His Glory"

In the parables of the Watching Servants, the Virgins, and the Talents, the Lord showed the tedious waiting and yet activity of His people during the age in which they were to make their calling and election sure to a place with Him in the throne. At the end of the age, or period of testing, they would enter fully into the "joy of the Lord." The expectations and teachings of the Apostles were in harmony with this. Paul said, not that he expected to be rewarded at death, but—

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing."—2 Tim. 4: 8; cf. 2 Cor. 4: 14.

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."—Col. 3: 4.

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first. . . ."—1 Thes. 4: 16.

He warned the Thessalonians not to be troubled or shaken in mind in anticipation of the "day of Christ," because it would not come in their day:

the "mystery of iniquity" must first be revealed. (2 Thes. 2: 2.) From these and similar passages, such as 2 Thes. 1: 7; 2 Tim. 4: 1; Rev. 11: 15-18, it will be seen that the second advent does not mean the giving to the Lord Jesus of additional power or authority; it means rather the public manifestation of power and authority already His, in the carrying out of the work then in order to be accomplished; e.g., the glorification of His saints, the forcible restraint of Satan, and the practical laying hold of the affairs of men—turning out the old, effete systems of religion, the corrupt governments, etc., etc., and establishing a *new order of things* on the earth. (Rev. 20: 1-3; 18: 21; 21: 21; 2 Pet. 3: 10-13.) In the accomplishment of all these things He sits upon "the throne of His glory," and before Him are gathered all nations, both the living and the dead; for all the dead, small and great, shall stand before the "great white throne" (Rev. 20: 11), and shall be instructed in righteousness, the believing and obedient being rewarded, and the wilfully perverse destroyed.—Rev. 21: 6-8; 20: 9.

We have already shown how the words "come," "visit," etc., are used in the Scriptures concerning Jehovah. A manifestation of His providence was a "visit," as when He "came down" to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt, and sent His Son to be born of a virgin. (Gen. 50: 24; Exod. 3: 8; Luke 1: 68.) In Psa. 50: 3, it is said, "Our God shall come," etc., but the following verse explains that He does not leave His place "above" but merely that He sets certain works in operation—a fire of trouble and destruction, a call to ruling powers and social order, and issues a command for the gathering of His saints. This prophecy began to be fulfilled at the first advent by the judgment on His people the Jews and the gathering out of the Church. He also "visited" the Gentiles by sending the Gospel to them. (Acts 15: 14.) In none of these instances did He appear to their natural eyesight. (John 1: 18.) So with our Lord Jesus: He will "come again," will "descend," or come down, manifesting His personal interest in mankind by acts of providence in their behalf. His reign with the Church over the earth will be manifested *by events*, and not by His appearing as a man among them. He will sit, not on a material throne at Jerusalem (as the disciples supposed until the Lord instructed otherwise, and as many still think notwithstanding the Lord's instructions), but on "the throne of His glory" in heaven.—1 Tim. 1: 17.

The Holy Angels

"And all the holy angels with Him." Doubtless those heavenly angels or messengers who sang the joyful song of His birth, who ministered to Him in the wilderness and in Gethsemane, who were commanded to worship Him, and who attended Him after His resurrection, now form part of His royal court. They add to His dignity and glory, besides showing to men that other and higher creatures than themselves delight to honor the King of kings. (Luke 2: 9-14; 22: 43; Matt. 4: 11; Acts 1: 10; Heb. 1: 6; Rev. 5: 11, 12.) They are all His servants to do His bidding. Several ancient MSS. and the Revised Version omit the word "holy" from verse 31; that these messengers are holy is, however, self-evident.

But Col. 3: 4 states that "when Christ, who is our

life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Therefore the "messengers" referred to in Matt. 25: 31 may be no other than the faithful "servants" mentioned in the preceding parable. These are the "overcomers" who will be in attendance on the King of kings. (Rev. 19: 14.) True, they are "joint-heirs," but in a subordinate sense, they being many (144,000—Rev. 14: 1-3), and all subject to Him. Blessed will be the privilege of worshipping and serving Him through endless ages; glad will they be, like Gabriel and others of the heavenly host, to carry out unquestioningly His directions in connection with the kingdom age work among men.

"Ye Reign as Kings Without Us"

Some Christians have sought to anticipate the thousand years' reign by achieving personal wealth and influence in this world. The apostle Paul wrote to some of these, expostulating with them for their wrong course, and adding that if they were actually reigning with Christ he would be reigning also; the fact that he, a faithful apostle, was suffering bonds and afflictions was evidence that the time for reigning had not begun. (1 Cor. 4: 8-16.) A definite promise had been given "the twelve" (which later excluded Judas and included Paul), that they should sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Their teachings have judged Israel and the Church, Israel's successor to the promises, all through the age, but the eminence of one's teachings can hardly be considered an adequate fulfilment of a promise to sit on a throne, given in answer to a direct question concerning personal sacrifice and an expected personal reward. (Matt. 19: 27-29.) The gospel message given out by faithful Christians since has prospered in the thing whereof God sent it, in taking out the people for His name, and in overthrowing many earthly evils and evil institutions (Acts 15: 14; 19: 17-20; Rev. 8: 7, 8), but the individual believer has in each instance, like Paul, suffered personal loss quite incompatible with a "reign." On the contrary, others have domineered over him, particularly great Babylon, in whom is found "the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain on the earth." (Rev. 17: 5, 6; 18: 24.) Far from "reigning," the saints have been "slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." (Rev. 6: 9.) Their reign does not parallel their sufferings; it follows them, after they have been proved to be overcomers (Rev. 20: 4; 2: 26, 27; 3: 21), and it is definitely limited to a thousand years.

"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."—2 Tim. 2: 11, 12; cf. Rom. 8: 17, 18.

Let us not therefore by becoming entangled in worldly affairs and triumphs merit the same rebuke as was given to those to whom Paul wrote. Let us give all diligence to the suffering now; then shall we be ready for the glory when it is God's pleasure to bestow it. (2 Thes. 2: 14; 1 Pet. 1: 4; Jude 24.) When He appears, we shall appear with Him in glory; and we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.—1 John 3: 2.

"As a Shepherd Divideth"

his sheep from the goats, so the Lord will separate between the righteous and the wicked in the King-

dom age. The words "separate" and "divideth" (verse 31) are from the same Greek word. The Lord will separate between the righteous and the wicked as a shepherd separates between his sheep and his goats. Here is introduced the parabolic feature of the prophecy—a comparison or similitude is made, a spiritual truth is taught, by means of an illustration from the lives of the shepherds of the east.

Our Lord referred to the intimate relation existing between a shepherd and his flock when He said, (1) My sheep hear my voice, (2) and I know them, (3) and they follow me; (4) "a stranger will they not follow." (John 10: 3-5, 27.) A recent traveler, Mr. Harold J. Shepstone, declares that these characteristics of shepherd and sheep are literally true in Palestine to-day, and he describes various tests as witnessed by himself, by which the native shepherds demonstrated their skill and the confidence reposed in them by their flocks. Each sheep is known to the shepherd by facial expression as well as by name, and each sheep knows its own shepherd's voice, giving no heed to any other, even though the imitation be indistinguishable to a human ear. If two flocks become confused together at a well, their respective shepherds readily separate each his own sheep by uttering the usual call. It is not that each shepherd has a different call, but, the call being the same, the difference is in the tone of voice. Sometimes a shepherd has flocks of both sheep and goats,* and if these mingle together, they also must be separated, the sheep generally following him on the right, and the goats at the left. In other words, the shepherd applies an individual test, and owns or disowns a sheep or goat accordingly. So in the Kingdom age a subtle test will be applied—a test as between the Lord himself and each individual soul which stands before Him for judgment. And that test will be—

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—Matt. 25: 40.

Loving the Brethren

The principle underlying this test is of the same nature as that which underlies the tests of the present age and of previous ages. Love and loyalty have been demanded of God's people from the beginning, and one expression of that love is in love and service to God's people. Moses chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of the court of Egypt, because he had respect unto God and His promises. So all the other worthy ones mentioned in Heb. 11. They were not only loyal to God, but they loved and served His people. The lack of love for God was shown by such as the Pharisees, by their rejection of God's prophets and their lack of love and service for His people. The Pharisees did indeed garnish the tombs of those whom their fathers had slain. That cost them nothing, and gave them a reputation for virtue. Their real character was shown by their imposing heavy burdens upon the people of their own time, and crucifying the Lord who came to deliver and bless the people.

*The goat was and is a valuable animal in the east, and must not be considered as condemned by our Lord's use of the goats to represent the wicked. It is the method of separation that is the point of the parable. For information concerning the uses of the goat in eastern countries see any Dictionary of Biblical knowledge.

To illustrate His meaning concerning the right attitude of the disciples toward one another, the Lord Jesus called a little child and set him in the midst, and said—

"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."—Matt. 18: 3-5.

Again He said—

"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."—Matt. 10: 40.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another."—John. 13: 35.

We receive our absent Lord by receiving those whom He sends as His messengers; we demonstrate our love for our Lord and our Heavenly Father, whom we have not seen, by showing loving kindness to the brethren whom we do see; for "Everyone that loveth Him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of Him." (1 John 3: 11-17; 4: 20, 21; 5: 6.) Each brother who humbles himself as a little child will be ready to love any brother (or sister) whom God gives him. (James 2: 1-9; 1 Cor. 1: 26-31.) To despise or hate a brother is to reflect on the Lord's ability to choose His own disciples, and convicts God of error in begetting His children. (Jas. 1: 18; 4: 11.) If those who are "in Christ Jesus" do not love one another, what influence for good can they expect to have upon one another? "If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (Gal. 5: 15; Jas. 4: 1.) And he who has not the spirit of Christ (which is love) is none of His.—Rom. 8: 9.

Further, we are exhorted to do good to all men, as we have opportunity, especially to them who are of the household of faith.—Gal. 6: 9, 10.

The tests are very searching, very severe; it is required, not only that the brethren do the work of evangelizing which the Lord commissioned them to do, but that they love sincerely and truly those who are reached by their evangelization, so much so that they will gladly suffer loss for their sakes. (1 Pet. 1: 22; Col. 1: 24; 2 Cor. 4: 15.) He who hates his brother is a murderer, because hate seeks to destroy or to injure in one way or another. But he who loves his brother succours and nourishes him, as a father or mother would do (1 Cor. 4: 15; Gal. 4: 19), sorrowing over his lapses and rejoicing with him over his victories. (2 Cor. 2: 4; 6: 4-13; 12: 15; 13: 7, etc.) Brethren, how is it with us? Are we finding the tests too severe? Or are we overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and His all sufficient grace?

Separating and Gathering

It was foretold that to Shiloh "shall the gathering of the people be." (Gen. 49: 12.) Many centuries later it was declared that all things should be "gathered in one under Christ." (Eph. 1: 10.) This work of gathering our Lord began at his first advent. He gathered first a remnant from the Jews, and to them He added a selection from the Gentiles. (Isa. 56: 8; John 10: 16; Rom. 11: 5, 17; Luke 13: 34; John 11: 52.) This "gathering" necessarily implied "separation." (Luke 12: 51-53.) Each disciple who took up His cross to follow the Master necessarily became separated from old associations, political, religious and social. The rich young man

had to forsake his wealth; the hesitating young man could not postpone decision till the death of his father in hope of obtaining an inheritance. (Matt. 19: 21; 8: 21, 22.) The rulers, rabbis and scribes, as well as the ordinary Jews, were called out of the synagogue and from the old temple worship. (John 4: 21-24; Acts 19: 8, 9.) The believer must be separated from father, mother, houses, lands, "all that he hath." (Luke 14: 26, 33.) The Gentiles also were called out from association with the things they held dear. (2 Cor. 6: 14-18.) Those interested in political panaceas and expedients must forsake them also, and recognize that God's Kingdom is the only power capable of grappling with earth's problems.

It was no indiscriminate gathering that the Lord performed in Galilee and Judea; and He exhorted His disciples to take heed that they operated in harmony with Him; for "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." (Matt. 12: 30.) Again, He declared that there should be "one fold and one Shepherd," and He prayed that the disciples might be "one." (John 17: 22.) The separating work and the gathering work have progressed side by side since Pentecost; the final separation and gathering being effected when the "overcomers" are "caught up" to meet the Lord in the "air," and so shall be forever with the Lord.

It is no new principle, then, that is introduced, in the parable of the Sheep and the Goats, as being the basis of the Judgment of the Thousand Years—separation and gathering, under the test of love and loyalty.

A Twenty-Four-Hour Day ?

Nor are we compelled to accept the popular view that the parable represents the transactions of a twenty-four-hour day, during which the billions of humanity are arraigned before the great white throne, their earthly record read out in the hearing of all their friends, neighbours and enemies, and their place instantaneously announced either among the "sheep" at the right or the "goats" at the left. A little calculation will soon convince the attentive student of the absurdity of such a process. Granted that the total number of persons born into the world as descendants of the first pair is twenty-seven billions (27,000,000,000), or, let us say, for convenience, twenty-four billions (24,000,000,000), they would pass the judgment throne in twenty-four hours at the average rate of one billion per hour, or (in round numbers) sixteen millions per minute, or three millions per second. Now what good purpose would be served by so undignified a procedure? Certainly not the glory of God, nor yet the moral or spiritual benefit of the persons so dealt with. It is only when the larger, more reasonable and Scriptural view of the Judgment of the Sheep and Goats, and of the office of the Lord Jesus as Judge, is taken that the real lesson of this parable is appreciated.

The Thousand-Year Judgment

If we can understand that our Lord Jesus was given the high office of Ruler or Judge at the time of His exaltation, and that the entire Gospel or High Calling age, a period of over eighteen hundred years, has been occupied in the judgment of His servants, who are being fitted for the position of "joint-heirs" (1 Pet. 4: 17), it should not be difficult to apprehend

that His dealings with mankind in general will occupy the thousand years of the Kingdom age, during which time His joint-heirs will reign with Him. And if we can understand that the judgment of His people during the High Calling age included their instruction and discipline, covering many years in their individual lives as well as in the age as a whole, there should be no difficulty in realizing that the same goodness, generosity and patience which mark His dealings now will be manifested then. It must never be forgotten that God's love was not and is not limited to a few, for He so loved the whole race of mankind that He sent His son to die on their behalf. Nor should we forget that our blessed Lord, who so loved them as to come into the world to carry out this beneficent purpose, loves them still, and is interested in the salvation of all for whom He died. So while for eighteen hundred years His interest has appeared to be limited to a few, it is in reality embrace of the many. He is the Seed of Abraham, in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed. (Gen. 12: 3; Gal. 3: 16.) He blesses a few now, and He will bless the remainder in the future. (Acts 3: 26; Gal. 3: 8, 14; Eph. 1: 7, 8; Rom. 8: 21, 22.) This blessing consists of the opportunity to hear the truth concerning Jesus and His sacrifice for sins and to turn from evil to good. This opportunity has come to a few in this life; the majority await the resurrection and the judgment of the Thousand Years.

But is it not written that "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil"? (Eccl. 12: 14.) Yes, but read the previous verse, "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." Evidently the Jewish people were addressed, who knew both God and His commandments; and hence, as stated in Gal. 3, were under obligation to keep the law, and were cursed by the Law for not continuing in all the things prescribed therein.

In Romans 2: 16 we read that God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus; that is, instead of judging them by the Law given to Israel, He has "committed all judgment unto the Son;" hence, whether one has previously been a Jew under the Law, or a Gentile having only the light of nature, the real and final judgment of both is that which accompanies the knowledge of Christ and the law of love which He imposes. The Gospel is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Rom. 1: 17.) The gospel is equally the power of God for the condemnation of every one who sins wilfully against it. It reveals the wrath of God against sin, as well as His pleasure in righteousness. (Rom. 1: 18.) It is those who are contentious and do not obey the truth when it is brought to them who are punished by "tribulation and anguish;" or, as stated in John 3: 19—"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." It is for the purpose of giving to all men who have not already had it the opportunity of comparing the light of truth with the darkness of error and superstition that the Kingdom age judgment has been arranged.

In order that the tests of the Kingdom age may be effective, they must be of such a nature as to

manifest the secret thoughts and intents of the heart, and to demonstrate beyond peradventure who are, and who are not, worthy of the inheritance referred to in Matt. 25: 34. And the deepest, most searching of the tests of that age can be no more searching than that of the present age; namely, love—love in thought, and love in action.

Love in Thought and Action

None but beings developed and perfected in love can be acceptable to God, for God is love (1 John 4: 16), and He cannot deny Himself, nor repudiate righteousness, by tolerating evil and hatred in any shape or form. (Hab. 1: 13; Psa. 66: 18.) God is the absolute embodiment of love, and its most notable manifestation was the sending of His own Son into the world. This manifestation of God's love toward us begets in our hearts a sense of love and gratitude toward Him; the contemplation of our blessed Saviour's sufferings and death in our behalf develops still more of love and gratitude toward both the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit sheds abroad in our hearts yet more and more of this wonderful love. (Rom. 5: 5; 1 John 4: 13.) Those who have this love are the children of God, and those who have it not are not His children. (1 John 2: 8-11; 3: 10-15.) If this love be the requirement of those who shall be joint-heirs in the Kingdom, it is none the less the requirement of those who shall be acceptable afterwards under that Kingdom. Love is the perfect law which under the New Covenant is inscribed on the heart of the believer, whether in this age or the next. (Heb. 8: 10; 2 Cor. 3: 3-6.) Love is the word which the Father gave Jesus to speak, and that is the Word by which men will be judged "in the last day."—John 12: 48.

Love is the manifestation of the spirit which shall never fail, because God, who is love, will never fail. It involves not only thoughts of benevolence and good will, but activity in good works. Even "faith" must work "by love" to be of real value. (Gal. 5: 6; Jas. 2: 26.) Love reaches out to all in need; it not only desires their blessing, but takes active steps to accomplish it. It may be imitated, as gold may be counterfeited, but the imitation cannot endure the crucible. There has always been an abundance of so-called love in the world, which is in reality selfishness disguised. The love that endures is of the thoroughly unselfish kind, as the parable shows—feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, etc., etc., because they are His "brethren."

The Lord Hungry and Afflicted

"Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?"

It must not be supposed that these words will actually be uttered by each individual who is approved or disapproved during the Kingdom age. Much less could they be said by each individual in the fraction of a second allowed for in the popular twenty-four-hour-judgment-day theory already alluded to. Were Jesus personally visible, with countless favors to dispense, doubtless all classes would seek to mollify him in order to profit by His bounty, just as many now profess Christianity for the material benefits it brings them. But these hypocrisies will not deceive the King of kings; neither is He deceived by those who now profess to love him

but in reality hate their brethren despising the poor, and catering to the rich and influential. His Word will judge in the last day, and that Word will have lost none of its sharpness, for it divides between the intents of the heart and the desires of the flesh; between the outward bone and the inner marrow. "All things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."—Heb. 4: 12, 13; John 12: 48.

For only a short period, during His earthly ministry, "in the days of His flesh," was Jesus in need of food and drink. As Lord of glory He has no physical needs. The nations in general in the Kingdom age will be aware of this, as we are aware of it now. The Ancient Worthies, who are to be the "princes in all the earth," will be His earthly representatives, and will no doubt promulgate a moral and civil code for the obedience of all and sundry, with penalties attached for infringement. With these rules and regulations strictly enforced, the opportunities for open, flagrant sin will be comparatively few and the temptations to secret sin correspondingly greater. But secret sins also bring penalties, and in time become outwardly manifest; hence the prudent, who still retain an indolent and selfish heart untouched by the manifestations of divine love and power all around them, will become, if one may use the term, passively good; that is, they will not do any active wrong, but neither will they do any positive good.

But some reader may ask, What good works will be open to the average person in the Kingdom age, if the Ancient Worthies are to be in charge of affairs on earth, and the Lord and the saints rule over all from Heaven? In general, the answer would be (1) to fall in line and co-operate heartily with those in authority, on the same principle that the Lord enunciated during His ministry, that whosoever gathers not in accordance with God's will and arrangements arrays himself in opposition, if only passively (Matt. 12: 28, 30; Rev. 3: 15, 16); and, in particular, (2) as stated in the parable, by service to others in need, whose needs will be counted by the Lord as though He were in need, and ministering to whom will be counted as ministering to Himself, on the principle in vogue during the Gospel age.—Matt. 10: 40-42.

Poor and Needy in the Kingdom Age

To some it may come as a surprise that there should be such in the Kingdom age, since many Christians have adopted the belief that the Millennium, or thousand years' reign, will be a period of perfect peace and good will among men in a perfect environment. The Millennium or Kingdom age is not, however, the ultimate of happiness and perfection. As shown in 1 Cor. 15: 23-28, it is not until the end of His reign that all enemies, including death, will have been "put down." Consequently, the Kingdom age is an age of probation, of instruction in righteousness, and of discipline as well. Rev. 21: 1-8 pictures in a few words the work of the entire age. A period of a thousand years seems only a reasonable one, when it is considered that the myriads of the dead are to be brought forth and dealt with as well as those nations who are alive when the time for setting up the Kingdom arrives.

Of the resurrection of the dead, many passages give assurance—

"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."—Dan. 12: 2.

"The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment."—John 5: 28, 29. See R.V.

"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."—Acts 24: 15.

"The dead, small and great, stand before the throne."—Rev. 20: 12, R.V.

That all the dead will come forth in one moment of thrilling excitement, amid opening graves, toppling tombstones and general confusion, is not conceivable when we consider who is Master of the situation. The Lord of glory would hardly display less order, foresight and management than a general marshalling his troops, or a ship provisioning for crew and passengers, or even a mother supplying the wants of her family. The dead tumbling pell-mell out of their graves may be very picturesque to the mind of an imaginative poet and very amusing to the audience at a picture theatre, but it is not Bible. For several reasons which lack of space forbids us to go into here, we understand from Rev. 22: 1, 2 that the dead will come forth at the rate of about a thousand millions (1,000,000,000) every thirty years. The pure river of water of life will flow out from the throne of God and the Lamb, and the Spirit and the Bride will say, Come, and take of the water of life freely. Moreover, the ancient worthies, as living examples of the beauties of holiness, will be as trees nourished by the river, and will yield the fruits of love, joy, peace, and good works generally, for the instruction and healing of the peoples.

The risen dead will require not only this instruction, but also physical comforts; and while these will no doubt be to a large extent provided for by a paternal government, there will also be room for personal service on the part of every individual who is in heart-sympathy with the Lord and the great work of blessing then in progress. The genuine believers, who really love God, will then see their opportunity to manifest their faith by their works, and each one will be glad to assist in whatever capacity, however humble, the authorities of the time will be willing to use him in.

Then also will be demonstrated who are rendering only "feigned obedience," not being in sympathy with the work in progress, and not moved to compassion by the sight of the poor and needy, the sick and the imprisoned—all of which terms were probably used by our Lord to represent various kinds of spiritual and moral as well as physical needs. There are sin-sick and truth-hungry, and the prisoners of Sin and Death, as well as the physically suffering captives of disease and pain.

Thank God that during that blessed time He will "wipe away all tears from their eyes;" and at the close "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."—Rev. 21: 4.

"Inherit the Kingdom"

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom

prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—Matt. 25: 34.

The Kingdom here referred to, "prepared from the foundation of the world," is apparently that arrangement made when our first parents were created, set in the Garden of Eden, and given dominion of earth and its contents. Had they not sinned, they might have remained in the garden, and lived forever, nourished by the "tree" or grove of life—probably fruit-bearing trees such as are now found good for food. The fact of their sin did not, however, frustrate God's plan to have the earth filled with righteous and happy beings, formed in His image, and, like Him, having a dominion, for he had foreseen their fall, and provided the remedy. (Rom. 5: 12, 18, 19; Rev. 13: 8.) In the absence of a definite invitation to some other sphere or plane of existence, a "remedy" would imply a recovery of their lost estate. This purpose remained unchanged when God gave Abraham all the land his eye could see for an everlasting possession. (Gen. 13: 14-17.) His purpose was still the same when Isaiah said—

"For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it; he created it not in vain [or, to be ruined—Young], he formed it to be inhabited. I am the Lord, and there is none else"—Isa. 45: 18.

Several prophecies in the New Testament refer to a "new heavens and earth;" that is, a new ruling power (of government and religion) over the earth, and a new order of things, or new social order, on the earth.—2 Pet. 3: 13; Rev. 21: 1, 5, 24-27.

The prayer the Lord gave to His disciples, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth," would be vain, were it not susceptible of fulfilment; were it not already determined in God's mind to bring about such a condition of things on the earth.

That the High Calling invitation to the Church is exceptional is shown by the particularity with which her call to obtain the glory of the Lord is explained. It is the exclusive privilege of those who follow His steps in the age between the First and Second Advents.

"Ye Blessed of My Father"

Although the Lord Jesus is the great Judge, and the Church is His associate, yet it is the Father's name which is honored in pronouncing the final blessing upon the "sheep" at the right hand. And why? Because He is the One for whom the Lord Jesus has been acting in the Judgment; it was His law that was infringed by man, and it is to His perfect law that they must be enabled to conform by the New Covenant arrangements, and by the process of "regeneration," or making new of their characters. So our Lord said, "In the *regeneration* when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, . . ." (Matt. 19: 28.) Another reason they are "blessed of my Father" is that they will have shown that disposition of love and benevolence which the Father requires.

In the High Calling age, those who are developing in the true love of God need have no fears as to the outcome, for they know God will not condemn the image of Himself which He sees in them. (1 John 4: 16-18.) Against love and the other elements of the "fruit of the Spirit" "there is no law;" hence those who practise these virtues are not condemned

in the doing of them; they have the constant assurance of God's Word, and also of their own consciences, that they are acceptable to God and approved of Him.—Gal. 5: 22, 23; 2 Cor. 1: 12; 1 Pet. 2: 19-23.

So in the Kingdom age; God's blessing rests con-

tinually upon those who demonstrate that they are in truth His children because they manifest His spirit of love.

The "whole family in heaven and earth" is "named" after God. God is love, they also are "love."—Eph. 3: 14, 15.

(To be continued.)

Fruits in Season

WHEN "our beloved brother Paul" told the people that God gave a continuous witness of Himself, in that He did good, and gave them rain and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness, he made a statement which none could contradict—a statement of a fact as evident to-day as it was eighteen hundred years ago. And this "witness" was to the end that they might "seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him."—Acts 14: 15-17; 17: 24-27.

Within the past six months God's demonstrations in nature have continued to call forth the reverence and awe of those who know Him and to impress those who know Him not with the fact of a Supreme Being in whose hands they are as helpless as shells upon the sand; One therefore to be sought after if haply they might find Him and understand the reasons for His dealings, the "whys and wherefores" of life and of things as they are.

Following the wreck of the "Titanic," the Brooklyn *Eagle* published an expressive cartoon, entitled "Man: The Sea is His and He Made It." A towering iceberg is pictured, with huge waves of the sea dashing up against it. In the slough of the sea floats a man clinging to wreckage, with one arm outstretched to the sky, and about to be engulfed in a mountainous wave. This cartoon clearly portrays the boastful egotism of man, well needing reproof at the hand of his Maker. It is to be hoped that many will take this lesson of nature to heart, and humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, seeking Him, and finding Him through the only door of access—Christ Jesus.

ONE CAN see a useful lesson in the sinking of an "unsinkable" ship and the destruction of luxury-loving millionaires. What lesson in the starving millions of Russia and China? Where the fruitful seasons in those afflicted countries?

In man's fallen and sinful state a "bumper" crop is not always the best for him. A succession of good years should indeed lead him to raise his heart in gratitude to the bountiful God; but such is his egotism that he too often looks out over the waving grain, and says, as did Nebuchadnezzar when viewing Babylon, See the great work which I have done! And he eats, drinks and is merry with others of like mind. But let his seed lie ungerminating in a foot of dust for two months, let his grass burn to the color of the dull ground, let his sheep die for lack of water, and behold, he is ready to pray. The Egyptians defied God in the face of mighty

miracles, but could not long resist Him when their crops, their flocks and their herds, were touched. It was in the respite following each plague that they hardened their hearts. The children of Israel treated Him with contempt when they prospered, but required only a good chastisement to bring them begging for mercy. And human nature is the same to-day.

Not that the millions of poor in China and India, as in Russia, and even Britain, might not have less experience with starvation were the country better governed and provision made in good years for the lean which are known to be possible and even probable (no doubt man by his selfishness and mismanagement adds much to his own sufferings), but that lessons for men to learn by must be in large type, and plain enough to be observed and commented on throughout the world, that the experience of one section may influence all to serious thoughts, and cause the requisite tide of sympathy and suggestions for improved methods. And as each generation dies when it has learned a few lessons, and the oncoming generation is usually in the flush of its youth as obtuse and egotistical as the preceding, the same lessons need to be demonstrated over and over again. But, blessed thought! though each generation passes away without the opportunity of putting in practice to any considerable extent the wisdom it has gained by experience, yet the lessons are not wasted, the wisdom not learned in vain. There is a "good time" coming, when the practical value of man's experience with the terrors as well as the bounties of nature and nature's God will be demonstrated to a resurrected race; and he who has died mourning, Oh, that I might live my life over again; I would live it so differently! will have the opportunity of showing the sincerity of that wish and desire by his obedience to the Kingdom of God established in the earth.

How God's providence may be manifested in a perfectly natural way, and yet amount to a miracle for which thousands will at least nominally and in the enthusiasm of the moment give thanks to Him, was demonstrated in Australia in the last month of the half-year. The beginning of the month of June saw farmers worried in fear of a prolonged drought, wholesale houses apprehensive through lack of orders from the wheat growing areas of Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia, sheep dying from lack of grass, lambing a probable failure, and metropolitan business men cautious concerning in-

vestments. Sunday, June 9, saw the drought broken by a phenomenal rain extending over the whole eastern half of Australia, bringing joy and gladness to the entire country. Rain in Queensland at this time of year is abnormal, and in the season seldom reaches farther than the east coast of New South Wales. This year, however, Eastern Queensland has been having an extraordinarily wet time. Normally, there is little or no rain in Queensland in the winter. This month many places ranged from five to eleven inches. But the rain which visited the dry areas of the interior was still more extraordinary—not only “abnormal,” but “providential.” It was not only providential in that it came just in time to save the crops and to prevent the annihilation of stock, but in that it was a *tropical monsoonal* disturbance, driven a thousand miles south of its usual course and drawn like a mantle of charity over the entire stricken district. Everyone draws a breath of relief; the country is saved!

DOES THIS give us an idea of how in the past God made the winds His messengers to bring either punishment or blessing upon Israel and other nations? It was “an east wind” blowing all day and all night which brought the locusts from central Asia to Egypt, and it was a “mighty and strong west wind” which took away the same locusts and cast them into the Red sea, so that there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt.—Exod. 10: 12-19.

Again it was a “strong east wind” which divided the waters of the Red Sea, for the children of Israel to pass over, and the cessation of the wind caused the waters to fall upon and destroy the Egyptians. And Moses sang, “Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” It was by the natural phenomena of a great storm of hail brought up *just at the right time and in the right place* that the Lord discomfited the enemies of Joshua.—Exod. 14: 21-28; Josh. 10: 10, 11.

ON OTHER occasions nations were brought up like “whirlwinds” to do His pleasure in the punishment of His people Israel for their sins.—Ezek. 1: 4; Jer. 23: 19; 25: 32, 25.

If we can see God’s providence in the natural phenomena, should we not also be able to see it in his dealings with nations?

BUT THE welcome rain gives us another lesson, suggested by the remarks of the Commonwealth meteorological expert, Mr. Hunt. After explaining

the peculiarities of the monsoonal visitation *from the north east*, he says, as reported in the press:—

“But we will have more rains here in Victoria after Wednesday and towards the end of the week, for one of the ordinary Antarctic disturbances has developed over Western Australia, and ample rains of from half an inch to an inch and 30 points have been recorded all over their wheat areas. Starting at Hamelin Pool, in the extreme north-west, the rain belt stretches to the south coast to a point well east of Albany. This storm will also give an additional fall in Victoria. *Of course rain, or rather moisture, draws moisture.*”

Mr. Hunt went on to explain that now rain clouds approaching the rained-over areas would not be so “timid” about letting the moisture fall. When the air and the ground were dry it took a lot to bring the rain, but when both the earth and the atmosphere were heavily laden with moisture, the rain was more easily drawn from passing storms. He therefore expects that this approaching Antarctic storm, which usually would not reach inland much further north than the Dividing Range, will stretch even as far north as the Goulburn, and benefit further all the south-eastern portion of the continent.

Remembering the advice given to sowers of glad tidings in Eccl. 11: 1-6, to sow the seed whether they could see rain clouds in sight or not, and seeing that the Australian farmers who sowed the seed in the dry dust *in hope* that rain would come are now in a better position than those who waited for the rain, because their seed is ready to germinate at once under the influence of the timely rains, shall we not take courage, and continue to sow the seed even under dry and unfavorable conditions? and trust that the same providence which can bring a monsoon a thousand miles out of its course to water the drought-stricken districts and bring another storm from almost the opposite point of the compass to continue the good work, can bring to the Gospel seed the necessary moisture in due time? What matter that we cannot see the clouds! If we could, where would be the faith?

Further, if instruments are used to sow the seed, and if other instruments are used to water that seed, shall not each one who can water such of the seed sown by others as comes under his observation? If he can give it only a *little moisture*, it will then be in a better position to attract and hold more from others who as clouds pass by with spiritual refreshment; and so, while one may plant the good seed, many passing by may water it, and ultimately the glorious fruitage in season be forthcoming; for God giveth the increase, and “we are labourers together with God” and with one another.—1 Cor. 3: 6-9.

THE LORD JESUS Himself grew up as a root out of dry ground, but He had in Himself the moisture necessary for perfect growth. Nevertheless, He craved refreshment from His disciples, and yearned for special outpourings from God. How much more do His people need one another’s love and sympathy!

—Q. O.

It Passeth Knowledge

“It passeth knowledge, that dear love of Thine,
My Jesus, Saviour; yet this soul of mine
Would of thy love, in all its breadth and length,
Its height and depth, its everlasting strength,
Know more and more.

“It passeth telling, that dear love of Thine,
My Jesus, Saviour; yet this heart of mine
Would sing that love, so full, so rich, so free,
Which brings a rebel sinner, such as me,
Nigh unto God.

“But though I cannot sing, or tell, or know
The fulness of thy love, while here below,
My empty vessel I may freely bring;
O Thou, who art of love the living spring,
My vessel fill.

“Oh, fill me, Jesus, Saviour, with thy love!
Lead, lead me to the living fount above;
Thither may I, in simple faith, draw nigh,
And never to another fountain fly,
But unto Thee.”

—Mary Shekleton.

A Work of Faith

Annual Report

FAITH which works by Love—not by Envy, nor by Contention, nor by Vainglory, but by Love—is stated by the Apostle to be the profitable thing. This point—"by Love"—is therefore the one that should be prominently before our minds, as consideration is given to the account of the activities of the past twelve months. The work of publishing, by means of the "Advocate" publications, the glad tidings of the love of God in Jesus our Redeemer and Mediator, has been a work of faith from the start that was made over three years ago; and at no time has it been more a work of faith and trust than during the past twelve months. It has been well to have had faith; also it has been well to have learned through trials to have more faith. And it is well that faith should have worked; otherwise it had been a corpse. We should all see to it that our faith works; but we should also see that it works by the prompting of love, for that is the only profitable sort of working faith. Without love, all knowledge, zeal and faith must remain profitless.—Gal. 5: 6; 1 Cor. 13: 1-3; Phil. 1: 15; 2: 3.

The reports presented annually in these columns are not reports merely of the activities of the offices; they are summarized reports of the activities of friends and sympathizers in all parts of the world. Because these doings are more or less associated with the publications, the office records are useful for the purpose of keeping all informed as to the progress made, and the general state of the Lord's work, as we are permitted to be associated with it.

For convenience, the account of the work is given under four heads—Correspondence, "Advocate," Cheerful Givers, and Books—these departments covering all the avenues into which up to the present the work has expanded.

Correspondence Department

Into the joys and pains of sacrifice individually experienced by dear brethren and sisters as they gladly give up time, strength and money in the blessed service, it is not always given to us to enter. Only occasionally do letters telling experiences come to us. Some such letters have been published for mutual encouragement; others, equally precious, could not, for good reasons, be given publicity. We are always glad to have letters relating personal experiences in the work, and in growth in grace and knowledge, and in the columns of the "Advocate" to share as many as possible of such with all the

friends. Questions on Bible subjects are always welcome; these also are often of general interest, and are shared with all friends by means of the "Advocate."

The number of letters received at Melbourne during the past twelve months (statistics for British and American offices are not at present available), was substantially greater than the record for 1910-11. It is hoped that there will be a gratifying further increase in this department in the next twelve months. We shall be particularly pleased to have more "experience" letters from our dear friends, that we may thus be permitted to have fellowship in your joys and sorrows. "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." (1 Cor. 12: 26.) So take unto yourselves paper and pen, and send us often your ever welcome letters; they will be the next best to personal visits.

Letters and cards received 1066

Letters and cards sent 706

"Advocate" Department

In this department of the service of Truth the editor and his helpmate have been granted a most congenial labor of love for the Lord and His people. The endeavor has been to keep the testimony of the "Advocate" faithful to the grand truths in defence of which the paper was called into existence; viz., that Jesus, the sole Mediator of the New Covenant, is Mediator for us, now, as He will be for all who shall ever come to God, and that His sacrifice for sins requires no supplement—neither the Romish supplement of the mass nor the more modern one which assumes that Gospel age believers are permitted to consider themselves joined with Jesus so that they may be the sacrifice for the sins of the world.

At the same time the "Advocate" seeks to declare and to stand fast for the "whole counsel"—whatever can be seen to have Scriptural support—and this in no sectarian spirit, but with a true desire and readiness to receive and to send further whatever truths of the Word, hitherto undiscerned or imperfectly apprehended, the Holy Spirit may guide into. This is the ideal; your prayers are desired that we may be granted grace to live up to it, so that the "Advocate" may be an instrument for the glory of God and for the further blessing of His people. We say "further blessing," for we

have reason to believe that some have been blessed, and in another column of this issue appear a few confirmatory words.

A monthly paper is not published without some anxiety concerning finances, and the "Advocate" has had to realize something of this during the past twelve months. Enjoying no income from advertisements, and not yet deriving from its regular list of yearly subscriptions sufficient revenue to meet all expenses of publication and postage, the "Advocate" must needs depend upon the faith of its readers, working by love, to help meet the bills which come in month by month with unflinching regularity. During the twelve months just closed there was a period of no little anxiety on this score; but, thanks be to God, He put it into the hearts of some of His people to help, and so that crisis was passed. Some of the friends have adopted the "Go Forward" plan of regular weekly contributions to the Advocate Sustaining Fund, the amounts accumulated being sent in at monthly intervals and being distinguished by the letter "G" after the donation number in the monthly list. At present there are scarcely enough of these to keep the future of the "Advocate" quite free from financial anxiety, yet we must try to avoid over anxiety, as we realize that the work is the Lord's, and that He knows all about its needs better than we could tell Him. "Who led us last will lead us still."

For the information of new readers it is appropriate again to state that the "Advocate" is under

no expense for editorial services. Outside the actual printing and postage, the only charge against the "Advocate" is one-third of the expense for office rent, light, and heating, and even this is reduced by the fact that some friends have been contributing regularly to the office rent, so that one-third of the *net* office expense only is charged. The contributions toward office expenses in the last twelve months amounted to £15/8/6 (\$74.96). None of the money sent for the "Advocate," whether as yearly subscriptions or to the Sustaining Fund, is applied to the personal use of the editor, who considers himself greatly privileged to serve in this capacity.

The accompanying financial statement shows a small amount to the credit of the "Advocate," all issues up to June inclusive having been paid for. But the July issue has now to be paid for, so the small credit balance will not carry us very far. There has been some increase in the number of readers during the year, but it will be discerned that still more regular readers are needed in order that the "Advocate" may become self-sustaining. This is where your activities have an excellent opportunity. You can be co-workers together in this cause, and can thus render great assistance. Some of the friends are taking an active part in this feature of the work, and are securing new readers, but the number of such workers must and doubtless will increase, as the realization of the opportunity and the need comes home to the hearts of more of the friends.

FINANCIAL REPORT, "NEW COVENANT ADVOCATE"

JUNE 15, 1911, to JUNE 17, 1912.

Receipts

Subscriptions and Sales of Extra Copies	£ 85 18 8		\$ 417.63
"Advocate" Sustaining Fund	267 6 6		1299.14
			£353 5 2	\$1716.77

Expenditures

Paper and Printing 32,000 Copies "Advocate"	£208 14 9		\$1014.46
Postage	62 4 6		302.41
One-third net Office Expense (12 months)	16 7 1		79.48
			£287 6 4	\$1396.35
Credit Balance, Carried Forward		£65 18 10	\$320.42

"Cheerful Givers" Department

This branch of the service attends to the publication and distribution of tracts, which are supplied free of all cost to any of the friends who will use them. Here is a great field of labor open to all who have the mind to do something, and who cannot

for good reasons engage in some of the other departments. It is a very simple thing to give out a tract. To do so often leads to interesting conversations in trains and trams, and is sometimes the means of finding earnest inquirers for better things.

To use the tracts systematically from house to

house is also very good. A good many well meaning and earnest people have become tired of the insipid and spiritually unnutritious food supplied in Christendom, and knowing nothing better to do, they stay at home. The proportion of these constantly becomes greater, and some of them are really desiring better things, but know not where to turn in hope of satisfying their desires. The only way to get in touch with such people is to *go to them*; and one of the ways of doing this and at the same time of offering them something better than they have known before is by slipping a tract under the door. But as we do not know exactly the houses in which these people live, we must place tracts in *every*

house, so as not to miss any of the class particularly sought after—those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Every reader should use the tracts in one way or another, and you will always be welcome to supplies from any of our offices. During the past year, 120,000 tracts were published, and are now being circulated.

There are other directions in which the "Cheerful Givers" Fund could be used to great advantage. One of these is the work of giving public lectures on these great themes. Openings for this work are not wanting, and whenever the fund increases sufficiently to provide travelling and other expenses, something of the kind will be undertaken, also other work for the spread of these truths among the people

REPORT OF "CHEERFUL GIVERS" FUND

JUNE 15, 1911 TO JUNE 17, 1912.

Receipts

Carried forward, Loan to "Bible Talks"	£203 18 4	\$991.03
Voluntary Donations received	130 12 1	634.71

Expenditures

Paper and Printing Tracts	£51 2 2	\$248.37
Freight and Postage	40 0 9	194.57
One-third net Office Expense	16 7 1	79.48
Balance Due from "Bible Talks" carried forward	227 0 5	1103.32
	£334 10 5	\$1625.74
	£334 10 5	\$1625.74

The receipts of this Fund were less than for the year preceding. This was due, no doubt, to the fact that more attention was bestowed upon the Advocate Sustaining Fund than had been given it before. But the total of the two Funds for the year shows an increase of more than £60 (\$300) over the total of the same Funds for the preceding year, which is encouragement to hope for greater progress during the coming year. Under the stress of circumstances, a small portion of the "Cheerful Givers" Fund (£23/2/1—\$112.29) was used last year for the temporary assistance of the Book Department, and the loan to that Department has thus been correspondingly increased, whereas it had been hoped to reduce it still more. This is disappointing, but better things are prayed for and expected, and they will come along in due course, under divine Providence. As it is with the "Advocate" money, so is it also with the Cheerful Givers' Fund; the only charge against it, aside from actual cost of paper, printing, freight and postage, is one-third of the net office expense.

A Legacy before Decease

During the past year a small sum of money was received as a donation which does not appear in the above accounts. A sister who desired to bequeath

something to the work bethought her that she would like to see the work benefiting now by the amount of money. Accordingly, she sent it, and we have given her a receipt containing a clause which allows her, if need requires, to draw on the money during her lifetime. Whatever balance remains in our hands at her death will then be credited and accounted for as a donation.

Book Department

During the year, the lines have fallen in hard places for this department of the Work of Faith, the circulation having been less than during any year since the beginning. In Australasia, the number of colporteurs has diminished, not through any decrease in their interest in the cause, but through ill-health or family circumstances. No new ones have yet offered to take the vacant places. In other parts there has been almost no colportering, the books circulated having been in ones and twos by interested friends.

Colportering

Carrying the message from house to house is a method of work sanctioned by the Lord himself, who sent His disciples from house to house and city to city in a systematic canvass of Palestine. Doing

the same work now with books gives the spoken word the aid of an instrument not available in ancient times, the book now sold being calculated to recall and emphasize the spoken word, besides providing for the current expenses of the worker. In our last issue there was a call for colporteurs; the same appears again in this issue, and we would wish to direct special attention to it. Does not the Spirit prompt any of us to give up and lay down all for the sake of serving Him who laid down all for us? Besides being the most practical form of taking part in the service, there is no doubt in our minds—we speak from experience—that the circulation of the message in this manner is also the most efficacious way of finding those who are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. There seems to be something in the combination of the spoken and printed message which specially has the divine blessing, and this without disparagement of work with tracts and "Advocates," for these have the blessing of heaven also.

It is understood, of course, that not all can be traveling colporteurs, but some can be, and we should be glad to hear from as many as possible about it, and as soon as possible, in order that the little time yet remaining before the close of the age may be fully employed. Write to Melbourne, London, or Brooklyn for further information.

Another Method

For the encouragement and assistance of those who cannot travel from city to city, a form of house-to-house work with books in envelopes was proposed a few months ago. This has been taken up by some of the friends in Australasia, and as a consequence there are now some hundreds of copies of the small book on "Everlasting Punishment" in circulation, some fruits of which will doubtless appear in due time. But this form of service could be used very much more largely than it has been, and we earnestly hope that it will be, not only in Australasia, but also in Great Britain and America, from which countries there has not yet been time to hear fully about it. The books and envelopes are in stock in London and Brooklyn, and the brethren in charge there will be pleased to afford every facility to friends who cannot engage in regular colportering, but who can work in this manner.

"One Book Per Week"

In last year's report, mention was made of the fact that a few Melbourne friends had determined to circulate at least one copy of "Bible Talks" per week. They would (*preferably*) sell the book, or they would lend it out or give it to some one, or, if in any week they saw no opening for a book, they would leave it with us to send to some public library

or hospital, or otherwise to dispose of to advantage. These friends have continued their efforts, personally disposing of some of the books, but leaving an average of about six copies per week with us. This method is excellent for all friends who cannot use either of the colportering methods first mentioned. When you sell your weekly book, it is a manner of combining the spoken and printed message according to the practical method of the colporteur; when you lend or give away the book, the two forms of delivering the message are again combined, together with some financial self-sacrifice on your part; when you leave the book with us to be donated to some library or hospital, or elsewhere, it finds a place within reach of someone who will some day thank God for having found it. So, by one method or another, we can be co-workers with God, and can take some part in gathering out the people for His name.

A Great Need

Hundreds of friends in all parts of the world have before now given us cause to appreciate their sympathy in both word and deed, and to thank God for it, and we feel sure that the present *great need for co-operation* in the Book Department of the Work of Faith will not pass without notice and response. Love for the Lord and His truth will prompt your faith to work; you need only be reminded of this direction in which the effort is so much needed, and the response will be immediate.

Can you be a colporteur? Thank God for the privilege, and use it. Are you so hedged about that you cannot free yourself for that service? Use the envelopes and small books, involving about two hours per week. Can you not command two hours per week for the work of delivering the message? Then put out "one book per week," and the Lord will bless the effort. If nothing more were done than this last, you would be surprised at what "one book per week" persevered in would accomplish by this time next year. Even one book per month, if kept up by all friends, would be a great help to this department.

The circulation of books during the past year has been so little that we do not like to mention the figures; but it is evident that this department as an opportunity for your activities has somehow been seriously overlooked by a large number of friends who are in every way thoroughly sympathetic with the work and who desire to see its usefulness extended. Let it suffice, then, to say that during the last twelve months the Book Department has been some degrees below "starvation point," and that that is why it was necessary to borrow from the Cheerful Givers' Fund, as above stated. The expense of the new book, "The Parables of Our Lord,"

a notice of which appears elsewhere, is coming on, the amount mentioned in the Report of a year ago as being held in reserve for it being only sufficient for initial expense, and not for entire cost of publication. (It is calculated to be a help in giving out the message, as we hope and pray, and ask you also to pray, that it may be.) You will be able therefore to understand that the need is *now* present with us; we assure you, the need is *great*; it is *urgent*; it calls

for prompt action. And we feel confident that the many hundreds of readers who have at heart the success of the work can appreciate the situation, and will take immediate steps to give a greater circulation to the books, "Bible Talks," "Everlasting Punishment," "Church and Ceremonies," and the forthcoming book, "The Parables of our Lord;" and will continually offer prayers for God's blessing upon the circulation of these publications as a work of faith by love.



From Far and Near

Twice I have seen you, once in Chicago and again in Allegheny, years ago. The love of God has pursued me with its chiseling work until this day. I know I am pressing forward to a better understanding of His perfect mind, as revealed in His beloved Son, and so I am more and more dissatisfied with my *own* disposition.

Your journal, "The New Covenant Advocate" has been and is a blessing to me, and I am glad for the numbers received. In our little gatherings I translate from the "Advocate" to the friends, and in the near future the article about the great Pyramid will be translated to them. I wish that some small books or tracts from your pen were translated into our language, as we should like to have something to distribute among the people here.

Your brother in the *only One*,
— NORWAY.

[Financial assistance has been offered by us to this brother for the publication of some of the "Advocate" tracts in his language for free distribution in Norway.—Ed.]

Thanks for the best "Advocate" we have ever had [The writer refers to the June issue.—Ed.], and may the good work continue! The thoughts expressed are the most searching and convincing that have come under my personal notice for some time, and I have been helped to greater zeal and a clearer recognition of the fact that the Lord is now reckoning with His servants. May we all be fully persuaded that nothing short of the most loyal love for Him, as expressed in the management of our time, influence, and whatever talents we may possess, will be acceptable.

Yours in Christ,
— VICTORIA.

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The Parables of our Lord

THIS new volume, which we trust will be helpful to readers, is approaching completion. It is hoped that it will enjoy a large circulation, and that under Divine Providence it may be used of the Master in His service. As the initial expense of bringing out a new book is great, and as our resources are limited, we take the liberty of asking our friends to send in advance as many orders as possible for this book. Your kind and prompt compliance with this request will be a very material assistance in the task in hand, and we shall be correspondingly thankful for your co-operation. The new book will be of approximately the same number of pages as "Bible Talks," and will be bound in handsome cloth, with gilt lettering. The retail price will be 2/6 (60 cents) per copy, but to "Advocate" readers the price will be 1/6 (35 cents) per copy. Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 5d. (10 cents) per copy. Advance orders and remittances may be sent to Melbourne, London or Brooklyn.

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MEN AND WOMEN with hearts filled with love and zeal for the Lord, His truth, and His people, to be messengers of the good news from house to house, as were the disciples of old, at the Master's command. Publications ("Bible Talks," "Everlasting Punishment," etc., and this Journal) are available, and liberal discounts are allowed on these to meet expenses of the workers. A great door is open in all English speaking countries. In regard to this work we are, as it were, on the bank of Jordan with the promised land just before us. Shall we not enter in? Or shall we let unbelief keep us out? God forbid! Pray the Lord of harvest, that He may send more laborers into the vineyard. The harvest truly is great, and the laborers few. Write to Melbourne, London or Brooklyn about this.

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"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, 1910, "Advocate." It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way.

152, 1/-; 153G, 6/-; 154, £1/1/3; 155G, £2; 156G, 2/-; 157G, 7/-; 158, 5/-; 159, 2/6; 160G, 6/-; at Brooklyn—93, \$10.25; 94, .85; 95, 3.70; 96, 1.00; 97, 1.25; 98, 1.00; 99, .25; 100, 3.00; 101, 1.00; 102, 5.00; 103, .10; 104, .50; 105, 5.00; 106, .75; 107, .60; 108, 3.00; total at Brooklyn, \$37.15 (£7/12/10); total for month, £12/3/7 (\$59.18); previously reported, £118/8/6 (\$575.53); total for year, £130/12/1 (\$634.71).

The "Advocate" Sustaining Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report. As the "Advocate" is regularly published at a financial loss, it is obliged to depend upon the loving co-operation of its friends until it shall become self-sustaining. Let the good work continue!

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Kingdom Herald

Vol. 4

MELBOURNE, LONDON, AND BROOKLYN, N.Y., AUGUST, 1912

No. 5

The Two Swords

(Luke 22: 35-38)

GREAT EVENTS were on the march. The last twenty-four hours of "the days of His flesh" had come to our Savior, and much was to be done. Many precious words of instruction were to be spoken to the disciples after the last Supper; their faith must be strengthened for the trial that was just upon them, their pride of position must be rebuked, and a lesson of humility must be taught. The Savior Himself required preparation in agonizing prayer for the coming ordeal. And certain prophecies were to be fulfilled. With all this amount of history to be made in so short a time, these few hours would be crowded with incidents sufficient—one might suppose—to engage all the faculties of even the dull-est; and yet the chosen three slept while the Master prayed.

That it might be Fulfilled

Many times is it stated in the Gospels that certain things were done "that the Scripture might be fulfilled." A familiar illustration is—

"When the even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils; and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses."—Matt. 8: 16, 17.

Those who deny the freedom of the will have sought to appropriate to their own province these fulfillments of Scripture, as though God had predicted these events and then had compelled individuals to fulfil them. The case of Judas, who betrayed the Savior and thus fulfilled certain prophecies, is often alluded to by Universalists in particular as though it were an instance of this sort. By taking this view of Judas' act it is thought to relieve him from responsibility for his deed, and to show that no punishment is due for it because Judas was only doing what God compelled him to do in order that His Word might not be dishonored by going unfulfilled. It should be carefully noted, though, that Judas was not chosen

to be a devil; he was chosen because he *was* a devil. —John 6: 70.

God's Word must be fulfilled, without doubt; and if it ever happened that persons did not of their own free will take appropriate parts in the fulfillments of prophecies as they became due, God would see to it. Such a contingency has never arisen, and since God's foreknowledge is perfect, there is no need to suppose that such a contingency would ever arise.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to know that even such an event is provided for, but not in the direction of coercing an agent otherwise free. Neither is Jehovah so limited that He must insure the correctness of His predictions by entirely withholding freedom of the will from all created beings, which would thus be helpless to do aught except at His impulse. One of the most convincing proofs of the divinity of the Scriptures is the fulfilment of its prophecies. (Isa. 41: 21-23.) But there would be no glory in foretelling the inevitable; hence it is evident that divine provision for the fulfilment of God's prophecies is not made along this line.

The Stones would Cry out

What God would do in case His intelligent creatures failed to take their appropriate part in the fulfilment of prophecies is indicated by our Savior's words to the Pharisees on the occasion of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

"And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."—Luke 19: 37-40.

The prophecy of Zech. 9: 9 was here being fulfilled, and the terms of the prophecy required a shout to acclaim and greet the King. The whole multitude

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of the disciples, moved thereto by the sight of many mighty works, rejoiced and shouted of their own free will, and so were privileged to act in fulfilment of the prophecy. Had they not been ready to shout at the right time, the prophecy would still have been fulfilled. Divine power would not have coerced the multitude to shout, but, passing them by, would miraculously have given animation, voice and speech to the silent stones, and *the stones would have immediately cried out*. God, Who miraculously predicted the triumphal entry some centuries before it occurred, could, if necessary, perform other miracles at the appropriate time, and without coercing the free will of any one, to assist in the fulfilment.

A similar thought had been expressed by John the Baptist. When the Pharisees and Sadducees trusted in their lineage, he warned them to bring forth "fruits meet for repentance."

"And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our fathers: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."—Matt. 3: 9.

The prophecy of Gen. 22: 17 required that there should be a numerous seed of Abraham, but they must be of a certain disposition. If the children of Abraham according to the flesh were not and would not be of the disposition of their father Abraham, God would not coerce them into becoming so; He would, if necessary to work a miracle, work it upon the very stones of the ground, which had not, at least, acted contrary to Him, and from them He would raise up children for Abraham.

Thus—by showing His mighty power in the inanimate creation—would God cause His prophecies to be fulfilled if the co-operation of beings with freedom of will were not forthcoming. But in neither of these cases was it necessary for divine power to resort to the stones. In the first case the multitude of the disciples was ready to raise the shout; in the second case, although the Pharisees and Sadducees were rejected, God has raised up children for Abraham from among the Gentiles.—Gal. 3: 7, 29; Rom. 4: 16.

God's people should be ready at all times to take part in fulfilling prophecies, and should consider themselves highly honored to be allowed to do so. For instance, those who realize that the events of our day show that a change is taking place in the rulership of the world should be ready to take some part—if only a small one—in sounding out the "great voices" throughout the "heavens" of Christendom, saying, "The Kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ." (Rev. 11: 15.) Such an opportunity and privilege must not be surrendered to the stones of the ground.

The Master's Readiness to fulfil Prophecy

The blessed Master on more than one occasion willingly and knowingly took part in the fulfilment of prophecy. Beyond all question, He had an understanding of His mission and its relation to many Old Testament predictions, which enabled Him to fulfil His part not blindly but intelligently. He understood the duration of His ministry, so that He could say that His time was not yet come (John 7: 6), and later could say that the things concerning Himself were coming to an end. (Luke 22: 37.) It is in view of this understanding that the Savior had of the Old Testament prophecies and His part in their accom-

plishment that His instruction in connection with the Two Swords is best understood, for in this incident is clearly brought out our Lord's willingness—even eagerness—to fulfil all the prophecies concerning Himself.

In the first place He reminds the disciples that He had sent them on a mission, and had strictly charged them to carry no money or other supplies. (Luke 22: 35.) Had they lacked any thing? No; every need was supplied. "But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip." (v. 36.) Why so? Was the Lord's providence in future to be less potent than in the past? Would He be less able than formerly to care for His messengers? Not so; the Lord would be just as able in the future as in the past, and had the errand been the same the instructions would have been similar, no doubt, as indeed they were when, after the Savior's resurrection, the apostles went back to secular business, and the Lord told Peter to feed the sheep and the lambs of His flock.

But in the present instance the Lord was sending the disciples on a vastly different message, and so keen was He in the matter, and so urgent that they have money, that He said—according to the Revised Version of the latter part of v. 36—"he that hath none [i.e., no purse], let him sell his garment." Why this urgency that they have money now? One may well stand astonished at the answer—He desired them to buy swords. What a paradox!—the disciples of the Prince of Peace armed with swords! Yet so it was.

"But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet: and he that hath none, let him sell his cloke, and buy a sword."—Luke 22: 36, R.V.

Why should they provide swords? For no other reason than to accomplish something that was written. The things concerning Him were now drawing to a close, but there was one item that must yet be accomplished in Him.

"For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end."—v. 37.

The swords were to bear some part in causing Him to be "reckoned among the transgressors." When they said they had two swords, He intimated that those would suffice.

The Part played by the Swords

When the multitude, under the command of the chief priests and elders and the guidance of Judas, came to the garden to arrest Jesus, the disciples said, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" Without waiting for a command, one of them smote off the right ear of the high priest's servant. Here was a transgression indeed—violent resistance of arrest. For although the Lord did not personally do this, it was done by one who acknowledged His authority, and whom he acknowledged as a disciple, and so He would be responsible. Was the close of the busy years of healing to be marred by the maiming of a man? No; for the damage done by the impetuous disciple was immediately repaired, the servant was healed (Luke 22: 51), and Jesus said unto Peter—

"Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"—John 18: 11.

Thus did the possession and use of the sword by a disciple cause our Lord to be numbered or reckoned among the transgressors; and had He not immediately healed the smitten servant of the high priest, thus destroying the evidence, He would have been a transgressor from the human standpoint at least, and probably also from the divine standpoint as well, inasmuch as He had not been sent to destroy but to save. (John 3: 17.) As it was, men could reckon Him a transgressor in only a very remote and not at all in an actual sense. In reality, He was an overcomer, for He resisted the temptation to turn aside; He went forward to drink the cup poured for Him by the Father, and fulfilled the Scriptures.—John 18: 11; Matt. 26: 53, 54.

An Unauthorized Allusion

There is but one other New Testament allusion to the prophecy of Isa. 53: 12 whose fulfilment is above referred to. It reads—

"27. And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand and the other on his left.

"28. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors."—Mark 15: 27, 28.

It is perhaps sufficient to observe that Mark 15: 28 occurs only in later MSS.; it is omitted by every one of the ancient MSS. and by the Revised Version, though it is noted in the margin of the latter. Strangely enough, the fact that our Savior was crucified between two thieves is almost invariably thought of as though it were the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isa. 53: 12, while the matter of the Two Swords

is practically overlooked, although this was undoubtedly the way in which the Master was numbered or reckoned among the transgressors or law breakers. Mere *association* with the thieves, as in the crucifixion, could in no way furnish adequate ground for considering, numbering, reckoning, or inventorying (as the Greek word means) Him as a transgressor. A draper when stocktaking does not inventory a piece of silk as muslin because it happens to be found among the muslins. Neither would our Lord be inventoried as a transgressor or law breaker because in His crucifixion He was found between two thieves. But the possession and use of the sword by the disciple to resist arrest constituted Him, the responsible Master of the disciple, a transgressor or law breaker in the sight of men, and would allow them, for the moment, to inventory Him as a transgressor. But only for the moment, because the disciple's action was immediately rebuked and the consequences were made good, so that this episode could not be brought in as evidence against Him. It is well to know that Mark 15: 28 does not require to be considered, as it is an unauthorized portion probably added by the hand of some later copyist, to express his own thought, which was incorrect.

Are not our Lord's faithfulness and His eagerness to be associated with the out-workings of the Father's purposes lessons to all of us, who profess to be following in His steps? Shall not we be keen to discern, faithful to do, the Father's will, counting ourselves honored to be associated in even an insignificant capacity with the fulfilment of His designs?



When was the Revelation Written?

MARGINAL notes in reference Bibles state that the book of Revelation was written about A.D. 96, and we accept this as correct. But those who profess to see in this marvellous writing a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred in A.D. 70, must needs contend that the Revelation was written before that date, or about thirty years earlier than the generally accepted time indicated in the margins of the Bibles.

This point has been contended for a long time. The evidence is not voluminous, but it is sufficient, and nothing new on the subject has come to light for many years. What is known about it to-day was equally well known fifty years ago, and what was known fifty years ago was current more than two hundred years ago. We therefore give the argument as presented by Robert Fleming, V.D.M., who preached on the subject in London, A.D. 1701, preserving as far as possible the quaintness of his language. If his argument be sound—and we do not see how the evidence can be impugned or the deductions therefrom disputed—the theory that the Book of Revelation was mostly a prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem is effectually disposed of, for the Revelation could not have been written expressly to predict what had occurred a quarter of a century

before the prophetic visions were given to John in Patmos.

We do not say that Revelation is absolutely silent concerning the fall of Jerusalem; we consider it likely that in one place at least this great tragedy is alluded to, and that there are a few other references to events that transpired before A.D. 96. But the general character of Revelation is prophetic, and the bulk of it must therefore refer, as itself states (Rev. 1: 1), to events that were to come to pass after the book was written, that is to say, after A.D. 96. Mr. Fleming's argument follows.

The revelation was written by the apostle John, and is a sacred and canonical book of the New Testament.

I hope there is no Christian that will dispute the truth of this proposition with me. For, besides that the title of John may be easily traced in this book, notwithstanding the difference of the subject from that which he wrote of in his gospel and epistles: he does frequently make mention of himself, and that with such peculiar circumstances. As agree with none but the apostle; as we see chap. 1. verse 1, 2, 4, 9. See also chap. 21. 2. and 22. 8.

I know indeed that some of the ancients doubted of this, as Caius a Latin father, mentioned by Eusebius, Hist. Lib. 3. Cap. 28, and Dionysius of Alexandria, who made a great noise against it for a while, as we see in Eusebius also, Hist. Lib. 7. cap. 4. But yet even this man declares that he owns it to be a sacred book, though not written by the apostle John. Wherein he speaks, what we must look upon to be altogether absurd. For if St. John be not the author, it must be an imposture, seeing his name is inserted in it, as being the penman. So that if it be not St. John's, it is no sacred book. Or, if it be a sacred book, the author is none but the beloved apostle. But the weakness and inconsistency of this, denies his reasons against this book, are sufficiently though briefly exposed by Monsieur du Pin, both in his preliminary dissertation to his *bibliothèque des auteurs ecclésiastiques*, and in his history of the canon of the books of scripture.

And if this were any argument against the divinity of this book, that some persons have doubted of it, or denied it to be canonical, there is hardly one book in the new testament that would stand the test: Seeing we find in the ancient Church-history that there have been not only particular men, but even sects of them, that have excepted, some against one book, and some against others. And we know, that the epistles of James, and Jude, and the second and third epistles of John, and that admirable epistle to the Hebrews, have been controverted, as well as the apocalypse: of the authority of which neither Papist nor Protestant, Grecian nor Armenian Christian doubts at this day.

And as all Christians do now acquiesce in the revelation, as a canonical book: so excepting those I mentioned, and the heretics called Alogians, all the eminent fathers of the Church received it of old. So did Justin Martyr, Dialog. cum Tryph. Irenæus lib. 4. cap. 37. and 50. and lib. 5. cap. 30. and apud Euseb. lib. 5. cap. 8. Tertullian, adv. Marc. lib. 3. cap. 5. Clemens Alexandrinus, apud Euseb. lib. 3. cap. 23. Origen in Mat. and in Joh. and apud Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 25. and Eusebius himself, Hist. lib. 4. cap. 28. Nay all the other fathers agree in this also, "viz. Epiphanius, Victorinus, Theophilus, Cyprian, Methodius, Jerom:" and other authors quoted by "Eusebius, Epiphanius and Jerom. viz. Melito, Hippolytus, Victorinus, &c.

But for my own part, were all these authorities wanting, there is that in this book itself, that would enforce me to own it as divine. For besides the augustness of its title, the wisdom of its contexture, and the purity of its design and counsels, there is something that I want a name for, that commands my belief and veneration, and insinuates itself into my affection and conscience, as if Christ himself breathed something divine in every line. But the clear view of the fulfilling of the several parts of its prophecy, is an argument that even several other books of the new testament want.

The book of the revelation of John was written after the destruction of Jerusalem.

The notion of Grotius, upon which his interpretation of Apocalypse is founded, is this; that the seven kings or heads of the beast, mentioned Rev. 17. 10. are not to be understood of seven several forms of govern-

ment, but of seven particular emperors, viz. Claudius, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian and Titus, and that Domitian is the eighth, who was of the seventh, because as he pretends, he governed during his father's absence.

The foundation which he lays, for the probation of this, is that John was banished into Patmos, in the reign of Claudius: But that though he saw his visions then, he did not write them till Vespasian's time. For he must make this last supposition, as well as the first, else his notion would be condemned immediately, seeing it is said, that five of these kings were fallen Rev. 17. 10. that is, says he and Hammond, when he wrote, not when he saw these visions. But how false this is, any body may see with half an eye; seeing these words are not John's but the angel's to him. And therefore the defenders of this opinion must find out five emperors that were fallen before Claudius, if they will restrict these heads of the beast to particular men: For if the angel spoke these words to John in the days of Claudius, they must relate to them that went before or to none.

This is enough to destroy this notion of their's, and I know not how it is possible for any of their admirers to false their credit this way. But seeing the principal thing they found upon, is this, that John saw the apocalyptic visions in the days of Claudius, and that so all, or at least most of the revelation relates to things that fell out before the destruction of Jerusalem; I shall say something further to disprove this assertion, and to confirm the verity of our proposition.

Now there are only two things adduced by Grotius and Hammond to prove, that John was in Patmos in Claudius his reign: the 1st is, that Claudius raised a persecution against both Jews and Christians, and that being the first persecutor, it is probable, that John was banished at that time. The second is, that Epiphanius does expressly assert, that it was by Claudius that John was banished to Patmos.

As to the 1st of these, it is nothing but a supposition, without any proof; for we have no account, either in the Acts of the Apostles, or in any other Writer, that Claudius did ever persecute either Jews or Christians. And Lactantius de Mort. Perf. does expressly assert, that no Emperor did persecute the Christians before Nero. It is true, Suetonius says, *Claudius Judæos impulsore Chresto tumultuantes Roma expulit*. And Luke tells us, that Claudius banished the Jews from Rome, which occasioned Aquila and Priscilla, and other Christian Jews, to retire from Rome: but neither of them say, that he persecuted the Christians, or even the Jews. Now, as for the expression of *Suetonius, impulsore Chresto*, or *Chresto*, the meaning must be this, that the Jews that did not believe, going about to stir up the government at Rome, as they did everywhere else (as is plain from the book of the acts) against the Christians, and appearing against them in a tumultuous manner, upon the occasion of Christ; complaints might probably be brought to the Emperor, who no doubt, upon this account, banished all of that nation from Rome: so that Suetonius having a confused notion of Christ, might easily be induced to express himself this way. And now that this was all that Claudius did against the Christians, is plain to me from one argument that has escap'd Dr. More, but is to me unanswerable, taken from 18th chapter of the acts; where, after the

sacred historian had taken notice of Claudius his banishing the Jews out of Rome, and of Aquila and Priscilla's being lately come upon that account from Italy to Corinth; he tells us of Paul's lodging with them, because he was of the same occupation. But being pressed in spirit, to preach Christ, upon the coming of Silas and Timothy from Macedonia, he goes into their synagogue, and reasons with the Jews and profelytes there, upon this head: and having converted some, particularly Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and Justus, in whose house he afterwards disputed; Crispus, no doubt being thrown out of his office, and Sosthenes put in his stead, and Paul continuing to preach in Justus his house, which joined to the synagogue; the Jews are incensed to such a degree, as to rise tumultuously against Paul. Sosthenes, therefore, the new chief ruler of the synagogue, and the rest of the unbelieving Jews make an insurrection, and seize upon Paul, and carry him to the judgment-seat, before the Proconsul Gallio, that excellent Roman, the elder brother of Seneca. He tells the Jews, that if Paul, or any other man, were guilty of what was lewd, wicked, or unjust, that in that case, he was obliged to punish such persons according as the Roman law and justice did require. But seeing they accused Paul of nothing of that kind, but only of doctrinal matters, relating to their own law and religion, he had nothing to do with them; and therefore he drove them all away, and set Paul at liberty, which made the gentiles fall upon Sosthenes the chief author of this tumult, and beat him before the judgment-seat, which Gallio permitted to be done, and connived at, either as judging that he did deserve to be so treated, or as supposing it might prevent the Jews from acting so factiously and tumultuously again. Now, after this short, but exact account of this history, it will be easy to see how precarious and groundless, nay false, Grotius's opinion is, of a persecutions being raised against Jews and Christians, in the days of Claudius. For if there had been any such thing, or any edict for it, how came Gallio to tolerate a public synagogue of the Jews, and suffer Paul to preach openly? or if the Christians were only ordered to be persecuted, why did not the Jews use this, as the reason of their accusing Paul, who to be sure wanted not a good-will to have done so, and were not ignorant that this would have been the main argument to prevail with the Proconsul? and had there been any such edict, can we imagine that Gallio was ignorant of it? for so he must have been, seeing he tells the Jews, that he had no orders to punish any man for his religion or sentiments that way, but only those that were guilty of wickedness or lewdness in life. If any say, that his temper was to care for none of these things? I answer, this expression may indeed denote his temper; but I suppose it speaks forth not only that, but his principle and sentiment, as judging it unrighteous to persecute, or punish any man for mere opinion. But, whatever this had been, had there been an edict for persecuting the Christians or Jews, he durst not have neglected his orders, especially when the edict must have been so recent, and when he had what might have passed for a just reason of his punishing both the party accusing, and the party accused, viz. their disturbing (as he might have represented it) of the public peace. But, indeed, it is too plain to need any further proof, that

Claudius his banishing the Jews out of Rome, was accompanied with no persecution, either against them or against the Christians. And this, Dr Hammond confirms, by what he says in his annotations on the 31st verse of the 26th chapter of the acts, forgetting, that this way he destroys his own foundation of interpreting the Revelation: where, upon these words of Luke, that Agrippa, Festus, and Berenice, and the rest of the company, after they had heard Paul's defence, did conclude, that he had done nothing that deserved either death or imprisonment; the doctor observes, that the reason why they did conclude so was, because there had been as yet no edict omitted against the Christians, by any of the emperors; and this was the reason also, says he, why Gallio, the Proconsul of Achaia, said publicly, that it was not for him to judge of things that the Roman laws had determined nothing about: For, continues the Doctor, though Claudius had commanded the Jews to leave Italy, by which the Christian Jews were forced to go away also, not as they were Christians, but because they were Jews; yet, there was yet no law made against Christians, as such, at this time. It is true, he says, that John was not only banished, as Aquila and Priscilla were, but confin'd in the isle of Patmos. But he should have given the reason, why John was the only person persecuted; however I shall examine this assertion, and the reason that the Doctor gives for it in other places of his annotations.

We come therefore now, in the 2d place, to consider the testimony of Epiphanius, upon whose credit alone Grotius and Hammond believe that John was in Patmos, in Claudius's time. And here by the way, I cannot forbear to observe the strange mistake of Dr Lightfoot, who agrees in the main with these learned men, in interpreting the Revelation, in relation to the Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem, and therefore makes John to see these visions long before that; but has this peculiar to himself, that he imagines John was not banished there, but went thither voluntarily to preach the gospel to the inhabitants; whereas John himself doth expressly tell us, that he was there as a sufferer and witness for Christ: chap. i. verse 9. "I John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ:" so that, as this refutes Dr. Lightfoot, and confirms what Grotius and Hammond agree in, that John was not in Patmos as a traveller, but as a prisoner and sufferer; so it is enough to refute even them also: for the words do plainly insinuate, that John was not the only persecuted man at this time, but that there was then a persecution raised against all Christians in general; and therefore we may be assured that he was not in that Island in the days of Claudius, in whose time we have proved there was no persecution.

But to return, Epiphanius says indeed, That John saw his visions in Patmos, in the reign of Claudius, Heref. 51 Sect. 12. and 33. But can his single authority weigh down all antiquity, that says the contrary? shall we believe him rather than *Ireneus*, who liv'd two hundred years before him, and was the scholar of Polycarp, the scholar of John himself? Now what can be plainer than the words of *Ireneus*, lib. 5. cap. 30, "if his name (viz. that of Antichrist, or the

beast), had been openly to be divulged at this time, it would no doubt have been told by him that saw the apocalyptical visions: for it is not a long time since he saw these, but even in some sense, in our own time, viz. towards the end of the reign of Domitian." And that Irenaeus had just reason to say, that John's seeing the revelation was almost in his own time, or within the memory of the men of that generation, if not his own also, is plain from chronology: for he being the scholar of Polycarp, who was martyr'd in the year of Christ 167, and being himself put to death in the year 202, if we suppose that he wrote this but ten or twelve years before his death, yet he might justly say, that there was but about an age's difference from his time, and that wherein John saw the revelation: for if John was in Patmos, towards the end of Domitian's reign, it could not be sooner in any propriety of speech, than the year 90, seeing he began his government Anno 81, and died 96. And who can doubt but Irenaeus does deliver here, what his master Polycarp had told him? for as none knew the history of John, better than that worthy person, so none had better opportunity to know what related to this matter than Irenaeus, by reason of his long and intimate acquaintance with him. This seem'd a foundation sure enough of old to Eusebius: and if some men had not some private ends to promote, by opposing it, might be a sufficient foundation to all men still. Let us, therefore, hear what this learned historian says on this head: "In those days, says Eusebius, Euseb. Eccl. hist. 1. 3. c. 23. (viz. in the "days of Cerdo, Ignatius, and Simeon, of whom he "had been speaking) the Apostle John, the beloved "disciple was yet alive, inspecting the churches of "Asia, having returned after Domitian's death from "the Island, whether he had been banished. Now "that John was then alive, it is enough to adduce "the testimony of two persons of great authority, "who are worthy of all belief, and were ever eminent "for defending the truth, I mean, Irenaeus, and Clemens Alexandrinus; the first of whom, in his second "book against Heresies, speaks thus: All the presbyters, says Irenaeus, who lived familiarly with the "Apostle John in Asia, do assure us, that they had "this related to them from John himself; for he "lived with them even unto the times of Trajan. In "this third book also, Irenaeus gives us the same "account, in these words; the church of Ephesus also, "which was founded by the Apostle Paul, and was "afterwards under the care of the Apostle John, "until Trajan's time, is an eminent witness of what "was delivered to us by the Apostles. And besides "him, Clemens likewise, says Eusebius, does not only "take notice of the same time, but gives a particular "story relating to him, in that book of his, which "bears his title; what rich man can be faked? and "then Eusebius recites the story at length, which "were too long to insert here.

Now if John lived to the days of Trajan, he must have been a prodigiously old man, according to Epiphanius, who says he was 90 years of age, in Claudius his time. For giving him all the allowance that can be desired, viz. that John was so old in the last year of Claudius, and that he died in the first year of Trajan, he must have been 134 years old at least, when he died; seeing Claudius died, A.C. 54, and Trajan did not begin to reign until the year 98,

though others say, with more probability, not until A. C. 100. Now, besides that it is not easy to believe, that so thoughtful and laborious a man should live so long, the improbability of what Epiphanius says, appears further from this; that if in the year 54, from Christ's birth, John was 90 years of age, he must have been 36 elder than Christ. And if so, it seems very odd, that Christ should say to him, from the cross, man behold thy mother, and to Mary, woman behold thy son. For as this seems to say, that he was at least as young as Christ, this account makes him an old man of near 70 years of age at that time. Which, as it must suppose, Mary to be a very aged person of between 80 and 90 at least: so it contradicts the constant and unanimous tradition of the church, which supposes him to be very young at that time. Whence Baronius says, that he was but 25 years old. And Nicephorus relates, out of an epistle of Evodius Bishop of Antioch, that the virgin herself was not then 50; seeing Christ as he asserts, was born when she was but 15 years old.

Whence it appears, how little we ought to trust Epiphanius, in opposition to all antiquity besides. Which made Drusus say, *scimus omnes Epiphanium in multis graviter hallucinatum*. And upon the same account, Petavius scruples not to correct him: for where he has it *imperante Claudio*, he writes this short note in the margin, *mendose pro Domitiano*.

But the truth is, though I am not willing to detract from this author's credit, yet I suspect it was not so much an error of judgment as of will, or that which some call a *pia Fraus*, that made him desert the tradition of the church in this matter. For his telling us this story is upon the occasion of an objection of the Montanists against the Apocalypse, taken from this supposition, that there was no church in Thyatira, when John writ the revelation: which it seems, he thought would serve another turn, if he inverted it, by telling them that John said so only by way of prophecy. Whence he proceeds to prove the verity and divinity of the book: and therefore thought his argument would be the more cogent, the further he run up the date of the revelation, and John's being in Patmos. But as this was a poor as well as unlawful shift: so I shall leave him and his authority both, to those that have more time and leisure to consider them further.

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E. C. HENNINGS, EDITOR

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Do You Believe This?

IT IS ALL VERY WELL to say that each person's chief concern should be his own salvation; to see that he lives right, and that he is ready at the last to give a good account and enter into a glorious reward. But is the person who cares chiefly for himself our highest ideal of a Christian character?

It is true that God knows His own purposes best, that he will "do right" toward the billions who have died without a knowledge of Christ, and to the billions now living who have perhaps only heard His name, but know little more. But does that excuse us in brushing aside all consideration of their future? Does it justify us in accepting the theory preached for centuries that all these unfortunates are to be tormented for ever and ever? Is endless torment our conception of "doing right" to the heathen?

"Ah, but," we often hear it said, "nobody believes that now; that is, nobody of importance or education. Men are too enlightened, and have progressed too far in benevolence and good will, to entertain such ideas. Why seek to overturn what no one believes?"

To this we reply, Would it not be wise, before making such an assertion, to ascertain *the facts* as to how many believe in eternal torment as the punishment reserved for the wicked? How many persons have you asked? How many creeds have you read? How many preachers and Sunday School workers have you questioned?

We venture to say that those who sweepingly assert that the eternal torment theory is but little believed nowadays, would be greatly surprised, if they began a candid investigation, at the vast numbers of people who still believe it and the number of creeds which still contain the teaching.

We have ourselves questioned many persons, both clergy and laity, both educated and ignorant, well-to-do and poor; and we have found that while a few are somewhat ashamed to own up to it, the majority admit either literal fire causing eternal misery, or "mental anguish," which they say is worse. How they can know that "mental anguish" to all eternity would be *worse* than physical pain to all eternity is a mystery, seeing that in this life people are as a rule more lively in stepping out of a fire, should they chance to be caught in one, than in ridding themselves of their worries, which they often seem rather to enjoy.

What Men have Said

However, let us ask a few great divines and evangelists what they believe, and have taught the people. Then we will know, not only what they believe, but what millions of their followers must have believed when they accepted the teaching given them. Let us begin way back in the second century of the Christian era, and come down to our own day. And let us remember that nowhere does the Bible justify the views presented, their origin being, not the Word of God, but heathen philosophies and mythologies. This statement can be verified at any public library.

"Knowing this, that when released from this life, we shall either live another nobler, not earthly but heavenly—or if we share the ruin of others, a *worse*

life, even in fire—for God did not create us like sheep or cattle, to serve a purpose, and then perish and disappear."—*Athenagorus*, close of second century.

"You are fond of spectacles; but there are other spectacles; that day which is disbelieved, derided by the nations, the last and eternal day of judgment, when all ages shall be swallowed up in one conflagration—what a variety of spectacles shall then appear? How shall I admire, how laugh, how exult, when I behold so many kings, and false gods in heaven, together with Jove himself groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness; so many magistrates who persecuted the name of the Lord, liquefying in fiercer flames than they ever kindled against Christians; so many sage philosophers blushing in raging fire, with their scholars whom they persuaded to despise God, and to disbelieve the resurrection; and so many poets shuddering before the tribunal, not of Rhadamanthus, not of Minos, but of the disbelieved Christ! Then shall we hear the tragedians more tuneful in the expression of their own suffering; then shall we see the dancers more sprightly, amidst the flames; the charioteer all red-hot in his burning car; and the wrestlers hurled, not upon the accustomed list, but upon a plain of fire."—*Tertullian*, A.D. 220.

"For if ye believe that the soul is originated and is made immortal by God, according to the opinion of Plato, we ought not to refuse that God is able to raise the body which is composed of the same elements, and make it immortal. . . . To those who have done well shall be assigned righteously eternal bliss, and to the lovers of iniquity shall be given eternal punishment. And this fire which is unquenchable and without end, awaits those latter, and a certain fiery worm which dieth not, and which does not waste the body, but continues bursting forth from the body with unending pain. No sleep will give them rest; no night will soothe them; no death will deliver them from punishment; no voice of interceding friends will profit them."—*Hippolytus*, A.D. 238.

"Whereas some have dared to assert concerning the nature of the reasonable soul that it is mortal; we, with the approbation of the Sacred Council, do condemn and reprobate all who assert that the intellectual soul is mortal, seeing that the soul is not only truly and of itself and essentially the form of the human body, as it is expressed in the Canon of Pope Clement Fifth, and likewise immortal; and we strictly inhibit all from dogmatizing otherwise; and we do decree that all who adhere to the like erroneous assertions shall be shunned and punished as heretics."—*Pope Leo X.*

"The unbelievers shall be companions of hell-fire forever." "Those who disbelieve we will surely cast to be broiled in hell-fire; so often as their skins shall be burned, we will give them other skins in exchange, that they may taste the sharper torment." "They shall be dragged on their faces into hell, and it shall

he said unto them, "Taste ye that torment of hell-fire which ye rejected as a falsehood." "They shall be taken by the forelocks and the feet and flung into hell, where they shall drink scalding water." "The true believers, lying on couches, shall look down upon the infidels in hell and laugh them to scorn."—*Mohammed; Extracts from the Koran.*

"The bodies of men after death return to dust and see corruption; but their souls (which neither die nor sleep), having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them. The souls of the righteous, then being made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory waiting for the full redemption of their bodies; and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torment and utter darkness reserved to the judgment of the great day."—*Presbyterian Confession of Faith.*

"Those wicked men who died many years ago, their souls went to hell, and *there they are still*; those who went to hell in former ages of the world *have been in hell ever since, all the while suffering torment.* They have nothing else to spend their time in there, but to suffer torment; *they are kept in being for no other purpose.*"—*Jonathan Edwards, Sermons, Vol. II.*

"Man has a body and a soul. The body dies. The soul never dies. The souls of the good will be happy in heaven. The souls of the wicked will be miserable in hell."—*Scripture Lessons, pub. by the American Tract Society.*

"*Second Death.* Death and hell are to be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; that is, the bodies of the wicked, once mortal or dead, and their souls united together shall be shut up in Tophet, where all the former torments of both shall be summed up with inconceivable increase, after which, no effect of the divine curse shall remain anywhere but in that pit of *endless misery.*"—*Brown's Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Smith.*

"The damned shall be packed like brick in a kiln, and be so bound that they cannot move a limb, nor even the eyelid; and while thus fixed, *the Almighty shall blow the fires of hell through them forever.*"—*Ambrose.*

"God has revealed it to be His will to punish some of mankind forever. You know not but you are one of them. Whether you will be saved or damned depends entirely on His will. And supposing He sees it most for His glory and the general good, that you should be damned. On this supposition then, *you ought to be willing to be damned; for not to be willing to be damned in this case is opposing God's will.*"—*Samuel Hopkins, D.D., Works, Vol. III, p. 145.*

"Is it intolerable to burn part of thy body by holding in the fire? What then will it be to suffer *ten thousand times more forever in hell?*"—*R. Barter, "Saints Rest."*

"In boiling waves of vengeance must I lie?
Oh! could I curse that dreadful God and die!
Infinite years in torment shall I spend,
And never, never, never, at an end?"

Ah! must I live in torturing despair
As many years as atoms in the air?
When these are spent, as many thousands more
As grains of sand that crowd the ebbing shore?
When these are gone, as many yet behind
As leaves of forest shaken with the wind?
When these are done, as many to ensue
As stems of grass on hills and dales that grew?
When these run out, as many on the march
As starry lamps that gild the spangled arch?
When these expire, as many millions more
As moments in the millions past before?
When all these doleful years are spent in pain,
And multiplied by myriads again,
Till numbers drown the thought, could I suppose
That then my wretched years were at a close,
This would afford some ease; but Ah! I shiver
To think upon the dreadful sound—forever!
The *burning gulf* where I blaspheming lie
Is time no more, but vast eternity.
Bound to the bottom of the burning main,
Gnawing my chains, I wish for death in vain.
Just doom! since I that bear the eternal load
Contemned the death of an eternal God."
—*Ralph Erskine, "Gospel Sonnets."*

"Sinners shall suffer *the most grievous torments,* both in soul and body, and without intermission forever. These torments are beyond expression, and our most fearful thoughts cannot equal the horror of them."—*Body of Divinity, Boston.*

"Suppose that we saw with our eyes for twenty or thirty years together, a great furnace of fire of the quantity of the whole earth, and saw there Cain, and *all the damned as lumps of red fire,* and they boiling and leaping for pain in a dungeon of everlasting brimstone—and the black and terrible devils, with long and sharp toothed whips of scorpions lashing out scourges on them, and if we saw our neighbours—yea, our own dear children—swimming and sinking in that black lake, and heard the yelling, and crying of our young ones—if we saw this, we should not dare to blaspheme the majesty of God."—*Samuel Rutherford, "Trial and Faith."*

"Only conceive the poor wretch in the flames. See how his tongue hangs from between his blistered lips! How it excoriates and burns the roof of his mouth, as if it were a firebrand! Behold him crying for a drop of water. I will not picture the scene, suffice it for me to say that the hell of hells will be to thee, poor sinner, the thought that it is to be Forever. Thou wilt look up there on the throne of God—and on it shall be writ Forever. When the damned *jingle the burning irons of their torments,* they shall say Forever. We are sometimes accused, my brethren, of using language too harsh, too ghastly, too alarming, with regard to the world to come. But if we could speak thunderbolts, and our every look were a lightning flash, and our eyes dropped blood instead of tears, no tones, words, gestures, or similitudes of dread could exaggerate the awful condition of a soul which has refused the Gospel, and is delivered over to justice."—*C. H. Spurgeon.*

[Justice? Is eternal torment justice?—Ed.]

"Forever harassed with a dreadful tempest, they shall *feel themselves torn asunder* by an angry God, and transfixed and penetrated by mortal stings, terrified by the thunderbolts of God, and broken by the weight of His hand, so that to sink into any gulf would be more tolerable than to stand for a moment in these terrors."—*John Calvin.*

"As the souls of heretics are hereafter to be eternally *burning in hell*, there can be nothing more proper than for me to imitate the divine vengeance by *burning them on earth*."—*Queen Mary*, as quoted by Bishop Burnet.

"The bodies of the damned will be salted with fire, so tempered and prepared as to burn the more fiercely, and yet never consume."—*John Whitaker*.

"The world will probably be converted into a great lake or liquid globe of fire—a vast ocean of fire, in which the wicked shall be overwhelmed, which will always be in tempest in which they shall be tost to and fro, having no rest day or night, vast waves or billows of fire continually rolling over their heads, of which they shall forever be full of quick sense within and without: their heads, their eyes, their tongues, their hands, their feet, their loins and their vitals shall forever be full of a glowing, melting fire, fierce enough to melt the very rocks and elements; and also they shall be eternally full of the *most quick and lively sense to feel the torments*; not for one minute, nor for one day, nor for one age, nor for two ages, nor for a hundred years, nor for ten thousands of millions of ages, one after another, but forever and ever, without any end at all, and never, never to be delivered."—*Jonathan Edwards*, Sermons, Vol. VII, p. 166.

"And, lastly, eternal death fills both body and soul with *most intense pain*, and the highest torment and anguish which can be received within a created, finite capacity. All the woes, griefs and terrors which humanity can labour under, shall then, as it were, unite and really seize upon the soul at once. Surely a *bed of flames* is but an uneasy thing for a man to roll himself upon to all eternity! The suffering which shall attend this estate, no tongue can express, no heart can conceive. Pain shall possess the body; horror, agony and despair shall rack the mind; so that the whole man shall be made the receptacle and scene of misery, the tragical scene for vengeance to act its utmost upon, and to show *how far a creature is capable of being tormented, without the loss of his being!* . . . For every lash which God then gives the sinner shall be with a scorpion; every pain which he inflicts shall be more eager than appetite, more cruel than revenge; every faculty, both of soul and body, shall have its distinct, proper and peculiar torment applied to it, and be distinctly struck there, where it has the quickest, the tenderest, the sharpest sense of every painful impression."—*Robert South*, on "The Wages of Sin."

"If a man were compelled to lie still, or to lie in bed in one posture, without turning, for seven years together, would he not buy it off with the loss of all his estate? If a man were put upon the rack for every day for three months together (suppose him able to live so long), what would he not do to be quit of his torture? Would any man curse the king to his face were he sure to have both his hands burned off, and to be tormented with torments for three years together? Would any man in his wits accept of a hundred pounds a year, for forty years, if he were sure to be tormented

in the fire for the next hundred years together without intermission? Think then what a thousand years may signify; ten ages; the ages of two empires. But this account I must tell you is infinitely short. . . . Hell could not be hell without the despair of accursed souls; for any hope were a refreshment and a drop of water, which would help to allay those flames, which as they *burn intolerably*, so they must burn forever."—*Jeremy Taylor*, on "The Foolish Exchange."

"Think now, O sinner, what shall be thy reward when thou shalt meet thy Judge? How shall the adulterer satisfy lust when he lies on a bed of flames? The swearer shall have enough of wounds and blood *when the devil shall torture his body and rack his soul in hell*. The drunkard shall have plenty of his cups when *scalding lead shall be poured down his throat*, and his *breath draw flames of fire instead of air*. . . . Oh! what a bed is this! no feathers, but fire; no friends but furies; no ease but fetters; no daylight but darkness; no clocks to pass the time away, but endless eternity; fire eternal always burning, and never dying. Oh! who can endure everlasting flame? It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever and ever. The wicked shall be crowded together like bricks in a very furnace. . . . What *woes and lamentations* shall be uttered when devils and reprobates and all the damned crew shall be driven into hell never to return! Down they go, howling, shrieking, and gnashing their teeth. . . . What wailing, weeping, roaring, yelling, *filling both heaven, earth and hell!*"—*Ebenezer Erskine*, on the Judgment.

[Heaven, under the above conditions, would hardly be a happy place for anyone with a vestige of the love of God or the compassionate mercy of Jesus.—Ed.]

"It is an unspeakably terrible thing for anyone to be lost. Even to those who suffer least, it is not only the loss of all, and a horrible lake of everburning fire; but there are *horrible objects* filling every sense, and *horrible engines and instruments of torture*. Unmortified appetites, hungry as death, insatiable as the grave, are so many springs of *excruciating and ever increasing agonies*, so many hot and stifling winds, tossing the swooning soul on waves of fire. And there will be *terrible companions*; and everyone utterly selfish, malignant, fierce and devilish. There will be *terrible sights and sounds*. Fathers and sons, pastors and people, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, with swollen veins and bloodshot eyes, straining toward each other's throats and hearts. Upon such an assembly God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, cannot look but with utter detestation. His face shall be red in His anger, His eyes shall not pity, nor shall His soul spare for their crying. The day of vengeance is in His heart.* It is what His heart is set upon. *He will delight in it*. . . . The wicked go away into everlasting torment. [The parable says "punishment." Ed.] If after enduring it all for twice ten thousand times ten thousand years, they might have deliverance, or, at least, some abatement, it were less terrible. But this may never, never be. There is a great gulf fixed, and they cannot pass from thence. Or if after suffering all

* A manifest misapplication of Scripture.—Editor.

this as many years as there are sand grains in the globe, they might then be delivered, there would be some hope. Or, if you multiply this sum, too infinite to be expressed by figures, and too limitless to be comprehended by angels—by the number of atoms that compose the universe, and there might be deliverance when they had passed those abyssmal gulfs of duration, then there would be some hope. But no! When all is suffered, and all is past, still all beyond is eternity.”—*Rev. Wm. Davidson.*

“When thou diest, thy soul will be tormented alone; that will be a hell for it; but at the day of judgment they body will join thy soul, and then thou wilt have twin hells, thy soul sweating drops of blood, and thy body suffused with agony. In fire exactly like that which we have on earth, thy body will lie, asbestos like, forever unconsumed, all thy veins roads for the feet of pain to travel on, every nerve a string on which the devil shall forever play his diabolical tune of Hell’s Unutterable Lament.”—*Spurgeon*, on the “Resurrection.”

“His soul is in hell, O ye children of men! While ye thus speak, his soul is in the beginning of those torments in which his body will soon have part, and which will never die.”—*J. Henry Newman*, on “Neglect of Divine Calls.”

“The evil portion shall be continual without remission of evil, no days of rest, no nights of sleep, no ease from labour, no periods of the stroke, nor taking off the hand, no intervals between blow and blow; but a continued stroke, which neither shortens the life, nor introduces a brawny patience, or the toleration of an ox, but is the same in every instant, and great as the first stroke of lightning; the smart is as great forever as at the first change, from the rest of the grave to the flames of that horrible burning.”—*Jeremy Taylor.*

“Their cursings are their hymns, howlings their tunes, and blasphemies their ditties.”—*Christopher Love.*

[This writer’s sentiments belie his name.—Ed.]

Popular Evangelists of To-Day

We have now seen examples of the teaching generally current in Christendom for sixteen centuries, Rev. C. H. Spurgeon being one of the most gifted of those who taught the doctrine of eternal torment, and whose writings were household words all over the English speaking world a generation ago. That he was a devoted Christian, and sincere in his belief, does not make it right. The Bible is the standard of truth, and where any speaker, however great or learned, is out of harmony with the Scriptures, he does not speak the truth. Why they did not see the truth on this subject we can only surmise. This much is evident, however, their searchings of the Scriptures could not have equalled their zeal in imaginative utterance, else they would have discovered the symbolic uses of “fire,” “iron furnace,” “Gehenna,” etc., as used in the Scriptures, and would have observed that it was Satan and not God who said, “Ye shall not surely die.”

Among recent evangelists, Moody, Torrey and Chap-

man are perhaps best known. Moody preached eternal torment, and was most successful in making converts. This may have been due largely to the fact that with the error he also preached the truth concerning the Saviour as having died for our sins. Many we have heard of believed in Jesus gladly, without feeling certain on the torment question; those converted through fear of endless torment often proving but transitory converts. In later years Moody’s Institute has turned out many Christian workers, but unfortunately most if not all proclaim the error as persistently as the preachers already quoted, though usually in less forceful language. One would think that if the doctrine were true the evangelists would speak out even more plainly, as time goes on and millions more hurry yearly to their fearful doom.

Dr. Torrey on “Hell”

During the great simultaneous mission held by Dr. Torrey and a company of evangelists and singers in Melbourne, May, 1902, he spoke as follows, in Exhibition Hall, May 1st, and we call special attention to the similarity of his teaching, and even of many of his phrases, to those of his predecessors:—

“First of all, Hell is a place of *physical anguish*. . . . ‘Destruction’ means ceaseless torment, day and night. . . . There will be much physical anguish of the intensest kind. The wicked will be raised with bodies which will be fit partners of the spirits that inhabit them.

“Secondly, Hell is a place of *ceaseless remorse*. . . . The rich man REMEMBERED. . . . All of you that have rejected the Son of God, and have trampled under foot the wondrous love that gave Him to die on the cross for you, you will take your memories of lost opportunities and wasted lives into Hell with you. Oh, the tortures of memory! . . . Yes, hell will be a place of memory—unceasing memory. Remorse without surcease or rest, the worm that dieth not forever and ever! . . . Hell is the madhouse of the universe, where people remember!

“Third, Hell is a place of *consuming and unsatisfied desire*. . . . In Hell you will be like a man with a swollen, parched tongue, longing for a drop of water, and not being able to get any.

“Fourth, Hell is a place of *ever-increasing degradation, baseness and vileness of character*. . . . It is the law of sin to sink deeper and deeper and deeper. . . . Oh, you men and women, . . . what a prospect that is, of a bottomless pit, where you go down and down and down, sinking lower and lower and lower, getting viler and viler and viler, through all eternity. That is Hell!

“Fifth, Hell is a place of *shame*. Oh, there are few agonies in this world like the agonies of shame. Hell is a world of shame, of grief, of dishonor!

“Sixth, Hell is a place of *evil associations*. The offscouring of the world will be there—the unbeliever, the sorcerer, the murderer, all liars. . . . That will be your society throughout eternity. Oh! friends, Hell is a place where men and women sink for all eternity! There is no love in Hell. There is no friendship in Hell. All is hate, and everyone is hated and hateful.

“Seventh, Hell is a place *without hope*. Oh, we can endure great pain and shame if we know that yonder there beams some star of hope. But the

never ceasing wail and moan from that restless sea of fire is, 'Forever! forever! forever!'

"Such is Hell—a place of anguish, a place of memory and remorse, a place of consuming and unsatisfied desire, a place of ever increasing degradation, corruption, shame, and agony, a place of unhal- lowed companionship, a place without hope. Men and women, is not anything better than going to Hell?"

In a subsequent address at the same place, he said—

"Did you ever burn yourself seriously? If so, you know the pain it brings. Now think of such suffering enduring year after year, century after century, aeon after aeon, even to the ages of ages! Shall- low thinkers say, 'Oh, this can't be true!' But don't you see men suffering here, year after year, with no hope, if they reject the gospel? If the day comes when repentance is impossible, what remains but an endless hell?"

In May, 1909, Dr. Chapman and Mr. Alexander visited Melbourne with a band of workers, and con- ducted a mission similar to the Torrey mission of 1902. At the Collingwood Town Hall, May 7th, Rev. W. Nicholson, one of the evangelists, said—

"Hell is a place of death, the terror of kings, and the king of terrors. It is a place of death, and still they never die. It is a living death. It is a dying and a dying, and yet no cessation of life. I do not concern myself whether it is a place of physical suffer- ing, and I believe it is, but I know a man's memory will make it hell—when the past sin awakens and appears like ten thousand mirrors around; when death makes life so horrible that men would commit suicide. But there is no suicide in hell. The memory will be awakened, but there will be no whisky to still the memory. . . . You will shut your eyes; you will try to stop thinking; but all your efforts will be unavailing. You will remember your mother's tears, and your father's prayers will haunt you. Oh, God! the horrors of recollecting! My God! what a sensa- tion when you awake in hell!"

Dr. Chapman, when asked if he endorsed Rev. Nicholson's lurid language, replied to the effect that he would not have expressed it in those terms. Exactly how he would have expressed it, he did not tell the interviewer. In his own addresses, however, there was an evident desire to avoid the subject and call attention more directly to the Savior. Is it not to be regretted, however, that our blessed Savior's name should be associated with such unChristlike teaching?

In May of this year, 1912, the Chapman-Alexander party again visited Australia. On this occasion, when Dr. Chapman spoke of the "lost," and of the fate that awaits unbelievers in general, he left his hearers largely to draw their own pictures. The uncertainty of the future would thus be made almost as terroris- ing as specified torments such as Dr. Torrey described, for most of the people who attended had the ordinary idea of hell as a place of torment in their minds, and a word or two from the preacher would be sufficient to awaken their fears.

Among the People

As to the prevalence of the belief in eternal torture among the people generally, two letters received from friends cast a sidelight upon it. The first is from a

Melbourne suburb, the second from a friend travel- ing the country districts of Victoria. They follow:—

As I mentioned to you a few weeks ago, I have had some strange experiences when selling "Everlasting Punishment" booklets.

One friend bought the book straight away, saying he was interested in such subjects. Next time I saw him I asked him how he liked the book. He said, "No; it is not accord- ing to the Scriptures. You are trying to teach that there is no torment of hell fire."

I told him it was an awful thing to imagine God to torment his people in such a terrible way, and it was a cruel idea.

"Not at all," he said; "I can think that it is so, and that there is real fire and torment for these men in our hotels and on our racecourses who are damning our nation. I am glad to think that they will be severely tortured in the flames of hell. I am glad of it, and praise God for it, for it is what they richly deserve. It is not cruel but kind, and it shows the tremendous power and love of God."

My friend thinks that there would be nothing to save men from if there were no hell fire. He is willing to read any literature on the subject, but his old beliefs are hard to shake.

Let us hope that the light will come to these friends who are as yet in the dark. With Christian love, ———

To-day at Ararat I met an "eternal tormenter" whom I have known for some time, but his beliefs were first made known to me to-day. I had always thought him a hard, merciless kind of man, though honest to the last farthing. I have been very much impressed by the effect of this terrible belief on the characters of men; and to hear of the good Word of Life mutilated (torn out of its setting) and made to say things that dishonour God and His Son makes one wish he could get on a cloud and proclaim the Truth in trumpet tones! We seem to be "nowhere" when the huge mountain of error is considered, and helpless when the tenacity with which it is held becomes evident.

The Lord help us! Yours in His name, ———

No doubt all our readers will join in the wishes of the brethren that these friends and many others of our personal acquaintances may be led out of the darkness of error into the marvellous light of truth. To change the figure, it is only when we realize how great a mountain of error stands in the midst of Christendom that we are spurred to greater efforts to overthrow it. We do indeed want to get upon a cloud in order to get a larger view of the conditions existing among men, and to proclaim with all our might the better tidings which the Scriptures de- clare.

To the testimony of these letters may be added the personal testimony of several colporteurs who have told us how many they meet who are in fear and terror on the subject, not only concerning their own fate, but concerning family and relatives. In- deed, really to conceive of one's friends in these awful torments must deprive one of his reason; it is too awful to contemplate for a moment, much less to receive it into one's heart and life as a veritable fact.

Just as we go to press we receive a letter from a friend in America, telling of revival services held in her town, and their effect upon the poor, distressed people, who think the preacher ought to know, and therefore that what he tells them must be true. Let us pray that the effort made to comfort the weeping women may be successful, and that the stubborn man may be more amenable to the true purpose of God as revealed in His Word than to the imaginations of men!

We sent to Brooklyn the other day for some literature, and are sending to-day for some more, as it seems the Lord is opening some opportunities for us, for which we are glad. There have recently been some very interesting revival services conducted in this town and I believe they claim nearly a thou- sand converts. It was a very short time after he went there that G. became known at the works as a Christian and a Bible student, and when the evangelists gave some particularly in-

teresting discourse, the following day in many instances G. was asked for his opinion. Three or four appear to be very much interested in what he says about things, one of them saying, "Well, I never heard it anything like that. That is reasonable." One of them promises to call some evening and talk about these things. The two young ladies where we are living "went forward," and they and I have had some interesting little conversations, although I don't think it has taken a very deep hold on them, although, of course, one can never tell about that. For example, they had their "Jubilee" service, and one of the girls, in telling about it, said, "The converts all shook hands with each other, and you know M. H., Mamma. Well, she is one of them. She didn't come near where I was, but if she had, I never would have given my hand to her." I am hoping that while the matter is still fresh in their minds, I may be able in some way to get them to see the meaning of real, true Christianity, and that Conversion means more than going to the "mourner's bench" and shaking hands with the preacher.

We went last night to the closing meeting of the evangelists. At the close of the meeting 308 went forward, and they claim

that in all there have been 1650. One woman where we were sitting pleaded with bitter tears for her husband to "go forward." He steadfastly refused, and finally endeavored to leave the place, but his daughter followed and the crowd prevented his "escape." Then they prayed and sang around him for fully a half hour, while others were going, and the poor wife and daughter were crying as though their hearts would break. The wife kept saying, she knew he would be lost if he didn't "come to-night," that it would be too late. When I could do so, I spoke to her, and tried to comfort her, but she refused to be comforted, saying that God had been striving with him for fifty years, and she knew nothing would break his stubborn, wicked will. I am to go to see her this week, and am in hopes that her sad heart may be opened to receive some of the truth of God's word. It seems so sad to hear such awful things preached to such crowds as, for instance, on the night he spoke on "Hell," and "That Awful Day."

Dear friends, what can we do to help deliver the people from the burden of this terrible libel upon God?



Prophetic Parables

(Continued from July issue.)

"Inasmuch as Ye did it not"

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."—Matt. 25: 41.

The Lord's disapproval of those who, during the Kingdom age, and in the midst of its wonderful opportunities for service, fail to develop the spirit of love and helpfulness, remaining disobedient and selfish, is here expressed in very strong terms. Only great provocation would draw such severe condemnation from the lips of the loving Savior, whose reign (as well as the giving of Himself as a ransom) is for the express purpose of "saving," rather than condemning, the race for whom He died. Our Lord, like the Heavenly Father, rejoices not in the penalties which His position requires Him to impose upon the disobedient; He would rather that they would turn unto Him and live. (John 12: 46, 47, 32, 33; Ezek. 18: 32; Rom. 10: 21; Rev. 22: 17.) Mankind having been condemned in Eden, there is no need for our Lord Jesus to condemn them afresh for that transgression, or for any subsequent transgressions directly or indirectly traceable to it. As already referred to (page 57), the condemnation of the Kingdom age (as it has been throughout the present High-Calling age) is incurred by a rejection of light and truth when brought clearly to one's notice, by a loving of darkness *rather than* light, after one has had what the Lord considers a sufficient opportunity to judge between them and to make a free choice.

"Depart from me, ye cursed." These words therefore clearly imply that the persons so addressed have made a free choice of evil. Two classes may be comprehended under this head, as "ye cursed"—first, those who never accept Him, but who are given during the Kingdom age sufficient light to enable them to do so were they so minded; and, second, those who during the Kingdom age, and after enlightenment, accept the Lord Jesus as the Christ, and for a time serve Him, but who afterward draw back or apostatize.

"Condemned Already"

The question has often been asked, Must one be entirely freed from the Adamic condemnation before he can come under the condemnation of the Lord Jesus? Our Lord's words in John 3: 14-21 seem to show that *an opportunity to come out from under the Adamic condemnation* is all that is required to make the individual responsible and to bring him within range of His condemnation; in other words, the condemnation or curse under which all men rest on account of Adam's sin is a perpetual condemnation from which there is only one way to escape, and that is through faith in the Lord Jesus and obedience to His commands. Whoever therefore does not accept the Savior and His offer of salvation, but persistently prefers evil, shunning and hating the light (John 3: 20), fastens upon himself individually the condemnation which originally rested upon him only racially.

We see an illustration of this in the case of the Pharisees. When our Lord shone as a light to the Jewish nation, they as well as the "publicans and sinners" were invited to repent, and take up their cross, and follow Him. They would not, however, acknowledge their sin or their need of a Savior. They were the servants of sin, as much so as the publicans they despised, and the Lord offered to make them free, but they spurned His offer. They did not obtain deliverance in spite of their refusals, nor were they after such deliverance put back under condemnation. They simply manifested by their conduct their preference for the darkness of sin and hypocrisy, as contrasted with the light of the Lord's perfect personality, His unselfishness, goodness and love (John 8: 24, 33-36), and consequently they were never made free, either from the power of Sin as a taskmaster, from the Law of Sinai under which they were held, nor from the general condemnation of death. After their ill treatment of the blind man who had been healed, these facts were again plainly stated by the Master Himself.

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

"And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."
—John 9: 39-41.

Nature of the Judgment

The nature of the Lord's judgment is indicated in Psalm 96: 13—"He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people *with his truth*"; that is to say, it will be the preaching of the truth which will place a test upon each individual who hears it, whether he will heed and obey, or ignore and disobey. Similarly, it will be by placing righteousness before them, both by precept and by concrete examples in the persons of the Ancient Worthies, that the people will be judged; for they will thus be put under the necessity of making choice between righteousness and unrighteousness.

The Pharisees and others were condemned because of the attitude they took toward the light then shining. During the Kingdom age the lovers of unrighteousness will likewise demonstrate their true character by the attitude they assume toward the light which will be shining then. It will be the same light—the light shining in the face of Jesus Christ; for He is the only "true light," the light which the apostle says was intended to lighten every man coming into the world. And, as already explained, their real attitude toward that light, and toward the Lord Jesus personally, will be made manifest by their conduct toward His "brethren." It is God's will that all men be brought sooner or later to an exact knowledge of the truth; but it is not God's will to coerce any man into an acceptance of that truth; each is left free to believe or not to believe, as he chooses. That some will even in that enlightened age remain unbelievers is shown by their inclusion among those shut out from the holy city who shall have their part in the "lake of fire," symbolic of the Second Death.

It may be thought by some that when the Kingdom is in full operation the light will shine so clearly that it will be impossible for anyone to ignore it or sin against it. Rev. 21: 7, 8, effectually disposes of that view. It declares that only the "overcomers" of that age shall inherit the blessings described in verses 3-6. There will be some "fearful," that is, afraid to trust God; some "unbelievers," who will not exercise faith in God or accept His terms of salvation; some "abominable," a term once applied to the wretched and unclean offerings brought by the Jews to Jehovah's altar (as well as to the idols and evil practices of the surrounding nations—(Lev. 20: 22-26; 1 Kings 11: 5, 7; Isa. 1: 11-13), and later associated with great Babylon, "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (Rev. 17: 5), and here no doubt intended to stand for those who insult God and the reigning Lord by contemptible offerings instead of yielding themselves wholeheartedly to their worship; some "murderers," those who hate their brethren and despise the poor and needy; some "whoremongers," those who seek alliances with others than God, to whom all their allegiance is due; some "sorcerers," or dealers in "black art" and other forbidden practices; some "idolaters," who put other persons or

objects before God (for "covetousness is idolatry"—Col. 3: 5); some "liars" who place their own theories before the truth which the messengers of the Kingdom declare, whether they be originators of the lies or only lovers of lies set forth or acted (see R.V.) by others. None of these will be allowed within the gates of the city; that is, none of these will be acknowledged as worthy of everlasting life and other blessings for which the Kingdom stands. Compare Rev. 22: 14, 15.

The second class included in "ye cursed" consists of those who when first enlightened will accept the terms of salvation but will afterward turn back again to the sinful life from which they were for a time delivered. They will be for a time "believers," but eventually become "unbelievers," just as in the parable of Luke 12: 41-48 the one time believing "servant" is given his portion among the *unbelievers* because he failed to act in accordance with his professed faith, and thus demonstrated his growing unbelief.

The above passage (Rev. 21: 8) does not definitely state that some of these rejected ones will for a time go in the right way and afterward apostatize. We gather that there will be such from verses 6 and 7 of the same chapter. Here it is stated that those who are athirst will be given the water of life freely, while only the overcomers shall inherit the blessings promised. The intimation is that some who thirst and partake of the fountain of divine forgiveness and love fail to persevere in the right way, and hence do not become overcomers or victors in their contest with the evil instincts of their natures, with which they came out of their graves, and from which they were not released by the mere lying in the grave.

There have been apostates in the present age, who even go so far as to crucify afresh the Lord who bought them. Notwithstanding they were "once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy spirit, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come," they put the Lord "to an open shame" by publicly and wilfully repudiating the value of His blood shed on their behalf. (Heb. 6: 4-6; 10: 26-31; 2 Pet. 2: 1.) Such persons are further described in 2 Pet. 2: 10-18; Jude 8-13, as destined to destruction. It is not surprising then that even in the light of the Kingdom age some will be found ready to despise the Lord and the covenant in His blood through which alone they can obtain forgiveness of sins and everlasting life.

Meaning of Cursed

In early years the words "curse" and "cursed" inspired in the mind of the present writer vague terror and dread; especially so when reading the curses pronounced from Mount Ebal and upon transgressors of the Law generally (Deut. 28: 15-68; Lev. 26: 14-39), or invoked by the inspired Psalmist upon him who should afterward betray the Messiah. (Psa. 69: 25; 109: 6-20.) Nor do we wish now to lessen the force of these and other curses contained in Scripture; we wish only to understand their meaning and to discern their appropriateness. In each instance it will be found that the "curse" is put in contrast with a "blessing."

"Cursed is the ground for thy sake," was said of Eden outside the garden, the latter having been specially prepared as a suitable abode for the newly-

created pair. Thorns and thistles, sweat of face and returning to dust, were contrasted with trees good for food, ease and enjoyment, and life. The doing of God's will was rewarded with life and material comforts; the disobedience to God's will was punished with discomforts and privations, and finally death. (Gen. 3: 17-24.) The ground itself had done no evil, that it should be punished; to it the curse meant simply the imperfections which should prove unfavorable to man, and thus bring discipline and trial upon him which under God's providence would not only punish the man but prove beneficial by forcing him to work, since the natural effect of idleness and plenty upon the sinful is to make their downward course more rapid.

The curse pronounced by Noah upon Canaan was in contrast to the blessing pronounced upon Shem and Japheth. Prosperity in material things included not only lordship over the earth, but the possession of servants. The curse in this instance was that Canaan and his descendants should be the servants, with all the humiliations and discomforts which an imperfect social order should mete out to them. Centuries of history from their day to this are witness to the fact that servitude is a most painful curse.—Gen. 9: 25-27.

Coming to Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, the one stood for blessing upon the obeyers of the Law, the other for cursing upon the disobedient. (Deut. 11: 26-29.) If they would make the law of the Lord their delight, they should be prospered in basket and store, in agriculture, in flocks and herds, in their family relations, and with long life to enjoy the work of their hands. But if they disobeyed, and went after other gods, and corrupted their ways, they should be afflicted in all these particulars. (Deut. 28: 1-68.) Obedience to God retained His favor and providential care; disobedience meant His disfavor and the incurring of penalties. Nor was this unjust, for the penalties of sin were prescribed in the Law, and concerning them the Israelites had full warning.

From these and other instances of blessing and cursing the student will draw the conclusion that punishment for sin is as much a part of the plan of God as reward for righteousness; it is, in fact, absolutely necessary that the relative positions of righteousness and sin be thus emphasized. This is recognized by all law makers. (Rom. 13: 3, 4.) A law having no penalty attached for infringement is practically a dead letter; further, if the penalty attached to a law be not inflicted upon violators thereof, the law is worse than a dead letter; it becomes an object of contempt and ridicule.

God does not allow Himself or His laws to incur for long the contempt of the disobedient. (2 Pet. 3: 3, 4, 17.) The curse or penalty is sooner or later inflicted. In the meantime His forbearance allows time for the disobedient to learn from their afflictions and to repent of their evil ways.—2 Pet. 3: 9.

So, in the Kingdom age, the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus will be manifested as much by the punishments inflicted upon wrongdoers as by the favors bestowed upon the righteous. To Him every knee must bow, and every tongue confess. Then if they learn the needed lessons they will be treated as prisoners of war; and, by taking the oath of allegiance and conforming to the laws of the Kingdom, they may become

respected citizens and ultimately heirs of all the good things the Lord has arranged.

When do They become Cursed?

It is only after the separation of the "goats" from the "sheep" that the former are called "cursed." In actual fact, a literal "sheep" can never turn into a "goat," nor can a "kid" be transformed into a "lamb"; each is born to its species, and so remains to the end of its days. But, in interpreting the parable, consideration must be had for the other fact that when the vast majority of the race come forth from the tomb they will not be, strictly speaking, either sheep or goats. Billions of heathen have gone into the grave not knowing their right hand from their left, so far as morals and spiritual truth are concerned. (Jonah 4: 11.) Billions more have died in infancy, knowing nothing of God and Christ, and without experience of either good or evil. Other billions after reaching maturity have died untimely deaths, through accident, famine, pestilence, or the sword, who, like those upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, were neither better nor worse than their fellows. (Luke 13: 1-5.) It is evident then that our Lord purposes to convey the grand truth that the Kingdom age Judgment is a process by which these (so to speak) nondescript persons may develop under the enlightenment and instruction of that age those characteristics and habits by which their everlasting estate shall be determined. If they hear the Good Shepherd's voice in the message of truth; if as they become more and more enlightened, and as the infants grow to maturity, they come to a realization of their undone condition as children of Adam, and gratefully accept the offering of Jesus on the Cross as a sacrifice for their sins; if they then render obedience to Him and enter heartily into the work of evangelization and instruction then in hand, they will be accepted as "sheep" for the right hand of favor. But if they fail in these respects, and inasmuch as they do *not* take up their duty and privilege to minister to other needy ones, they will be considered as "goats" for the left hand of disfavor.

In other words, the probationers are not "goats" until they have developed a character in opposition to the Lord and the work then in hand; and it is only when that opposition is wilful and persistent that the Lord applies the epithet "cursed." Depart from me, ye cursed; you have had equally with the "sheep" all the advantages of my reign, of the universal enlightenment, of the various helpful agencies inaugurated out of love for you and with a desire to help you, and you have profited by none of them. What more can be done for you? You have proven yourselves unworthy of life; any further extension of favors to you would be useless. You are only cumberers of the ground, whose presence would mar the peace and happiness of the "sheep" were you to be allowed to remain among them. There can be no more fitting end for you than that which is reserved for certain other wilfully perverse beings—"the devil and his angels."

The Devil and his Angels

The word "devil" here is *diabolos*, meaning "trader," or "accuser." A chief accuser or traducer is evidently referred to, one who has "angels" or messengers possessing his characteristics and performing his bidding. None can deny that the

"cursed" of the parable are human beings upon whom the Lord pronounces the sentence of "everlasting fire." Is their chief also a human being? No, because the Scriptures do not tell us of any human being having authority over all others. The devil or traducer referred to is the same who tempted the Lord Jesus in the wilderness, and who sets himself in opposition to God and to all God's arrangements. In Eden he traduced the character of God by implying that he was unable or would be unwilling to carry out the penalty He had pronounced. Our Lord Jesus called him a "murderer from the beginning" who "abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him." When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." (John 8: 44.) The lie he told led to Eve's undoing, and indirectly "murdered" both her and Adam. The lie he told her, "Thou shalt not surely die," has been repeated from generation to generation, and will continue to be repeated by the lovers of unrighteousness to the last; for they so deceive themselves by their own imaginary cleverness that they fancy God will not destroy them. The devil, or Satan, may have some excuse for this idea concerning himself, for he has been allowed to oppose himself to God for a very long time. If a reason be desired why God did not dispose of him as soon as he had transgressed, we might suggest that it was because God wished to give to angels and mankind an object lesson on the lengths to which an intelligent being can go when once he rises up in opposition to the Almighty. Thus Satan serves as a warning, and also as a foil to demonstrate how much stronger God is than the cleverest of His opponents. Nevertheless, He will ultimately experience the fate he deserves, as our Lord declares, in the "everlasting fire." To this the Apostle John adds his testimony—"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John 3: 8.) Satan, being a murderer, cannot have eternal life abiding in him.—1 John 3: 15.

And how can men be angels or messengers of the devil? In the same way that the angels who sinned in the days of Noah were his messengers, when they disobeyed God and left their first estate. Many of them have continued to be his messengers, as manifested in demonic possessions. Our Lord explains the matter in the passage already cited. (John 8: 44.) Speaking to the Jews, He says—

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."

"Your Father the Devil"

The Jews claimed God as their Father, because they knew Him as the Creator; they also claimed Abraham as their father, because of natural descent. (John 8: 41, 33.) But neither of these claims was allowed, on the ground that if they were children of God they would have recognized Jesus, the Son of God, and if they were children of Abraham they would not have desired to kill one who spoke the truth to them: "This did not Abraham." Then He told them plainly—"Ye are of your father the devil." Why? Because they did his works, or works similar to his; that is, murder and lying.

To this again the Apostle John adds his testimony, saying—"He that committeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning." Cain was "of that Wicked One" because he slew his brother.

(1 John 3: 12.) Of professing Christians it is written that "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer," and therefore also "of that Wicked One." (1 John 3: 15.) In this way the distinction is manifest between the children of the devil, who are actuated by envy and hate, and the children of God, who are animated by love and good will.—1 John 3: 10.

Not only is the one who claims to love God but at the same time hates his brother a murderer, he is also a liar; because he thus makes a false claim; in this also showing himself like his "father the devil," who was a liar from the beginning.—1 John 4: 20.

The angels or messengers of the devil therefore include all, both angels and men, who have his spirit of envy, hatred, lying and murder. And the parable of the Sheep and the Goats gives us to understand that those who in the Kingdom age are classed among the "goats" will be of the same disposition as the devil and those whom he has gathered for a following in previous ages. Inasmuch as they fail to do works of benevolence for Christ's sake when that is the order of the day, they prove not only that they do not love their brother, but also that they do not love God or the Lord Jesus. They prove also that they are liars, in that they are out of harmony with the truth of God then being proclaimed.

Everlasting Fire

When was the fire "prepared" for the devil and his angels? Doubtless when other of the purposes of God were arranged before the creation of man, he foresaw both the reward he would give to the righteous and the final punishment of the incorrigibly wicked.

The parable of the Sheep and the Goats expresses finality in the treatment of both the righteous and the wicked. The righteous are called to inherit the Kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world. The wicked are sent into everlasting fire. No hope is held out of ages to follow in which further probation will be granted. The test of the Kingdom age has been searching, the demonstration complete, the great Judge has recorded His decision. Nothing remains but the execution of the penalty. How shall it be done? Does it mean that the "cursed" with the devil and other of his messengers shall be tormented to all eternity? Were that the case finality would not have been reached in God's dealings with mankind, nor would sin have been eradicated from the universe, for wherever these creatures existed there would be sin, and consequently inharmony in God's house. Such a thought is contradictory of such passages as, "Neither shall there be any more pain."—Rev. 21: 4.

A Lake of Fire

Several statements are made in Scripture concerning a "lake of fire," into which the incorrigible wicked are to be cast. The popular view, handed down from Papacy, and borrowed by them from heathen mythologies, is that there is somewhere a literal lake of literal fire, and that all the unsaved will experience endless torments for their sins. The references in Scripture to the lake of fire are used to support this erroneous teaching; but in reality the Bible teaches nothing of the sort. Thank God, that He has a more just as well as a more merciful method of dealing with His creatures.

(To be continued)

The Parables of our Lord

THIS new volume, which we trust will be helpful to readers, is approaching completion. It is hoped that it will enjoy a large circulation, and that under Divine Providence it may be used of the Master in His service. As the initial expense of bringing out a new book is great, and as our resources are limited, we take the liberty of asking our friends to send in advance as many orders as possible for this book. Your kind and prompt compliance with this request will be a very material assistance in the task in hand, and we shall be correspondingly thankful for your co-operation. The new book will be of approximately the same number of pages as "Bible Talks," and will be bound in handsome cloth, with gilt lettering. The retail price will be 2/6 (60 cents) per copy, but to "Advocate" readers the price will be 1/6 (35 cents) per copy. Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 5d. (10 cents) per copy. Advance orders and remittances may be sent to Melbourne, London or Brooklyn.

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, 1910, "Advocate." It gives us pleasure to see some taking up the work in this way.

100, 18/-; 200, 7/-; 300, 3/4; 4, 15/5; 500, 7/-; 600, 5/-; 700, £1:0:8; 800, £6:11:4; 900, 10/-; 1000, £1; 1100, 7/-; 1200, 2/-; 1300, 7/-; 14, 0/8; total for 1 month, £14:4:5 (\$69.11).

Peace or War?

A NEW BOOK thus entitled, dealing with our day and its issues from the Scriptural standpoint, is now ready. 96 pages, paper covers, price 6d. (10 cents) per copy; 3/- (75 cents) per dozen post paid. Orders will receive prompt attention in Melbourne, and as soon as stock arrives in London and Brooklyn.

More Testimony

Very apropos is also the following good letter received at the last minute before starting the printing.

It is a sincere pleasure to have to acknowledge receiving much gratification and help from the perusal of your "good work in small compass," the book "Everlasting Punishment." The contents, being based on Scripture, are clear, concise, and unanswerable.

I was brought up very strictly Presbyterian, but for many years had a very indifferent belief in the Scriptures. When I brought myself to think on the matter at all, it would only be to be utterly puzzled. According to what I was taught, I seemingly had to believe in utter contradictions. It seemed to me passing strange that the God, Who so loved erring sinners as to allow such a sacrifice on their behalf, should be the same God Who dooms the great mass of humanity to a never-ending torment, and everlasting pain.

I enclose order for more publications, and shall be obliged by your prompt attention to same.

The "Advocate" Sustaining Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report. As the "Advocate" is regularly published at a financial loss, it is obliged to depend upon the loving co-operation of its friends until it shall become self-sustaining. Let the good work continue!

100, 5/-; 200, 10/10; 300, 1/6; 400, 1/-; 500, 1/-; 600, 2/-; 700, 2/-; 800, 1/-; 900, 3/4; 10, 15/5; 1100, 2/-; 1200, 10/6; 1300, 2/-; 1400, 1/-; 1500, 1/6; 1600, 1/-; 1700, 2/-; 1800, 2/-; 1900, 11/-; 2000, 1/-; 2100, 1/6; 2200, £10; 2300, 1/6; 2400, 4/-; 2500, 1/-; 2600, £1:0:8; 2700, £6:11:4; 2800, 2/-; 2900, 0/6; 3000, 1/6; 3100, 1/-; 3200, 2/-; 3300, 1/-; 3400, £1; 3500, 2/6; 3600, 11/3; 3700, 1/-; 3800, 1/-; 39, 6/8; total for 1 month, £25:11:9 (\$124.35).

The Book Department

FRIENDS will be delighted to observe that the first monthly report in this new financial year shows that our two Funds—"Cheerful Givers" and "Advocate Sustaining"—have prospered some in the last few weeks. More power to them! But the Book Department is not yet enjoying the measure of prosperity that is essential to the fulfilment of its mission. That it will ultimately do so there is no doubt. In the meantime we would again desire to direct attention to the notice of the forthcoming book on the "Parables of Our Lord," to the small book on "Peace or War!" and to the Call for Colporteurs. Does not the Holy Spirit impress upon the minds of any the importance of this phase of the work for the Master in serving His people and laying down one's life for the brethren? Read the Call again!

Wanted

MEN AND WOMEN with hearts filled with love and zeal for the Lord, His truth, and His people, to be messengers of the good news from house to house, as were the disciples of old, at the Master's command. Publications ("Bible Talks," "Everlasting Punishment," etc., and this Journal) are available, and liberal discounts are allowed on these to meet expenses of the workers. A great door is open in all English speaking countries. In regard to this work we are, as it were, on the bank of Jordan with the promised land just before us. Shall we not enter in? Or shall we let unbelief keep us out? God forbid! Pray the Lord of harvest, that He may send more laborers into the vineyard. The harvest truly is great, and the laborers few. Write to Melbourne, London or Brooklyn about this.

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The New Covenant Advocate

— and —

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No. 6

Raca—Moreh

(Editor's Sermon.)

"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 [Moreh], shall be in danger of the Gehenna of fire."—Matt. 5: 21, 22, R.V. margin.

REFERENCES to arrangements and customs in vogue under the Mosaic law, and to incidents of Jewish history, were frequently made by our Lord in His delivery of the New Law, an epitome of which is expressed in the so-called "Sermon on the Mount." Many of these allusions were made in the manner of our text—"It was said to them of old time. . . ; but I say unto you." In every one of these cases, the "I" is emphatic, which would give the hearers the impression that this Teacher, who taught not as the Scribes and Pharisees but spoke with authority, was not only claiming to succeed but to supersede Moses. This impression would be quite correct; yet the Master was careful to state that the manner of His superseding Moses would not be destructive, but by way of fulfilment of the things which were written in the Law and the Prophets. (Matt. 5: 17.) But the time would come when, all being fulfilled, the law of Moses would pass away.—Matt. 5: 18.

There was abundant opportunity, also, for those who heard the Lord, as well as for those who read the record of His words, to realize that His law would be far more searching than that of Moses; for whereas Moses' law inquired principally concerning the act, the commands of Jesus pierced even to the thoughts and intents of the heart, whether an act had occurred or not. If this might seem to be a disadvantage, in that it would condemn one who *thought* evil without being able to accomplish it, there would be a compensating very great advantage in the approval of him who thought and desired good things which he would not be able to perform. The law of Moses could not make allowance for such unaccomplished good

thoughts, desires and efforts; it required deeds. "The law is not of faith; but, The man that *doeth* them shall live in them."—Gal. 3: 12.

The Courts of Israel

The status and jurisdiction of the ancient Jewish courts are not easy to determine with exactness. In Moses' time, while the Israelites were all in one camp, in military order, the rulers of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens, composed the court of first resort, and the cases that were too difficult for them were brought to Moses. (Ex. 18: 13-26; Deut. 1: 15-17.) Seventy of these rulers were subsequently granted a special portion of Moses' spirit, after being gathered out by Moses and presented before the Lord, and they became his assistants in some special sense not clearly defined, to help him to bear the great burden of the people. (Num. 11: 11-17.) After settling in Palestine, there seems to have been in each community a judge, who sat in the gate. (Amos 5: 15.) In Samuel's time, he, as supreme judge, went on circuit annually to various cities of Israel. (1 Sam. 7: 15-17.) David appointed six thousand of the Levites as officers and judges. (1 Chron. 23: 4.) Jehoshaphat appointed judges in all the fenced cities of Judah, and set some of the chief of the Levites, priests, and fathers of Israel as a court at Jerusalem.—2 Chron. 19: 5-11.

After the return from Babylon, the arrangement seems to have been similar, with the Sanhedrin as the senate and supreme court of the people in Palestine, its jurisdiction being acknowledged as well by the Jews abroad. The Sanhedrin was a body of about seventy of the most eminent of the elders among the Jews. The power of capital punishment was taken from the Sanhedrin by the Romans about forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem, according to the Jerusalem Gemara, which would explain why the Jews who desired Jesus' death had to bring Him before Pilate. This fact enables a co-ordination of the three courts referred to by our

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Saviour to be made. The "judgment" would be the local court in any city; the "council" would be the high court at Jerusalem—the Sanhedrin; the "Gehenna of fire" would be the infliction of capital punishment followed by destruction of the body of the executed one in the valley of Hinnom, outside Jerusalem, where fires were kept burning for the purpose, the power of this infliction being reserved by the Romans to themselves.

The judgments prescribed by our Lord were not adopted by the Jews in Palestine, and inasmuch as His jurisdiction is not limited to Palestine but is worldwide, it could not be expected that His judgments would be so restricted that the extreme penalty would require to be inflicted at Jerusalem. Rather should we expect that the Master's mention of the Jewish courts would be by way of using them as symbols or illustrations of certain of the arrangements under the New Covenant of which He is the Mediator, and whose law He promulgates and enforces.

Angry with his Brother

The Mosaic law forbade murder, and provided for the judgment of a murderer. But our Lord put anger on a level with murder. In the Authorized Version, the expression is—"angry with his brother without a cause;" but the words, "without a cause," are omitted by the Sinaitic and Vatican No. 1209 MSS., these being the most ancient MSS. of the Gospel of Matthew. There is therefore no scripturally recognized cause for one to be angry with his brother. There may be occasions for reproof, rebuke and exhortation of a brother who errs; there may be circumstances in which it will be necessary to withdraw fellowship from a brother who walks disorderly; there may be reason to regard some as makers of division and to avoid them; there may arise the necessity to look upon some as enemies of the Cross of Christ. All these misfortunes had come upon the Church even in the apostles' days, and they have been present more or less throughout the age to the present time. But even against the latter class, the enemies of the Cross, the Apostle was not angry; he wept over them, shedding tears of sorrow while pointing out the evil of their way. If in the present day it be necessary to reprove, rebuke or exhort; if we be required to withdraw from a disorderly one or to avoid a maker of division; if faithfulness require us to recognize and point out enemies of the Cross of Christ; the unpleasant work must not be shirked on account of the natural desire to avoid disagreeable duty; yet all should be done without anger, rather with sorrow.—2 Tim. 4: 2; 2 Thes. 3: 11-15; Rom. 16: 17, 18; Phil. 3: 17-19.

Anger a Divine Prerogative

Anger seeks the destruction of its object. Anger in any of us would seek redress and vengeance for real or fancied wrongs endured. And it is because we are still imperfect, and therefore incapable of reaching infallibly correct conclusions, that anger is forbidden us, while the Lord promises that the wrongs done to His people shall not go unnoticed, for vengeance is His, and He will repay. (Rom. 12: 19-21; 2 Thess. 1: 6; 2 Peter 2: 9.) This being so, it is not difficult to understand why the Lord defined anger with one's brother as murder. The Lord, being perfect, can judge dispassionately, and can

be justly angry with those who sin wilfully after enlightenment. He knows perfectly who has been fully enlightened and who has not; He understands exactly which sins are wilful and which are not; we are not yet equipped with that perfection of discernment, and are therefore to judge nothing before the time. (1 Cor. 4: 5.) Our part is to learn patience, long suffering, mercy and obedience, so that we may be equipped with these virtues when, as overcomers by His grace, we shall sit with Him in His throne as judges of the world and of angels.—Rev. 3: 21; 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3.

Be ye Angry, and Sin Not

"Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath."—Eph. 4: 26.

Are these words of the Apostle contrary to those of our Lord, his Master? The Master forbade anger. Does the Apostle not only permit anger, but even command us to be angry, only to be careful that we do not sin, and in any case not to be angry after dark? These words of the Apostle have been appropriated as a refuge by those who feel the need of something to justify their sometimes manifestation of what they call—in supposedly scriptural terms—their "righteous indignation." But they are mistaken, for "righteous indignation" is not a scriptural expression, and the Apostle is not even justifying—much less commanding—anger during daylight hours, nor is he saying that one can be angry without sinning. He does not contradict the Lord, Who defines anger as a grievous sin.

The Apostle's words are a quotation of Psalm 4: 4 according to the Septuagint. In order to appreciate the full force of the words, vs. 2-4 should be read—

2. O ye sons of men, how long will ye be hard of heart? Wherefore will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah.
3. But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself; The Lord will hear when I call unto him.
4. Be angry, but ["and" in Eph. 4: 26] sin not; Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.—Psalm 4: 2-4, *Septuagint*.

The Psalmist, addressing the unconsecrated, re-proves them for their vanity and hardness of heart. He expresses his conviction that Jehovah takes a special interest in those who are devoted toward Him, and his confidence that his call to Jehovah will be heard. Still addressing the hard-hearted ones, the Psalmist says (v. 4), "Be angry and sin not." Does the Psalmist call upon the ungodly to be angry with the godly, only to be careful that they do not sin? By no means! The word "not," though only once expressed, is to be understood as being applicable to both members of the sentence, as though the Psalmist had said—Be not angry; sin not. This is his exhortation to the ungodly, and this is the sentiment that the Apostle transfers to his letter to the saints at Ephesus, as though he would say, If it is sin for the unconsecrated to be angry with the consecrated, how much more sinful would it be for the consecrated to be angry with each other? Be not angry; sin not. But if through some weakness of the flesh your angry passions should rise, get them quenched at once. Do not allow them to remain up, when even the great sun has to go down. Think it all over in the quiet of the night hours, and you will see the rightness and

the advantage of being still, instead of being tossed about by tumultuous waves of anger.

To harbor angry feelings is to show hospitality to the devil. (Eph. 4: 27.) Therefore the Christian must resolutely refuse to become angry; and not only so, he must also avoid provoking others to anger. As he would not wish others to tempt him by teasing or nagging, so must he not tempt others by the same. But if one's faithfulness to the Lord anger others, as Stephen's words angered the Jews, that is the concern of those who get angry, not of him who speaks the truth in faithfulness and love.

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and ANGER, and clamour, and evil speaking, be PUT AWAY from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children."—Eph. 4: 31 to 5: 1.

"But now ye also PUT OFF all these; ANGER, wrath, malice, . . . seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."—Col. 3: 8-10.

"Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." "Provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."—Col. 3: 21; Eph. 6: 4.

The City of Refuge

If a dweller in Palestine under the Mosaic law killed a man accidentally, not having hated his victim, he was allowed to flee to one of six cities of refuge which were set apart for such cases. If he reached the city of refuge before being overtaken by the avenger of blood, and it were demonstrated that he had had no malice against his victim, had not waylaid him, and had not intentionally killed him, then he was to be allowed to reside in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest then in office, after which he might return to his own town. If he left the city of refuge before the death of the high priest, the avenger, if he met him, must kill him. But if a murderer reached the city of refuge in advance of the avenger, and it could be proven by at least two witnesses (one would not be sufficient) that he had hated his victim, and had lain in wait to kill him, or had risen up against him, then it became the duty of the elders of the murderer's city to send to the city of refuge, and fetch thence the criminal and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he might die.—Num. 35: 6-34; Deut. 19: 1-15.

If a Christian becomes angry through weakness, and not intentionally, he has in Christ both Refuge and High Priest. Let him flee at once to Him; let him confess and abhor his sin of anger, and the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse him from his unintentional crime. Let him abide in that precious Refuge until the "death of the High Priest;" that is, until He shall have said, It is enough, enter the joy of the Lord; for in this case the High Priest will not die, being Priest "after the power of an endless life" (Heb. 7: 16), but the refugee will finish his course. If he finish his course *within* the Refuge to which he has fled (Heb. 6: 18), it will be well; he shall have his inheritance. If he leave the Refuge before the time appointed for him to do so, he will be at the mercy of the avenger. It is a lesson for us all to take to heart lest, in a moment of pride, self-confidence, or forgetfulness of that which should never be forgotten, we leave our Refuge and forfeit our claim to His protection.

Raca—Vain Fellow

Having discerned the murderous tendency of an angry disposition, it may seem surprising that the great Teacher counts the offence of hurling an epithet at a brother more serious than murderous anger. What is there in this epithet, "Raca," that makes it worse than anger? We shall be able to understand this as we realize that the Lord was here referring to an incident in David's life in which this epithet occurred, and that this incident was being used as an illustration of events that might occur in the Christian life.

When David went to bring the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David, he showed great zeal, not only to praise God with all the fervor of his intense nature, but also to distribute blessings to the people. In his zeal he was careless of his own person, and displayed himself in a way that was perhaps not entirely to his credit or advantage. For this he was criticized by Michal, the daughter of Saul, and in her criticism she used the epithet referred to by our Lord. We are therefore to understand that His allusion is to the entire incident, and we are to take it as one of the things written aforetime for our learning. The account reads—

12. . . . So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.

13. And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings.

14. And David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod.

15. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

16. And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Lord, and she despised him in her heart.

18. And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts.

19. And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house.

20. Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious [rather "honorable," as at end of v. 22] was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows [RACA] shamelessly uncovereth himself!

21. And David said unto Michal, *It was before the Lord* that I did dance; blessed be the Lord, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel: therefore will I play before the Lord.

22. And I will yet be more vile than this, and will be base in thy sight; and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour.

23. Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death.—2 Sam. 6: 12-23, vss. 21, 22, according to Septuagint.

David was zealous to restore the true worship of God. The ark was essential to this, because it contained the tables of the Law and the book of the Covenant under which the service of God was conducted. It also contained Aaron's rod, and the golden bowl of manna, and it had for its lid the mercy seat, where all the blood of the offerings for sin had to be sprinkled and where also abode the supernatural light, the

emblem of the Divine Presence. Clearly, the worship of God could not be carried on without the ark; hence David's great rejoicing at being allowed to do something to restore it to its proper place. Instead of criticising David as she did, Michal should have taken part in the rejoicings, and should have congratulated David on being permitted to restore the worship of God and bless the people with good things. Because of her hypercritical disposition she was without children to the day of her death.

David and Michal among Christians

During the Gospel age, the spiritual worship of God, typified by the ark and its appurtenances, has sometimes been lost sight of, and erroneous teachings have been introduced. Some have said that Christ as our Mercy Seat is not required, that He is merely an example for us. Others have sought to take the Covenant out of the ark, saying we are not under the New Covenant, it is only for those who will be blessed in the next age—as it were the Philistines. In these and various other ways, the true worship of God has been perverted. But there have also been zealous Davids throughout the age, desiring and endeavouring to recover lost truths, and set them in order before God's people, so that He might be worshipped as much as possible in spirit and in truth. And there have always been hypercritical Michals. These have been willing enough to see the "ark" coming back; but when a zealous David, in the exuberance of his joy at being permitted to take some part in restoring truth to God's people, has exhibited some of his imperfections, which the "linen ephod" of imputed righteousness only partially hides from the view of those round about, the Michals, instead of congratulating the Davids on being permitted to serve the Lord in this manner, have sought to damp the ardor of the Davids by referring sarcastically to the display they made of themselves. Instead of applauding the zeal of the Davids, the Michals have said, What a spectacle you make of yourself; why should you be so energetic? It is only right to say that the Davids among Christians have not all been men, nor have the Michals all been women.

Raca more heinous than Anger

Suppose a Christian reaching the extremity of anger, and killing a fellow Christian. He would have committed a horrible crime in killing the body, but he could not touch his victim's future life. After killing the body of his victim, there would be nothing more that he could do. (Luke 12: 4.) But a Christian acting the part of Michal to David, characterizing energy in the Lord's service as the action of a vain fellow (Raca), might cause a slacking of zeal and energy in the David, and so might cause him to offend. King David did not become less energetic under the sarcasm of Michal, but resolved to be more so. And so should the Christian Davids become more energetic, if sarcastically reproached by the Michals of this age. Nevertheless, some of the Davids might be caused to offend; they might give so much heed to the hypercritical remarks of the Michals that they would be turned out of the way, and lose the prize of the High Calling. On account of this possible effect, "Raca" is a more grievous sin than anger, even though the latter were to reach its extremity.

Anger may interfere with the present life, but cannot injure the future. Raca may affect both the present and the future.

Our Saviour said that offences would come, but woe to those who cause them to come. (Luke 17: 1.) Any David who gives way under the sarcastic fault-finding of a Michal will not be held guiltless; he will certainly be an offender. But the Michal who caused the David to offend has to expect woe. Michal, the daughter of Saul and wife of David, was condemned to childlessness, which was a great reproach to a Jewish wife. Some penalty corresponding in severity to this will be visited upon those who in this age are recognized by the Lord as Michals, seeking to discourage the Davids. It may be that the penalty will be the everlasting reproach of never having had spiritual children, of never having brought one into the way of truth and everlasting life. What a disgrace! What a fit penalty for those who seek, as Michal did, to discourage the activity of others in the Lord's service!

Moreh—Rebel

But the severest denunciation is pronounced against him who says to his brother, "Moreh." In the Authorized Version this word is translated, "Thou fool," but its proper meaning is "rebel." What is there in this word that calls for so severe a penalty as "the Gehenna of fire," symbolic of the second death? (Rev. 20: 14.) Here again we shall be able to understand the Lord's meaning by recognizing His allusion to an incident in the history of the Israelites, and we shall have to consider the whole of the incident as being intended for our learning.

Soon after the Israelites had left Egypt, they came to a place where there was no water. "The people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this, that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?" Then follows the account of the miracle of bringing water from the rock, Moses being commanded to strike the rock with the rod. In all this, Moses did exactly as the Lord commanded him. (Ex. 17: 1-7.) This rock is used as a type of Christ.—1 Cor. 10: 4.

In the course of their wanderings, the children of Israel came again to this place, and again there was no water. In this connection occurred the incident to which the Master refers. The account reads—

2. And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.

3. And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God, that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord!

7. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

8. Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so shalt thou give the congregation and their beasts drink.

9. And Moses took the rod from before the Lord as he commanded him.

10. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels [MOREH]; must we fetch you water out of this rock?

11. And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.

12. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children

of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.—Numbers 20: 1-13; Psalm 106: 32, 33.

Moses was commanded to speak to the rock, but he spoke to the people, and smote the rock—twice. In speaking to the people, he used the word "Moreh," by means of which our Lord alludes to this incident. In calling the people "rebels," he usurped a prerogative of the Divine Judge; moreover, in his vexation of spirit he spoke in pride—"Must we fetch you water out of this rock?" But the source and fountain of Moses' sin on this occasion was stated by the Lord in this word—"Because ye *believed me not*." The penalty was that Moses should not enter the promised land.

The Christian who sins in the manner illustrated by this incident sins very grievously indeed. Smiting the rock twice, he crucifies to himself the Son of God afresh (Heb. 6: 6); in speaking as Moses spoke to the hysterical, frantic people instead of to the rock, the Christian, uplifted with pride, forsakes

his privilege of prayer for refreshment of spirit and appropriates to himself prerogatives that belong to the Lord, thus becoming a usurper of the Lord's place, and himself a rebel. And the source of this evil disposition in the Christian is Unbelief—"because ye *believed me not*." And if any Christian shall lose his portion in the promised rest, and shall be cast into "the Gehenna of fire," which is the second death,* it will be because of unbelief. "Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."—Heb. 3: 1 to 4: 11.

Dearly beloved, let us search our hearts diligently for any disposition of Anger, "Raca" and "Moreh." Let us cast them out, root and branch, and let us have God's Holy Spirit within. And then let us watch and pray always, lest we enter into temptation.

* For full explanation of "Gehenna," "Second Death," and related subjects, please see the 112 page book, "Everlasting Punishment," Clothbound, 1/1 (29 cents); paper covers, 6d. (10 cents), post paid.



The Parables of our Lord

(Continued from August Issue)

The Sheep and the Goats

The meaning of the lake of fire having been fully dealt with elsewhere,* we merely state here that the word "fire" is used in Scripture as a symbol of destruction, because whatever is cast into fire is more effectively destroyed than by any other method. The Valley of Hinnom or Gehenna outside Jerusalem was a "lake of fire" into which the refuse of the city was cast. Thus it is a fitting symbol of the complete destruction which awaits wilful sinners against the New Jerusalem, the New Covenant, and the Lord Jesus who administers that Covenant. When all evil and evil doers are destroyed, there will be no more pain, no more sorrow, crying nor tears, *no more curse* of any kind. (Rev. 22: 3.) The universe will be clean, and enjoyed by happy beings in both heaven and earth. Then all will join in praise to God and to the Lamb for the gracious purpose devised and wrought out by them, and to them will be given all honor and glory.—Rev. 5: 11-14.

That the "everlasting fire" means complete destruction is shown by the repetition of the thought in slightly different language (verse 46), "And these shall go away into everlasting *punishment*." There is no question but that the punishment is as everlasting as the life promised to the righteous; the question is as to the *nature* of the punishment. *

The word here translated punishment gives a hint; it is *kolasis*, and is used of *penal infliction*. A criminal given a life sentence is everlastingly punished; that is, the punishment is continuous without interruption; he is not necessarily tormented; but he is cut off from liberty and enjoyment. Physical torture

is not allowed in modern prisons. Again, the criminal who is executed is not tormented, but his punishment is everlasting in that he is dead, and there is no release from death, so far as human law is concerned. This should help us to understand how the punishment of the wicked will be a complete and everlasting cutting off from life and the blessings of the Kingdom, and yet will not be torment. Their state is described by the Psalmist, also in figurative language, as like unto fat which consumes away into smoke, with nothing remaining—

"But the wicked shall perish,
And the enemies of the Lord shall be as the
fat of lambs:
They shall consume;
Into smoke shall they consume away."

—Psa. 37: 20.

That the "lake of fire" is a symbol of destruction is also shown in Rev. 20: 14; 21: 8, where it is interpreted to mean the second death. Death is the antithesis of life. The righteous are to be rewarded with everlasting life, the wicked are to be punished by being deprived of life.

According to Their Works

The book of Revelation is a book of visions or pictures, each illustrative of some event or teaching; not necessarily in chronological order. In this way a few descriptive phrases tell more than many pages of explanation would do. Chapter 20 contains four distinct pictures. Verses 1-3 tell of the binding of that "old serpent, which is the devil and Satan," that he should deceive the nations no more for a thousand years, and after that he should be loosed. Verses 4-6 tell of the reign of the Church with Christ for a thousand years. Verses 7-10 speak of the Satan let loose at the end of his term of restraint for a test upon the nations, both living and dead, who will have en-

* See book entitled "Everlasting Punishment," for explanation of every Scripture passage on the subject. To be had of the publishers as per advertisement.

joyed the benefits of the Kingdom reign. Verses 11-15 describe the purity and power of the Kingdom and give details concerning the judgment of all, small and great. They were judged out of the things written in the books (that is, the Word of God), and according to their works under the judgment; or, as expressed in chap. 22: 12, "according as his work *shall be*" under the enlightened opportunities of that age of blessing. All this is in harmony with the parable of the Sheep and the Goats, and with the interpretation suggested in these pages.

What a blessing comes to us with this knowledge of God's gracious purposes toward all men under the glorious Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ! How our hearts are lifted up in gratitude when we think of the myriads of our race who have gone into the grave without God and without hope, who are to be then enlightened and lifted up to the condition of perfection and bliss in the beautified earth! Yet we, who know and love the Lord now, how much greater is the reward held out to us—to share His glory, to sit with Him in His throne, to have a part in giving out the glad message and otherwise assisting the many for whom man can do little or nothing in the present age! Shall we not seek *now* to enter into the spirit of our blessed Master, and take to ourselves what lesson we can from this and all other parables for our own stimulation in righteousness? Let us have that sincere and unselfish love for our Lord that will manifest itself in true love and kindness to His "brethren," those whom He owns as His disciples, and whom He has given to us to be our brethren also. Let us love them with a pure heart fervently, and count it a joy and privilege to be permitted to assist them in any degree to the bread and water of life, the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, the clothing of righteousness, the armor for the Christian warfare, and to all other spiritual benefits of which they stand in need!

The House on the Rock The House on the Sand

—Matt. 7: 24-27 —
(To the Multitude.)

24. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.

25. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock.

26. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

This parable is also recorded in Luke 6: 46-49.

THESE WORDS spoke our Saviour in conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount. In these words He announced Himself as the new Teacher or Leader, the great Prophet, raised up unto the Jews of their brethren, like unto Moses, whom they should now hear instead of Moses; or, rather, in continuation of the work of leadership and instruction which God had begun in Moses. (Acts 7: 35; 3: 22; Heb. 1: 1, 2; Matt. 17: 5.) The Law given at Sinai served several good purposes, one of the most important being the demonstration that man in his fallen state is incapable of keeping a perfect law, and there-

fore requires to be dealt with on some other basis, if he would be completely delivered from the power of Sin. The Law, the Apostle Paul says, only brought them under greater bondage to Sin, and the Lord showed, in His great Sermon, that an outward observance of the Law would not compensate for the inward transgression of it in the thoughts of the mind.—Rom. 7: 8, 13; 8: 3; Matt. 5: 21-47.

The difficulty under which the godly Jew labored was that while his earnest desire and endeavor was to do the will of God, his imperfect brain and flesh intruded contrary thoughts and desires and involuntarily indulged in wrong actions. This proneness to sin was like the dead body which the ancients often chained to a prisoner to serve as a hindrance to movement and as a reminder of the possible fate awaiting him. And the Apostle Paul voiced the sentiment of the sincere-hearted Jew when he cried—"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom. 7: 24, margin.) The Law said that, "The man that *doeth* them shall live in them;" but as no Jew could do them, all were under the curse of the Law; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. 3: 10-12.) The Law which they hoped would give them life, they found to bring only death. (Rom. 7: 10.) When therefore our Lord came with a message of *life*, it meant much to the Jew.

It meant that the Lord Jesus came with an arrangement superior to that of the Law. What the Law could not do, God sending His Son could accomplish. (Rom. 8: 3, 4.) That a New Covenant was required, and would be granted, had been foretold centuries before by the prophet Jeremiah. (Jer. 31: 31-34.) Our Lord came to introduce that New Covenant, one of the chief of its advantages being that under it *the thoughts and intents of the heart* can be accepted, and the inability of actual performance allowed for, whereas under the Law no such allowance was made. This failure to make allowance for the thoughts of the heart, as compared with the actual performance of good works, constituted the weakness of the Law. As a document, the Law was "holy, and just, and good;" but as an instrument suited to the needs of fallen men, it was a failure. So says the Apostle in Rom. 7: 12; 8: 3. The Law Covenant was of works unto death, the New Covenant is of "repentance unto life."—Acts 11: 18.

The Pure In Heart

Accordingly, our Lord began His ministry with the new message of mercy and grace under the New Covenant—

"Blessed are the pure in heart."

"Blessed are the poor in spirit."

"Blessed are they that mourn."

"Blessed are the meek."

"Blessed are the merciful."

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness."

All these referred to the state of the mind, its attitude towards God, its desire to serve God, its willingness to admit its undone condition under the Law, and to receive righteousness and truth in whatever way God chose to provide them. Any Jew in this pure, humble state of mind was "blessed," because he was in readiness to receive and be benefited by the

New Covenant operations about to be introduced. The remainder of our Lord's discourse detailed the superiority of a pure heart and merciful thoughts over mere outward observances such as the Pharisees and rulers were fond of practising in public places.—Matt. 5: 20; 6: 1-7.

Mercy and Forgiveness

When Jesus said, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them," did He mean to imply that, like the Law of Moses, His words could not be kept by His followers? Thank God, no! The requirements of the New Covenant can be kept by the least and feeblest who come unto God by Him, because it was ratified by the shedding of His own blood as the perfect and complete offering for sin, and because the terms of the New Covenant are exactly suited to the needs of fallen men. (Matt. 26: 28; Mark 14: 24; Luke 22: 20.) It is a Covenant of Mercy and Forgiveness, and provides for the inscribing of the law of love upon the mind and heart of the believer, through the operation of the Holy Spirit. (Heb. 10: 12-18; 2 Cor. 3: 18.) Read it—

"I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, any every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. 8: 10-12.

The apostles were sent forth as ministers or servants of the New Covenant, preaching repentance and remission of sins in the name of Jesus. (Luke 24: 46, 47; Acts 2: 38; 5: 31; 2 Cor. 3: 6; etc.) They explained that each one whose sins were forgiven on account of acceptance of the death of Christ on his behalf received the Holy Spirit as a token and assurance of that forgiveness. (Heb. 10: 12-18; Acts 2: 38.) The one offering of Jesus Christ was satisfaction for the sins of the whole world—for the first pair of sinners and all their descendants; it remains only for each individual personally to accept that sacrifice and to become a devoted follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5: 12-19; Acts 16: 31.) This is indeed a message of love and mercy, of peace and goodwill, worthy of the angels' glad song. (Luke 2: 10-14; Matt. 1: 21.) Who can hear it without wishing to take advantage of its provisions? Who can longer continue in sin and selfishness and rebellion against God, once he realizes the wonderful love of God and Christ, and understands how plain and simple the way of salvation has been made? Just to think that under this New Covenant sins and iniquities are *remembered no more!* As far as the east is from the west, so far are his sins put away from the penitent believer. (Psalm 103: 12; Isa. 1: 18.) Praise God for it!

Entrance Into the Kingdom

The whole of the Sermon on the Mount is a revelation to all who read it of their need of the Messiah and of His Kingdom. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," and all other necessary things will be added. (Matt. 6: 33.) And the Lord declared that He Himself should decide who might, and who might not, enter into that Kingdom. (Matt. 7: 21-23.) "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do

not the things which I say?" (Luke 6: 46.) Any therefore who wish to enter into the Kingdom must give heed to His words.—John 8: 24, 51.

It seems marvellous that entrance into the Kingdom should depend upon heeding and obeying words spoken in the ear; and yet it is not so marvellous when we consider that an appeal to the senses is the only way to influence men either for good or bad. It is through the senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch that man indulges in sin or practises righteousness, that he is tempted or that he resists temptation. Temptation to evil or exhortation to do good is an *appeal to a man's will, via his natural senses*. Such an appeal to the will of His hearers the Lord made when He announced Himself as the Messiah, the King and Deliverer, the One whose words were like a rock for the wise to build upon.

Doing, or Willing to Do

Another passage which shows our Lord's appeal to the *will*, under the liberal terms of the New Covenant, and which shows an allowance made for the believer's inability to perform perfect works of righteousness, is John 7: 17, according to the Revised Version—

"If any man *willeth to do* his will, he shall know the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself."

The promises of the Law were for those who actually performed its requirements; the promises of Jesus and His Covenant and Kingdom are for those who *will to do*, who earnestly desire and strive to do, the Father's will.

The New Covenant embraces a system of counting or reckoning or imputing which is most heart-searching. It is strongly condemnatory of secret sins and faults, hypocrisy and deceit, and of such righteousness as that of the Pharisees, who cleansed the outside of the platter only. That sort of righteousness the Lord frequently warned His disciples to beware of. (Matt. 23: 5-7, 23-28.) But this system of reckoning is most advantageous to those spoken of as "pure in heart," "poor in spirit," etc., and who (when their actual sinful state is made plain to them) repudiate sin in all its forms. The Apostle expresses it thus:—

"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man *to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*"—Rom. 4: 7, 8.

Not only are his sins *not* imputed or reckoned to him, having been forgiven for Christ's sake (Eph. 4: 32), but righteousness *is* imputed or reckoned to him. *His faith* is counted for righteousness; that is, his faith is accepted by God as instead of absolute perfection in thought, word and deed. (Rom. 4: 3-5, 22-25.) It is not possible for the finest specimen of fallen manhood to do in his own strength works acceptable to God; for nothing short of absolute perfection can satisfy the holy and just God. But it is possible for him to believe, to take God at His Word, and accept forgiveness as a free gift through Christ, and thus be *justified from his evil works* (Acts 13: 38, 39), and accepted as a son of God by Jesus Christ.—Gal. 3: 26; Eph. 1: 5.

This reckoning is further described in Romans 6. God reckons or imputes righteousness to the believer on account of his faith. But there is something more for the believer to do—

"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. 6: 11.

Forgiveness of sins is not granted in order that the believer may continue in sin, but to give him a standing with God and a basis upon which he may gain complete victory over Sin as a Taskmaster. Hence he must no longer acknowledge Sin as his master; he must reckon himself as dead to Sin. The past time of his life sufficed to work the will of the flesh. (1 Pet. 4: 1-3.) Now he must reckon himself alive unto God, to do His will, and to practise righteousness. "So now yield your members servants to Righteousness unto holiness."—Rom. 6: 16-19.

On this system of reckoning under the New Covenant it is therefore possible for the disciple of Jesus to fulfil our Lord's words as recorded in the parable under consideration—"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them." It is possible for such an one to build his house upon a rock, secure against the severest storms and floods. He can perform in his daily life all the things which his Lord and Master imposes upon him, for his faith is counted unto him for righteousness, and his best endeavors are counted for achievement.

Acknowledging the Son

"He taught them as one having authority"; yea, the authority of God, the Heavenly Father; and the words which He spoke were not His invention, but the words which His Father had given Him to speak. Everyone therefore who acknowledges God, must acknowledge the Son of God.—John 5: 19-23; 6: 38; 7: 16; 12: 44-50.

Thousands of persons yearly read the parable of the man who built his house on a rock and the other who built his house on the sand, and they laugh at the stupidity of the one and praise the foresight and good sense of the other. But how many really take to heart the lesson of the parable? How many make it their business to "hear these sayings of mine?" how many search the Scriptures for other of the Lord's commands? how many make it their chief aim and ambition in life *to do them*? These are serious questions, and entrance into the Kingdom, or being barred out, depends on the answer we give. Shall we be obliged to admit that after full warning we have foolishly built our house on the sand of disobedience, and shall we have nothing in the future to look forward to but "great" shall be "the fall of it?"

No, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things which accompany salvation.—Heb. 6: 9; 10: 31-39.

The True Wisdom

He is indeed a wise man who hears and obeys these sayings. It is true wisdom to build upon a rock, because a rock provides a solid foundation which cannot be moved. It is true wisdom to build upon "these sayings of mine," because they are a solid and safe foundation; they shall endure when all the wisdom of the worldly wise, who have built upon shifting sand, has perished. Even the Law Covenant, good and serviceable as it was for its particular purpose, was destined to pass away, when Jesus nailed it to His cross; how much more so those heathen mythologies and barbarities, and those pseudo-Christian

theories, which deceive their millions and tens of millions.

The solid rock foundation of the Lord's words was referred to on another occasion when He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Mark 13: 31.) Again He said, indicating their enduring character, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."—John 12: 48.

The Good Confession

The man who builds his house upon a rock, and is thereby enabled to pass safely through the storm, is not ashamed to acknowledge how much he owes to the rock; rather he takes pride in pointing it out to his friends, as an evidence of his own good judgment in selecting the site for his building. The Christian who finds the Lord's words a solid and safe foundation is likewise not ashamed to point out to others the secret of his security in the storms of life. The only point upon which he can congratulate himself is that he had the good sense to choose "these sayings of mine" as his foundation rather than the sayings of philosophy or Judaism or heathendom or other false voices. All the credit for his safety goes to the Rock. The necessity of such an acknowledgment was referred to by our Lord when He said—

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."—Mark 8: 38.

Peter, by his frank and fervent confession of the Lord and His words, set an example to all. "Whom do men say that I am?" asked Jesus. The disciples told him the various rumors current. "But whom say ye that I am?" Peter answered promptly, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. 16: 13-19.) Never mind what other people say, we acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, and are not ashamed to confess it before men.

Indeed, such open confession is absolutely necessary to salvation, as our Lord says in Mark 8: 38. A similar statement is made in Rom. 10: 9, 10—

"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 unto salvation."

The Church Built on a Rock

The importance of Peter's acknowledgement of Jesus and His Words is shown by our Lord's immediate response—

"Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona;" and then He adds—

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—Matt. 16: 18.

The name "Peter," derived from "petros," meaning a "stone," was given in honor of Peter's recognition of Jesus Christ as the true foundation for faith, *the rock*, upon which the Church, as living stones, was to be built up. (1 Pet. 2: 4-6.) The Church was not to be built upon Peter personally (as Roman Catholics claim), but upon the fact of Jesus' Messiahship, the open confession of the same being required of all who would be eligible for membership in the Church.

"Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. 3: 11.

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."—1 Cor. 15: 3, 4. Compare Matt. 16: 16-19; Rom. 4: 24 to 5: 1.

The living "stones" obtain their life from the living "Rock." In Him is life, and joy, and peace, and every other blessing.

"On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

The Yoke and the Burden

—Matt. 11: 28-30—

(To the Multitude.)

28. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29. 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.

30. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

HERE AGAIN our Lord speaks with authority. He had just been saying, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." (Matt. 11: 27.) The invitation to come to Him, therefore, is more than a mere offer of a favor which may be accepted or rejected at will. Though couched in pleading terms, and uttered with genuine concern for those addressed, it is nevertheless a command. It was the duty of the Jews to receive and obey their Messiah. It was perversity which prevented them recognizing the weight of the burden of sin which oppressed them, and which led them to reject the loving service of the great Sin Bearer. The Law was also a heavy burden, which the Jew should have been glad to be rid of; and besides that, the common people had to bear the load of tradition which the scribes and Pharisees had laid upon them, which they themselves would not move with one of their fingers. (Matt. 23: 4.) Peter called the Law "a yoke" "which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" (Acts 15: 10), and he refused to sanction the placing of such a yoke upon the Gentile converts.

But though our Lord's invitation was a command, it was not of a sort to benefit Himself. His interest was wholly unselfish. He had come, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many. (Matt. 20: 28.) Nor did He wish to rid Himself of a yoke and burden by placing them upon others. The yoke is an emblem of servitude, and He counted it a joy and privilege to bear it; to do the will of God who had sent Him. And now He was offering the weary and heavy-laden Jew a yoke more easy than that of the Law and the traditions of men. Having been placed in a position to command, He had a right to impose servitude on those under Him (Heb. 5: 9), but He assures His hearers that His purpose is altogether different from that of the scribes and Pharisees: They placed a burden which they would not touch with one of their fingers; but Jesus places a yoke, part of which rests upon His own neck. It is a beautiful similitude.

Oxen are yoked in pairs, and the Lord likens Himself to the ox accustomed to the yoke; He had learned the lesson of meekness and patience, and obedience to the Heavenly Father's will. And He invites the weary and heavy laden to leave their old yokes and heavy burdens, and come under the yoke with Him. Unbroken and unskilled, they would find difficulty

with the new yoke and the new burden, but, by being yoked with Him, they find He bears the brunt of the load, and that if they *pull with Him* the burden is light indeed. The close association gives them a good opportunity to observe His patience and meekness under the yoke, and they are led to emulate His example. Once the mind is fully made up to forsake the old yokes and burdens and associations, and once the new yoke is properly adjusted, half the battle is won. The *decision* is the chief difficulty. Some want to carry the Law yoke and burden as well as the yoke of liberty and love which Jesus offers, but no ox can wear more than one yoke, and so they are continually in trouble. Others want to carry the yoke of business or worldliness and pleasure with the yoke of obedience to God, and they are like the man of two opinions, unstable in all their ways. (James 1: 8.) The way to find rest is to take the one yoke, to take Jesus as the Teacher and Pattern, as well as Master, and as the lessons are learned the peace will come, more and more fully and satisfying.—John 14: 27; 16: 33; Phil. 4: 6, 7.

This message and invitation are equally extended to the Gentile, since the "middle wall of partition" was broken down (Eph. 2: 13-16; Col. 2: 14, 15), for while the Gentiles were never under the burden of the Law given at Sinai, they have been under the severe taskmasters, Sin and Death; they have been under the power of Satan, the god of this world. The Gentiles were glad when they heard that they too might come unto Him and find rest for their souls. (Eph. 2: 2, 3, 12; Rom. 8: 2; Acts 26: 18; 13: 46-48.) We of our day, called out from the Gentiles, are also glad, and desire to "glorify the word of the Lord," as did the early converts. And we know no better way to do it than by further extending this precious invitation to the sin-sick and weary, to forsake the old ways, and to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Master, quietly submitting while He places upon them His yoke of obedience, and then patiently drawing with Him the burden of the new sanctified life. This is the will of God for each of His children, their sanctification.—1 Thes. 4: 3; 2 Thes. 2: 13, 14; 1 Pet. 1: 14-16.

The Rest that Remains

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."—Heb. 4: 1.

Canaan was to the Israelites fleeing from Egypt the land of rest and promise. It was better than the Egyptian bondage, but it was not altogether ideal, for they still had difficulties with their neighbors, as well as those attendant upon the endeavour to keep a law beyond their ability to keep. If Joshua had given them a permanent and fully satisfactory rest, the Lord would not afterward, through the Psalmist, have spoken of another day. (Heb. 4: 5-8.) The perfect rest is that which the believer has in Christ, when he rests from his own works, and accepts the finished work of Christ. But as the Jews did not enter into even the Canaan rest, because of unbelief, so the Christian is in danger of losing the rest now possible, and for the same reason—unbelief. Unbelief is defined as "departing from the living God" (Heb. 3: 12), and may begin in a very small matter.

The yoke which binds us to the Saviour is the best

safeguard against this besetting sin of unbelief. Let us therefore treasure it, humbly submitting to whatever in our lives we cannot understand, because we know that under His leadership and instruction all things will work together for our good. The heaviest cares and crosses which the Father lays upon us become light when we say with Him—"Not my will, but thine, be done;" "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Luke 22: 42; Matt. 12: 26.

The Words of Eternal Life

And now, having, as it were, sat at the Master's feet, and heard the wonderful words of wisdom and life; having had our inmost thoughts penetrated by his searching parables and similitudes; having heard His explanations of the object of His mission, and of His coming again in the glory of His Kingdom; having learned what He requires of His servants left during His absence to maintain the honor of His cause and to gather out by the faithful preaching of

the Gospel the people for His name—shall we now, like some of old, go back, and walk no more with Him? Or, when we hear His sorrowful voice saying, "Will ye also go away?" shall we say with Peter, "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure, that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."—John 6: 66-69.

If the latter, what pleasure shall be ours in thinking of ourselves as the broken hearts which He came to bind up; as the sheep safely sheltered in His fold; as the branches drawing life and power of fruitage from the Vine; as servants faithfully watching and serving, as virgins patiently waiting the appearance of the Bridegroom. And may it finally be also our joy to appear with Him in the glory!

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."



The Field is the World

A New Reformation

LABOR is no match for capital, in the opinion of Frederic Harrison, the British Positivist who has been active in labor's cause for fifty years. Labor is thoroughly roused in England; its friends are in the Ministry, it showed its power in the great coal and dock strikes, and now there is talk of a nation-wide general strike to bring capital to its knees and show that labor is the master. Mr. Harrison discourages all such talk, because he is sure labor would lose by it. What is needed, he believes, is a new reformation, "social, moral, and religious," that will give the worker his due—a seven-hour workday and a living minimum wage. It was Mr. Harrison who aided the strike in the building trades which won the Saturday half-holiday and an increase in wages. He has served on the Trade Union Commission (1867-1869), and has been a diligent agitator for labor legislation since 1871. He thinks that all the present rebellion and unrest spring from the fact that the hours of labor are too long and the pay too short. As we see here, he is not very optimistic:

"I have studied these labor troubles too long and too closely to dream of any legislation, or conference, or agreement whatever doing more than patching up a truce for the moment. And I hold the necessary reorganization of society to be far too deep, and wide, and complex to be brought about by any panacea or in any one revolution of industrial life. One who for all these fifty years has watched this growing unrest, and has been in close touch with the best labor-leaders and the most enlightened chiefs of industry, could not give way to optimism to-day. I see long and arduous struggles before both workmen and managers in our anarchic industrial world. And I know what menacing obstacles face both, whether political, economic, or social. I have always held and taught that industry can not be in a settled and healthy state until seven hours is made the normal standard of a day's labor and a fixed 'living wage' for a regular stated term is recognized as being merely the irreducible part of remuneration, the rest being proportioned to the profits resulting from the work done."

Mr. Harrison declares that he is no anarchist; while he considers that there are circumstances in which a general strike is inevitable, he does not see how it can fail to increase the misery of the poor laborer without always securing the advantages he hopes for. The claims put forth by the unions he declares to be "eloquent, morally and socially right. But the methods of attaining these results are vague, contradictory, and anarchical." He proceeds:

"We hear big phrases about national strikes, international leagues, about 'the doom of modern society,' and 'shaking civilization to its foundations.' But, supposing all these ends accomplished—what then? How can civilization be ruined without ruining those by whom . . . civilization is built up day by day? What is going to be put in the place of modern society? Will not the doom of society be also the doom of labor? If not, tell us how it is proposed to organize industry. On this vital point all the leaders, politicians, and prophets are at variance. Some say by reform bills, by new electrical machinery, by votes for women, by a legal minimum. Others demand a universal stoppage of all work, by blockading the ports, starving great cities, paralyzing the means of locomotion, by monster demonstrations, and so throwing ministers and capitalists into a panic. The advocates of these mutually destructive schemes denounce the proposals of each other more violently than they denounce either governments or employers. It is a day of Pentecost with them. They all talk different tongues, each unknown and odious to the rest."

The fact is, as noted above, he believes labor is really no match for capital, which must win every time, while strikes simply increase the misery of the poor. Thus we read:

"Capital is not only an enormously powerful but a singularly adroit creation of modern civilization. It is not so easily frightened and not so readily outwitted. The recent general strikes only proved how helpless and suicidal they must be—while the laborers are not united with a firm belief in a new form of practical industry. Organized capital only mocks at mere anarchical outbursts. And the general strike—any great strike—without vast reserved funds, without unity, discipline, trusted leadership, and a definite future, is anarchy."

Mr. Harrison, who is president of the English Positivists, a high and dry philosopher of metaphysical and economic genius, thinks that the cure for the labor unrest, rebellion, and riot can not be found in legislation or the conflict of the classes. The country, he believes, needs a moral reform, such as that wave of humanity which swept over the Roman world, and put a stop to gladiatorial shows, when one man leapt between the fighting slaves of the arena and sacrificed his life that the brutal exhibition might be abolished forever. This thoughtful writer tells us there may be some palliatives, some anodynes for the disease of society. But a genuine remedy must come from within the body politic itself, as we read in the following striking words with which Mr. Harrison concludes his essay:

"By all means try various temporary palliatives. Profit-sharing may be good as far as it goes and can be worked. Conciliation has done something, and may do more. The arbitration of public authorities may be useful. New blood in Parliament is eminently needed. There are now before it bills and schemes which ought to be tried. But let not workmen think that, given the present tone on both sides of this unrest, any legislative, political, or economic devices will touch the root of the matter.

"*Nothing will touch it but a new and better spirit in all who work and who organize work—a new social, moral, and religious reformation.* That is too big a thing to enter on here. For the present let employers reflect that the unrest is come to stay, and will not be ended by petty devices. And let workmen reflect that, even if they could 'shake civilization'—which is quite unlikely—they and theirs would suffer first and suffer most, unless they see what the new civilization is to be—and then join as one man, determined to secure it."

—Literary Digest.

Reforms Doomed to Failure

Prominent labor leaders and economists see the hopelessness of a new order of things arising out of the present confusion. Men need a force outside themselves in which they would have confidence, and to which they must be made to submit, before the peace-loving and well-meaning can be secure in the possession of a minimum wage and ordinary comforts of life. While the present competitive system continues there will be corruption, bribery, selfishness and sweated labor, with sin and poverty appalling to the last degree. The new power, outside of men, which will right present wrongs, is the Kingdom of God. And it will not reform the present evil world. It will "break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms." The people will not be destroyed, for they are to be reigned over by the fifth Universal Empire. It is the governments and great political, religious and social institutions, with which the New King makes war.

Earthly empires are likened in the Scriptures to great beasts of prey, and man's hope lies not in the reformation of these beasts, but in their destruction. —Dan. 2: 44; 7: 3-27; Rev. 12: 3; 13: 1-7, 11-14; 19: 20.

A Sad Mistake

The nominal Christian Church has made the sad mistake of thinking it must either rule the world or reform it. Hence we hear much about "the Church's failure" to do various things. For example, Bishop Anderson, of Riverina, addressed the Anglican Synod at Sydney, and pointed out, just as Mr. Harrison did, the impossibility of having economic peace without moral and spiritual reforms. He said:

"Communities did not seek peace in Christ, but had recourse to their own nostrums, which only afforded momentary relief, and aggravated the disease. Hitherto the church had failed because of the inconsistencies of her members, and because she had magnified the spiritual at the expense of the secular. Extremes of wealth or poverty were a menace to the peace of the world, and the church would welcome any sound method of adjusting inequalities.

"If socialism be the cure," he exclaimed, "let socialism come; if it be syndicalism that is to cleanse the Augean stables, then by all means let in the flood. But socialism and her sister syndicalism have yet to show that they are radical enough to meet the enormous task before them. Who would say that when all men were equally provided for that all men would be equally good? How are you going to guard against unscrupulous rogues, liars, thieves, and the many evils that must ever threaten the body politic? Socialism and syndicalism must fail because they do not deal with the whole man, or, rather, they ignore that part of his composite nature that matters most. Unless the spirit of Christ permeates social and economic reforms, all such reforms are doomed to inevitable failure."

Has the Church "Failed?"

But Bishop Anderson (and many other ministers of all denominations) errs in stating that the Church has failed of her mission. To make such a statement is to say that the Head of the Church has failed. It may be true that the Anglican Church has failed of its supposed mission; it is certainly true that the Papacy has failed in her assumption of headship of the Church and as universal ruler of the kingdoms of the world. But Christ's Church has not failed; no, never. Throughout the centuries she has been doing what the Lord commissioned her to do; namely, *not to rule, not to reign*, but to make herself ready while waiting for the Lord to come and exalt her to His throne and glory. She has devoted herself to the taking out of a people for his name and to giving a good witness to men, and this work has not involved the assumption of carnal weapons nor the interference in political and capitalistic affairs.

What is needed in the next few years is more voices to shout the good news of the Kingdom! In the meantime the Bride is busy making herself ready.—Rev. 19: 5-8.

"The Greatest Moral and Spiritual Force"

That others beside Anglicans and Catholics mistake the mission of the Church was shown also at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church held last May. The Moderator-elect stated that—

"The most important part of the Church's work was to preach the Gospel, so that righteousness might be promoted, the moral tone of the community elevated, and men shown the high standard by which they ought to live. When thus regarded the Church was seen to be the greatest moral and spiritual force in any country. . . . Jesus did not advocate any particular scheme of government, or try to introduce a new social order. . . . If Jesus were here He would plead that such conditions should be secured as would enable men to live in ordinary comfort, and have some chance of self-culture and improvement."

Another speaker, Rev. Prof. Paterson, of Edinburgh, said that one of the triumphs of the Church was that the State had become Christianized to the extent of philanthropic work in poor relief and caring for the sick and young—work previously carried on by the Church.

Nearly all large Church organizations have Social Questions Committees for discussing theatres, Sunday travelling, week-end holidays, etc., etc. At the above mentioned assembly Rev. Stewart moved that "the

General Assembly, recognizing the urgent need of clearer teaching on the relation of the Church to social problems, resolves to appoint a committee of investigation. He said that all that went to the making of character and conduct in the people was bound up in these questions. The political element in such questions was small, for most of the questions dealt with the relations between man and man. If the spirit of Christ were interpreted rightly the Church would be more fearless in expressing the mind and spirit of Christ on the questions of the day."

How far all this is from the Scripture teaching! Where do the Apostles state that their work was to elevate the moral tone of the community by influencing legislation? What ground is there for saying that were Jesus here he would interest Himself in questions of wages and physical comfort? He did not do so when on earth at His first advent. But He did advocate a "particular scheme of government"; not a human government, but a divine. He said not one word about seeking to improve the Roman government, but He did urge His hearers to forsake all that they had in order that they might enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Alas! the preaching of the Kingdom of Heaven is not popular to-day. Ministers and theological professors have forgotten Daniel's prophecy that *the God of Heaven* will set up a Kingdom; they have also forgotten our Lord's statement that this gospel of *the Kingdom* must be preached in all the world for a witness. They are in ignorance of the fact that God is selecting the joint-heirs of the Kingdom, and that soon it will be set up in the earth. Then, and not till then, will earth's affairs be righted.

The council of the Congregational Union, at a special meeting in July, discussed the Social Unrest, and considered the advisability of appointing "a standing committee of Christian men to act as a board of mediation in connection with industrial troubles and disputes, with the object of bringing capital and labor into brotherly conference, for the just settlement of the rights of both workers and employers by mutual agreement." Those present could not, however, agree as to whether this would be a good move or not. One suggested that the Government could appoint better mediators in the persons of men skilled in the handling of such questions. The matter was adjourned for further consideration at a future meeting.

Death and the Hereafter

The pastor of the principal Baptist Church in Melbourne, Rev. F. C. Spurr, gave recently an address on the above topic. As reported in the press—

"He said that, first of all, death was a fact, common to all, saint and scoundrel. Life was like a game of chess, men and women were pieces of varying value whilst the

game was in progress. Few people could contemplate death without misgivings. Death terminated much that was attractive—physical beauty, riches and honours, pleasures and sensations. Because of this, death was regarded with horror and as a robber. Yet this view was unnatural, and was one result of living unnaturally. To live well was to solve the mystery of death. These were commonplace remarks, but they led to the query, What was the meaning of death? Biologically, death was a necessity, and held no mystery. Process of waste and rebuilding began at birth. But this process had limits, and could not continue for ever. When the process of waste went on faster than the rebuilding, death resulted. Death was a stage of progress to prepare us for a higher station; it was not a collapse, it was an occurrence, and it had always been, long before sin came about, the natural ending of life. From a social view-point, death was a necessity, and physical immortality was unthinkable. Had all the people who lived during the past 6,000 years remained alive, there would be insufficient room on this planet. And, from the religious point of view, although a superficial reading of the Bible might suggest that death was a punishment of sin, and some churches actually held that doctrine, death was natural. Careful perusal of certain biblical passages touching death proved that the word was not intended to refer to physical death. The death which was the wages of sin was moral death, not the physical dissolution. Why did humans dread death? Animals, birds, and other species did not dread it. As St. Paul said, the sting of death was sin, and sin gave a moral significance to a perfectly natural proceeding. If men led normal lives, doing their duty to God and their fellow-men, death would have no fears. The sting could be removed only by Christ. The Old Testament took a gloomy view of death; but the New Testament described it as a sleep, a departure, an exodus. Death was an exchange of a pit for a house."

Several statements here made call for correction, being contradictory of the Scriptures the speaker claimed to expound.

First, that the Old Testament and the New give different views of the subject of death. It requires very little searching to find that the Old as well as the New Testament teaches that death is a sleep, and that there is to be a resurrection.

Second, that death is "natural," and that it is "unnatural" to "regard it with horror and as a robber." The Scriptures do show death as the penalty for sin, and describe it as an "enemy," not by a "superficial reading," as Dr. Spurr states, but by a clear and positive testimony from beginning to end. Man's natural and proper state is to live and not to die. Certainly the body wears out now in the course of a few years, but in the beginning it lasted nearly a thousand years; and if God can arrange for the renewal of the body continuously for a thousand years, He can arrange for the same process to be repeated for a million more.

Third, that death in the Bible refers to moral death, and not to physical dissolution. This is manifestly a false statement, for when the death penalty was pronounced in Eden, the explanation given was that it meant the body returning to dust as it was. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Mr. Spurr, like many other believers in the immortality of the soul, denies the obvious as stated in the Scriptures, and upholds the impossible, as originated by Satan and

perpetuated by all heathen religions. That death in the Bible does not refer to "moral death," but to physical death, is shown by the fact that "Christ died for our sins." He did not die a moral death, but expired physically when nailed to the Cross.

It is true that death is sometimes used figuratively in the Bible to refer to man's helpless condition in sin, such phrases as "dead in trespasses and sins" being frequent; but instead of disproving the fact of physical death such passages affirm it. The fact that fire is used as a symbol does not disprove the existence of fire; but what we know about the injuriousness and destructiveness of literal fire helps us to understand its application as a symbol. It is because death is an actual state of *helplessness and inertia in the grave*, that it can be employed as a figure of *helplessness and inertia in sin*. And thus one is assisted to understand that the power of Christ is required to deliver a sinner from the power of sin, just as a miracle will be required to raise the dead "in the last day."—Eph. 2: 1-5.

Fourth, that there is insufficient room on the earth for all of Adam's race. If we take twenty-seven thousand millions (27,000,000,000) as the total num-

ber of descendants of Father Adam and Mother Eve, we find that the State of Victoria could give each of them twenty square feet of surface, and yet have three-fourths of the State unencumbered. The Commonwealth of Australia could give each of the resurrected individuals a small farm. There is plenty of room in the earth for the millions yet unborn as well as for all who have died or are now living.

Fifth, that to "live well" was to solve the mystery of death." Millions of persons have lived well in the past, and have not solved the mystery. Can man by searching find out God, or by "living well" learn more of any of the mysteries of nature, such as how it comes that an ox and a lamb feed in the same pasture, and yet the same food makes for each a different hide? No, merely living well, while a good thing as far as it goes, solves nothing. Only the revelation of God's mind and purpose as given in the Scriptures solves the mysteries of life. Faith in the Lord Jesus is the only basis upon which any can come to an understanding of Life, Death and the Hereafter. "I am the Way, the Resurrection and the Life."



Do You Believe This?

WE HAVE RECEIVED a number of communications from readers of the above-named article in the August "Advocate," confirming the statement there made that the doctrine of eternal torment is still widely taught and believed, and that an active campaign is needed to show the truth on the subject. Many thousands of persons are more worried than they usually care to admit over the fate of members of the family, or friends, who they believe were too good to be eternally tormented, even though they are not sure they were good enough for heaven.

One correspondent sends a page from "Pearson's Weekly," June 6, 1912, containing an article entitled "Three Years in a Madhouse." The writer was cured, and now relates her experience. She describes Bethlem Royal Hospital as an ideal institution for the treatment of the insane, and describes one or two cases which were subsequently cured. She then says:

"There were a great many cases of religious mania, and these the doctors regarded, on the whole, as the most hopeless and intractable of any. I am, and have always been, a devout Churchwoman; but I used to feel, when gazing upon

these poor creatures, that a great and terrible responsibility rests upon men, whether clergy or lay preachers, who paint the future beyond the grave in such lurid colours to young and emotional girls. Nearly all of them in Bethlem had been driven mad through fear of eternal punishment in the life to come, and many of them imagined that they had committed the unpardonable sin."

This statement is only too true, and is in agreement with a statement made to us by a physician who had been for some years Inspector of Hospitals for the Insane in the State of Georgia, U.S.A. He said the majority of the patients he had seen afflicted with religious mania had been made so by the preaching of eternal torment for the unsaved. Several cases he knew of had been brought in during or just following revivalist campaigns of a sensational kind, such as were common at the time, now twenty years ago.

What better work can one engage in than to declare the truth concerning God's great love for mankind in sending His Son, and concerning the blessed provision for bringing them to an exact knowledge of the truth and the opportunity of salvation?

The Rose of Sharon

Now, thanks be to that God, who always leads us forth to triumph with the Anointed One, and who diffuses by us the fragrance of the knowledge of Him, in every place. Because we are a sweet odour of Christ to God, among those who are being saved, and among those who are perishing; to these indeed an odour of death to death, and to those, an odour of life to life; and for these things who is qualified? For we are not like the many, trafficking the word of God; but really from sincerity, and as from God, in the presence of God, we speak concerning Christ.—2 Cor. 2: 14-17.—Emphatic Diaglott rendering. See also E.D. Footnote.

VICTORIOUS generals among the Romans were given a "triumph" on their return from the successful campaign. A procession was formed, and the victor carried some of his relations with him in his chariot. "The streets through which the procession passed were strewn with flowers, and, as Plutarch tells us, the streets were full of incense." By this reference to the ancient custom, the Apostle shows that apart from Christ Jesus we are nothing.

We are Christ's brethren ("For which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren."—Heb. 2: 11), but in all things He has the pre-eminence. (Col. 1: 18.) Take away the victorious general, and the relations are nothing. Likewise, take away Christ, our victorious general, and we are nothing.

Again, "who diffuses [spreads abroad] by us the fragrance of the knowledge of Him." The streets were strewn with flowers, were full of incense. Why? They were there because of, and associated with, Him, the victorious general.

"Because we are a sweet odour of Christ to God." Now Jesus is the Rose of Sharon, and we are, as it were, the odour. Take away the rose, and the odour is gone. How then can any say we do not need a Mediator; are we not a sweet smell to God only because we are the odour that flows from Christ? If we are not that odour then are we *nothing* in God's sight; as were the relations that were not taken up in the chariot of the victorious general nothing.

For we are not as many which deal deceitfully with the Word of God, or adulterate it, or negotiate it for our own lucre and advantage. (Verse 17.) The position and condition of those who thus misuse the

Word of God, and who have grown rich thereby, is described in Rev. 3: 17, 18—

"Because thou sayest, 'I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing;' and knowest not that thou art the wretched and the pitiable one—even poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel thee to buy from me gold which has been refined by fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white garments, that the shame of thy nakedness may not be manifest; and eyesalve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see."

The fact that we are a sweet odour of Christ may not be manifest to all; nor do all appreciate the message of glad tidings; nevertheless, this failure on the part of others to recognize the sweet odour does not alter the fact, nor does it alter the sincerity of our mission or the truthfulness of our message—

"But if, indeed, our glad tidings be veiled, they have been veiled to those who are perishing. . . . For we do not proclaim ourselves, but the Anointed Jesus as Lord, and ourselves your bondservants on account of Jesus."—2 Cor. 4: 3, 5.

How, then, can we become a sweet odour of Christ unto God? The apostles give many exhortations, of which the following occur to us. Many others may be found in daily readings.

"But we entreat you, brethren, to acknowledge those who toil among you, both presiding over you in the Lord, and admonishing you, and to esteem them very highly in love, on account of their work. Cultivate peace among yourselves." (1 Thes. 5: 12, 13.) "Reject also foolish and uninstructional questions, knowing that they produce contentions; and a servant of the Lord must not be contentious, but be gentle towards all, fit to teach, patient under evil." (2 Tim. 2: 23, 24.) "Doing nothing from party-spirit, or vain glory, but in humility esteeming others as excelling yourselves." (Phil. 2: 4.) "For whereas envy and strife exist among you, are you not fleshly, and walk according to man?" (1 Cor. 3: 3.) "Then let us walk decently, . . . not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."—Rom. 13: 13, 14.

If we give heed to the above admonitions, and the many others equally searching in regard to our daily life and conversation, then shall we be able to say of ourselves, as did the apostle of himself, that we are a sweet savour, an acceptable and fragrant incense, of Christ unto God.

—E. L.



Gideon's Band

"Count me the swords that have come."
 "Lord, thousands on thousands are ready."
 "Lo! these are too many, and with them are some
 Whose hearts and whose hands are not steady.
 He whose soul does not burn,
 Let him take up his tent and return."

"Count me the swords that remain."
 "Lord, hundreds on hundreds are daring."
 "Those yet are too many for me to attain

To the victory I am preparing.
 Lead them down to the brink
 Of the waters of Marah to drink."

"Lord, those who remain are but few,
 And the hosts of the foe are appalling,
 And what can a handful such as we do?"
 "When ye hear from beyond my voice calling,
 Sound the trumpet! Hold the light!
 Great Midian will melt in your sight!"

—J. F. Gellately.

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Kingdom Herald

Vol. 4

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No. 7

Swift to Hear, Slow to Speak Slow to Wrath

—An Address on James 1: 10.—

IN HIS FIRST Epistle (1: 5) the Apostle Peter says we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, but he also shows that besides God's part in perfecting us, we have our own part. We are not to sit down with folded hands. He goes on to add that we shall have manifold temptations that the trial of our faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

This passage in James is similar. Of his own will God begat us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. (Jas. 1: 18.) Seeing God has so highly favoured us, James adds—“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.” Paul says the same thing in Rom. 8: 29—“For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.” All of these Apostles give us directions how this conformity to Christ is to be brought about. James tells us that in order to make our calling and election sure we must be swift to hear, slow to speak, *not easily provoked*, not easily put out of humour, but slow to wrath, ready to do God's will in everything.

Swift to Hear

Be ready, be anxious, be eager to hear. To hear what? To hear everything man would speak to us about—Christian Science, Evolution, Theosophy, &c.? No, not these things. To hear what, then? *To hear what God has to say to us.* It is sometimes pretty hard to hear God's voice. Let me give you a little illustration. We read that love suffers long and is kind. (1 Cor. 13: 4.) When people are misrepresenting us, treating us unkindly and cruelly, God says to us—Keep quiet, be still; if you speak, be sure it is a soft answer. It is not easy to be swift to hear in conditions of that kind. That is what the

Lord wants us to do. You and I have nothing to do with *second causes*, are *not to fight them*. “If your enemy hunger, feed him.” Tell him to quit his meanness, that you will have to feed him as long as he continues to be mean.

All, to be fitted to do the Lord's will, must come into close contact with the word of truth. Our seeking to make our calling and election sure means our being swift to hear. Why should we be swift to hear? Because it is the word of truth which is to be our guide in the Christian life, to tell us what our salvation is, and how to get it. It is to be the rule of our faith and practice. It is to be our Book of Rules. It contains all that is necessary for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, so that we may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.) All we need to give us strength is there. It gives us all we need in our Christian life.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you.” (Col. 3: 16.) It doesn't say: Let it dwell in the book, but “in you.” You are to get it into you and keep it there. Some say, I have a very short memory, I don't remember the texts of Scripture. If that is so, you are not doing what is necessary to strengthen your memory. I prayed to the Lord to strengthen my memory. I saw His plan was so glorious. I began to do all I could to learn the Scriptures. By practising I strengthened my memory. I know some who are pursuing this plan—They have a text each day, one for Monday, another for Tuesday, &c. They write the text on one side of a card and the book, chapter and verse on the other. It surprises me how many texts these people know this day.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” We want to get all the texts in use. We are to be swift to hear the *Promises*. The reason why people fret about their circumstances is because they are apt to forget the promises, e.g., that God will never suffer us to be tried beyond our ability. No trouble or

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trial can come upon us without God's knowledge or consent, only what would be for our good. The condition we are in is the very best for us. With thoughts of this kind running through our mind we would not worry. The reason why people worry is that the word of Christ is not dwelling in them richly. We are to appropriate the promises of God to our condition; they are for the purpose of strengthening us. Whatever befalls us, sorrow or joy, disaster or prosperity, we are content. The promises of God are so varied that they are suited to every condition. By applying them to ourselves, the result is that the peace of God rules in our hearts. No matter how our experiences may vary, God's promises can be found suitable. What effect do they have? They sweeten every pleasure, alleviate every sorrow, but never leave us destitute. "Wherein ye greatly rejoice," "Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (1 Pet. 1: 6, 8.) So great is the joy that words fail us. We have to express our joy in some other way. As we go through the storms of life, we are to have the joy and peace which God alone can give. It matters not how severe and how protracted our trials and troubles may be, the spiritual joy and peace will more than counteract the misery.

There are other things in the Word of God which we are to be swift to hear. We are to be swift to hear the *Commandments*, and we are to be sure to keep them. We cannot make our calling and election sure in any other way. Purify your souls by obeying the truth. (1 Pet. 1: 22.) "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Cor. 2: 9.) Why for them that love him? Because Jesus said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments. . . . He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." (John 14: 15, 21.) These things, then, are prepared for them that keep his commandments, and they who keep the commandments prepare themselves for these things by keeping the commandments.

Here are some of the commandments:—"Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, patient endurance; and to patient endurance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly love; and to love of the brethren, love." (2 Pet. 1: 5-7.) The Apostle then adds—"If ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 1: 10, 11.) "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 6: 33.) "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." (2 Cor. 7: 1.) God has so arranged the matter that, if a man falls, it is simply because he fails to keep the commandments, and he will have no one to blame but himself.

Again, we are to be swift to hear the *warnings, the threatenings*, in the Scriptures. What for? Simply to put us on our guard. Why does God tell us to

"work out our own salvation with fear and trembling?" (Phil. 2: 12.) Is it not because there is danger in neglecting our salvation? (Heb. 2: 3.) *We need every commandment and every warning.* "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4: 4.) "My sheep hear my voice (my warning or commandment), 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."—John 10: 27, 28.

Slow to Speak

Why cannot we make our tongues go real quick? Because we are in danger of saying the wrong thing, or the right thing at the wrong time. We must be sure we don't say a single word that would in the least misrepresent the divine character or plan, and thus dishonour God. We are not, however, to abstain from speaking altogether, but to be slow to do it. It is sometimes an imperative duty to speak. As the Psalmist says—"My tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long." (Psa. 35: 28.) Surely there is nothing wrong in speaking of this wonderful plan, the ransom sacrifice which has been paid for man, when we hear it repudiated. There is nothing wrong in speaking the truth in love, in recommending right living, in giving an encouraging word, in speaking good of others, &c. Does the Apostle James object to these things? Surely not. Why, then, does he say we are to be slow to speak?

There is a kind of speaking in which we are never to indulge, and that is evil speaking. "Speak evil of no man."* (Tit. 3: 2.) "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." (Jas. 1: 26.) The Apostle is here referring to the evil use of the tongue. "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy; who art thou that judgest another?" (Jas. 4: 11, 12.) This text shows just exactly what kind of adverse speaking is meant. It is not so much calumny as *fault-finding*. Evil-speaking is opposed to the Bible from beginning to end. He who is guilty of these things is guilty of disobeying the Bible from beginning to end. He is bestowing attention on the conduct of others, which ought to have been bestowed on himself. He is find-

*This passage is rendered by some modern versions, "to be defaming no one"; or, "to revile no one." The original word means "to blaspheme," "to vilify," or "to speak injuriously," as may be seen by consulting a lexicon, and by comparing other passages in which the word occurs; as Matt. 26: 65; Rom. 14: 16; 1 Cor. 10: 30; 1 Pet. 4: 4; 2 Pet. 2: 10; Jude 8, 10, etc. It is translated "revile" in Matt. 27: 39, and "rail" in 2 Pet. 2: 11. The Apostle's meaning is not, as some take it, that the evil course of others may not be pointed out as a warning. The Lord and the Apostles did so, and the Church throughout the age has been obliged to call attention to the evil words and works of false teachers, in order that the inexperienced Christian might not be led astray. But the saint will not revile or rail at any man, however base, nor will he speak injuriously, to injure the reputations of men in general.—Ed.

ing fault, not to help, but to criticise. Such a one has a very inadequate estimate of his own frailties. If he knew his own frailties, he would be less likely to speak of the frailties of others. If he fully realised what is meant by Christ's imputed righteousness, he would be less eager to find fault with and to judge others. To act thus betrays oneself. It shows self-conceit, self-complacency. Such a person is ignorant of his own condition. He is too easily pleased with himself.

Listen to the proud Pharisee—Lord, I thank thee I am so good, and other people so bad; you know I am much better than that publican. He then goes on to tell his positive and then his negative goodness. He is ignorant of himself, too easily pleased with himself; he is self-righteous. Our Lord saw him as a whitened sepulchre, and you cannot give a man a worse character than that. What is worse than a corpse putrefying? That is how the Lord saw him.

Speaking Evil of the Law

Fault-finding, with the injustice it leads to, shows marvellous ignorance of human nature. It is not merely a transgression of the royal law, it is an invasion of the divine prerogative. It is a setting of oneself above that law. God alone has the right to judge. "He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law." It is no less a presumption than if one were to quit one's station of doing the law and call men to account for disobeying the law.

What law does such a one speak against? The law of love, the perfect law of liberty. What does the law of love say? I shall rejoice in my brother's prosperity just as much as if it were my own. I shall be just as grieved at my neighbour's adversity as if it were my own. If a man loved his neighbour as himself, how many faults would he find against him? How many unfavourable judgments would he pass upon him? Such a one is in love with himself. He takes a microscopic view of his own faults. How often do we find people going about telling their own faults and failings? Men don't usually condemn themselves readily, don't usually endeavour to make themselves appear in a worse light than they are. Just so, if they had the love of God, they would not do this of others. We should be severe against ourselves, lenient towards others. Our natural tendency is to be lenient to ourselves, and severe against others. Nine times out of ten we are wrong in our judgment. The eye and the mind, being affected by the corruption of the heart, put another colour on the actions.

If one knows anything to the detriment of another, has he to tell everyone, or is he to keep it to himself? Peter says—"Above all things have fervent love among yourselves," and he gives this reason, "for love shall cover the multitude of sins." (1 Pet. 4: 8.) He knew that brothers and sisters would have weaknesses, and that if they had this warm love, they would be sure, instead of uncovering and magnifying their frailties, to cover and minimise them, so covering a multitude of sins. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred men follow the opposite course; yet reason would teach one that this is not the best plan. A

man never makes himself better or greater by making another worse or less.

If it is necessary to uncover the faults of another, do it in the Lord's way. We must be swift to hear the word of the Lord. There has been more trouble through ignoring this rule than ignoring all the other rules put together. Matt. 18: 15-17—"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go"—and tell everybody you meet all about it, never go and tell him himself? Is that what is said? No, those who act in this way, are not swift to hear. "Go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone." Say to him—Brother, the Lord tells me I have to come to see you and I have come. "If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." That is the rule to follow.

A man degrades himself spiritually if he speaks of the faults of others. If a man continues to speak of the faults of others after it has been pointed out that it is wrong to do so, he makes himself a transgressor, and should be treated as such. Such a person is apt to put things in a false light in order to injure. We should discourage such a person. We should say to him—Brother, for you to tell me these things would be committing a sin, and if I listen I am committing a sin; and a very severe penalty would be meted out to us. So say the Scriptures—Matt. 18: 23-35—"O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me; shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses."

If this rule were observed, there would be very little fault-finding and evil-speaking. Usually the listener has too little courage to stop the gossip, or there may be some other reason. Generally those who tell the faults pretend to love the brother and assert this; but that is not the case. If they love the brother as they ought, they would not tell the faults. What is more, they don't love the Lord. If they love the Lord, they would keep his commandments. Be swift to hear the Lord's commandments. Hear him saying—Go and tell your brother his faults between you and him alone; go and see your brother and fix it up with him. The very fact that you don't do this proves you don't love me. One who loves his brother would cover a multitude of sins.

Molehills Become Mountains

Men who ignore Bible rules usually magnify faults; they turn a molehill into a mountain. You have seen a boy making bubbles out of a little drop of soap-water. You have seen how large the bubbles can be made. So it is with the stories told about a brother's faults. Each time it is told the one who tells it adds a bit and the result is something very big indeed, though the original of it may have been very little. Let me give you another illustration. You

have all looked through a telescope. You know how near and how big things look when seen the one way, and how distant and how small they appear when you reverse the telescope and look through the other end. So it is with such people when looking at faults. When they look at their own faults, they appear very insignificant, but other people's faults are very big and fill up the whole field of vision. I am not speaking thus because there are any fault-finders among you, but rather to prevent any.

If the fault-finder still persists, he is setting himself up as superior, not only to those whom he is judging, but also to the royal law of love itself. He is proving or trying to prove that the law of love is defective, or that he is such a superior person that he is not bound by it, and does not require to obey it. This is the proof of the lack of humility of which the Apostle speaks in the previous verse. (Jas. 4: 10.) "Humble yourselves in the sight of God, and he shall lift you up." Such a person is assuming an attitude of superiority not only towards other persons, but towards the law of love and its Author; he declares in effect that he is omniscient, that he knows all about the heart, that he has full authority from God, that he is perfect, and can cast as many stones as he wants to. The true Christian knows too much of his own faults to be severe on others. If we would consider ourselves, we would be less prone to criticise others, and have less time to do it.

We are for the most part very unfit and improper judges over the faults of others. What are the qualifications in order to judge others? (1) Full authority from God. Have we that qualification? Would someone give me the text which says we are to judge others.* You cannot find it? Then we lack the first qualification. (2) We should be omniscient, we should know all about the heart, the motives. Have we that?

In the next age the Lord shall judge the people righteously. There has been no righteous judgment done for many thousand years. No matter how just the judges of to-day are, they are bound to make mistakes. But with Christ it is different; because he is omniscient, "he shall judge righteous judgment." Suppose God were to say—I want you to judge Brother So-and-So, and I want you to judge him righteously, but if you don't I shall send you into the Second Death. How many would like to undertake a job like that? Would you not come to the conclusion you had better keep your hands off altogether? You would be afraid. Why? Because you know your failings. That is why the Lord says—"Judge nothing before the time." (1 Cor. 4: 5.) There is a time when we shall be omniscient, and shall be able to judge righteous judgment. While the heavenly Father in the Kingdom Age intends to delegate to us the authority and power to judge (1 Cor. 6: 2; Rev. 20: 4; 2: 26, 27), he forbids it in this

*We understand the speaker to mean, to judge severely or condemn a brother or sister for faults or unintentional lapses. To judge as to the rightness or wrongness of an action is necessary, for the Lord said, a tree is known by its fruit. If one could not tell right from wrong, he would be in danger of imitating the wrong. The full grown Christian is one who has learned to judge between good and evil. (Heb. 5: 14.)—Ed.

age. We are told positively not to judge. A man who does so is sure to get into trouble sooner or later.

Be swift to hear. Since we must always give an account of ourselves to the great Law-giver, it is our proper business to look well into ourselves to pass successfully his judgment. If we do this impartially, we shall have neither heart nor time to search much into the faults of others. The Apostle Paul at the end of his course exclaimed—"I have fought a good fight." (2 Tim. 4: 7.) Was it a fight with himself or with other people? It was with himself; as he said—"I fight not as one that beateth the air, but I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection; lest that when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—1 Cor. 9: 26, 27.

That is where he did his fighting, and that is where I have to do my fighting. The Lord is giving me a good deal to do. I have my hands full. A man who does this well will not have time to do with others. Paul says—"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine."—1 Tim. 4: 16.

Another thing: a man who is guilty of judging another thereby lays the foundation of his own severe judgment. (Matt. 7: 1.) "Judge not that ye be not judged." If you don't want to be judged harshly, severely, then don't judge others severely. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." This should strike terror upon us. (Jas. 2: 13.) "He shall have judgment without mercy." Who will have judgment without mercy? Does the Apostle James tell us? Who is it? "He that shows no mercy." God shall have no mercy upon him. You see, then, that if you want God to be real merciful to you, you must be real merciful to others. The man who is guilty of finding fault with the conduct of others, judges another, engages God against him.

The Mote and the Beam

Then Jesus asks the question—"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" (Matt. 7: 3.) It wouldn't be so bad to look at your neighbour's mote, if you didn't neglect your own beam. "Thou hypocrite!"—that is what he calls him who finds fault with another; there is no exception to it, every fault-finder is a hypocrite and has a beam—"Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." (Matt. 7: 5.) He intends to teach us that the man who habitually judges a brother has a fault a thousand times greater than the fault of his brother. If he attended to his own faults, he would have no time to attend to the faults of others. A mote is a little particle of dust. What is a beam? Is that a speck? No, it is the largest piece of wood in a building. Our Lord's expression is purposely hyperbolic to show that the fault-finder has a fault a thousand times greater than that of his brother. He strains at a gnat, and swallows a camel. No wonder our Lord calls him a hypocrite!

If it is wrong to speak evil of or judge a brother, how about listening; is there anything wrong about that? Yes, just as much wrong. The receiver of

stolen goods is just as obnoxious as the thief. (Psa. 15: 1.) "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" Not—Who shall get in? that is another question, but—who shall abide after he gets there? Here is the answer—"He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour." Neither the backbiter nor the one who listens will be permitted to remain in the Kingdom. You would think that is a severe penalty for such a small thing. The Bible doesn't consider it a small thing; the Bible considers it a very bad thing.

What is meant by taking up a reproach? To receive or admit it without giving check to it. The penalty is the same. To take up a reproach against a brother is a transgression of the royal law of love, a sign of an unloving heart. If we have the love of God in our hearts, we shall not believe anything to the disadvantage or injury of a brother, until we get the complete evidence, and this will not be from one side only but from both. The fault must be proved against him in the Bible way. What would you think of a judge who after hearing one side of the evidence, said to the jury—"Don't you think these witnesses were sincere, that they told the truth? Let us not waste time listening to the other side." We should say that was an unjust judge, not fit to be a judge. If that is true of an earthly judge, what about one who is being trained to judge for a thousand years in the Kingdom of Christ? Yet that is what a great many do. Without giving a brother a chance to defend himself, they decide against him. Everyone who will be chosen as a judge under Christ's Kingdom will be just, and a loving judge. If we have the love of God in our hearts, we shall only believe *after complete evidence*. We shall turn our ears away from the tale-bearer. We shall accept a fact with manifest reluctance and make many an excuse, cover a multitude of sins. Why does a mother show such reluctance in receiving bad reports of her children? She must get complete evidence against her son before she believes it. She will ask—"Did you see it yourself? Was the person who informed you actuated by any unfriendly motive? Were there not some mitigating circumstances? Are you sure it was my boy and not some other boy? She would rather believe the tale-bearer was malicious or mistaken than that her boy had done the wrong. Tell her, on the other hand, something good about her boy, and you will see her face brighten. Then her tongue will begin to go, and she will give you a full account of his good qualities and actions, and you will be lucky if you can get away in less than an hour.

Why are parents so unwilling to hear anything against their children, and so willing to hear all in their praise? Why is it? *It is love*. If you love one another, you would not hear anything against another without complete evidence. If the love of a mother is so strong for her offspring, how about the love of God? Would that be less strong? Certainly not. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." (Isa. 49: 15.) We ought to be ashamed of ourselves if we find fault with others, or listen to

tales about them. It will show we have not the love of God in our hearts.

Slow to Wrath

"For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." (Jas. 1: 20.) What is meant by the righteousness of God? Is it a real practical righteousness? Yes, it is a righteousness of character, and our characters must be built up into the likeness of God's character. He gives us to understand that if we get easily provoked, that will not build up our characters. John refers to the same thing when he says—"He that *doeth* righteousness is righteous." (1 John 3: 7.) Our Lord said—"Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." (Matt. 5: 20.) It should be the care of every true child of God not only to work out the righteousness of God in himself, but to promote that of others, and to be careful about putting a stumbling-block in the way of any. Man's wrath worketh not out God's righteousness. It cannot cultivate the formation of a righteous character, but opposes God's righteousness.

The Apostle James tells us at the beginning of this chapter that we must be ready to work out two things—(1) We must count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations, and (2) after we do fall into divers temptations, we must let patience have her perfect work, not to get excited or anxious. Why are we to count it all joy? Is it because the trials are agreeable? No. Then why are we to count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations? It is because of their effects, their results, their fruits. If properly exercised by them, they yield in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and we shall be rewarded with an eternal weight of glory, a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give in that day to all that love his appearing. "The trying of your faith worketh patience, but let patience have her perfect work."

Another reason is because the effects, good or bad, depend entirely on the way we receive the trials. They are either a great blessing or a great curse. If we receive them meekly, if we see God's hand in them, if we are kind and loving to the second causes, they will prove blessings. If, on the other hand, we look on them as bad, worry and fret, grumble and growl, then they become curses rather than blessings, and leave us worse than before.

We are not to waste our trials. God is the author of our discipline. Our trials cannot come without his knowledge and consent, and He is so wise that He never makes a mistake, so good that He never suffers us to be tempted more than we need. If we only keep these thoughts in mind, we shall make proper use of our troubles and trials, and not waste them.

God is the author of our discipline. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." (Heb. 12: 6.) No matter what instrument is used—he may utilize Satan, Judas, a member of our own household—we are to receive our troubles and quit fighting second causes. We are to quit fighting men and women. We are to have nothing to do with fighting second causes, unless to

treat them kindly. Remember our Lord said it was the devil who put it into the heart of Judas to betray him, yet when our Lord summed the matter up, he passed by all these secondary causes. Did he say?—"The cup which Judas fixed up for me,—or the cup which Satan, or which the Jewish nation gave me? No, what he said was—"The cup which my Father gave me, shall I not drink it?" He knew that Satan and Judas and the Jewish nation could not give Him that cup unless with God's permission. If the Father permitted it, he was to look on it as an expression of the Father's will. And so with us, we are to say "Amen!" to all that God permits to come upon us.

Prepared for the Kingdom

We are to look on these troubles and trials as blessings. "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him!" (Heb. 12: 5.) Are we to look on these chastenings as things of no consequence? Surely not. It is because God loves us, because we are His sons, because He wants us to be partakers of His holiness, that He permits us to be chastened. Look on every trouble or trial as a blessing, a disagreeable blessing, but a blessing nevertheless. God is preparing you for the Kingdom, just as Jesus was prepared for the Kingdom. We are not to despise the chastening of the Lord. We are not to faint under it, not to get down-hearted. If we remember the purpose, we shall not be discouraged. It all depends on how we look at it. Our troubles and trials are preparatory. We are in the school of affliction at the present time. We have covenanted to suffer and die with Christ. It is necessary not only to prove our sincerity, but also to perfect ourselves. We never could get into the Kingdom without that. The troubles and trials of this year are to prepare us for the troubles and trials of next year. God sends us troubles not to make us feel bad, but to develop in us the heavenly graces.

They are spiritual gymnastics. Just as an athlete

goes through different exercises to develop his body, so troubles and trials are sent to you and me to develop us spiritually. If we remember this, will we be slow to wrath or swift to wrath? You would never perfect yourself in a thousand years by losing your temper. Every time you get provoked or excited, you are interrupting the work of character-building. We must develop meekness by God's grace. We are to resolve every day by the grace of God that we are not going to cause anyone to stumble to-day, or be stumbled by anyone to-day. If people are out of humor with us, we shall just smile, or perhaps not even smile, if that would provoke them.

Especially do we need wisdom when we come to troubles and trials. If any of you don't see God's hand in it, and don't see how to co-operate with God, don't know how to manage the troubles and trials. "Let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." (Jas. 1: 5.) That is excellent advice, is it not? Be swift to hear, when people are misrepresenting you, saying things about you that are not true; the Lord is saying to you—Keep cool, don't be bad to him because he is bad to you; bless him because he is cursing you. God is saying to you—"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." (Heb. 13: 5.) When poverty is staring us in the face, just let us smile and sing. God will give us a right good meal.

Be swift to hear the word of the Lord when things are adverse as well as when things are prosperous.

Be slow to speak. Before giving utterance to your thoughts, consider whether they are in accordance with the Book of Rules. If you are not swift to hear and slow to speak, you will interfere with your entrance into the Kingdom.

Lastly, *be slow to wrath.* Don't lose your temper or get out of humor. You can't build your character in that way.

—M. L. McF.

Christian Evidences

(The first of this series appeared in the "Advocate" for April, 1912, a re-reading of which is recommended in connection with the present article.)

Ancient Books

LESSON III.

1. You have been taught that Christians—even those who have not received what is called a learned education—ought to have some good reason for being Christians; and not to believe in our religion, as the Pagans do in theirs, merely because their fathers did so before them. But some persons suppose that, however strong the evidences may be for the truth of Christianity, these must be evidences only to the *learned*, who are able to examine ancient books, and to read them in the original languages; and that an ordinary unlearned Christian must take their word for what they tell him.

You do, indeed, read in English the accounts of what Jesus and His Apostles said and did, and of what befell them. But the English book which we call the Bible professes to be a translation of what was originally written in Greek and Hebrew, which

you do not understand. And some one may perhaps ask you, how you can know, except by taking the word of the learned for it, that there *are* these Greek and Hebrew originals which have been handed down from ancient times? or how can you be sure that our translations of them are faithful, except by trusting to the translators? So that an unlearned Christian must, after all, (some people will tell you,) be at the mercy of the learned, in what relates to the very foundations of his faith. He must take their word (it will be said) for the very existence of the Bible in the original languages, and for the meaning of what is written in it; and, therefore, he may as well at once take their word for everything, and believe in his religion on their assurance.

And this is what many persons do. But others will be apt to say, "How can we tell that the learned have not deceived us? The Mohammedans take the word of the learned men among them; and the

Pagans do the same; and if the people have been imposed upon by their teachers in Mohammedan and Pagan countries, how can we tell that it is not the same in Christian countries? What ground have we for trusting with such perfect confidence in our Christian teachers, that they are men who would not deceive us?"

2. The truth is, however, that an unlearned Christian may have very good grounds for being a believer, without placing this entire confidence in any man. He may have reason to believe that there are ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, though he never saw one, nor could read it if he did. And he may be convinced that an English Bible gives the meaning of the original, though he must not trust completely to any one's word. In fact, he may have the same sort of evidence in this case, which every one trusts to in many other cases, where none but a madman would have any doubt at all.

For instance, there is no one tolerably educated, who does not know that there is such a country as France, though he may never have been there himself. Who is there that doubts whether there are such cities as London, and Paris, and Rome, though he may never have visited them? Most people are fully convinced that the world is round, though there are but few who have sailed round it. There are many persons living in the inland parts of these islands who never saw the sea; and yet none of them, even the most ignorant clowns, have any doubt that there is such a thing as the sea. We believe all these, and many other such things, because we have been told them.

3. Now suppose any one should say, "How do you know that travellers have not imposed upon you in all these matters: as it is well known travellers are apt to do? Is there any traveller you can so fully trust in, as to be quite sure he would not deceive you?" What would you answer? I suppose you would say, *one* traveller might perhaps deceive us; or even two or three might possibly combine to propagate a false story, in some cases where hardly any one would have the opportunity to detect them; but in these matters there are hundreds and thousands who would be sure to contradict the accounts if they were not true; and travellers are often glad of an opportunity of detecting each other's mistakes. Many of them disagree with each other in several particulars respecting the cities of Paris and Rome; and if it had been false that there are any such cities at all, it is impossible but that the falsehood should have been speedily contradicted. And it is the same with the existence of the sea,—the roundness of the world,—and the other things that were mentioned.

4. It is in the same manner that we believe, on the word of astronomers, that the earth turns round every twenty-four hours, though we are insensible of the motion; and that the sun, which seems as if you could cover it with your hat, is immensely larger than the earth we inhabit; though there is not one person in ten thousand that has ever gone through the mathematical proof of this. And yet we have very good reason for believing it; not from any strong confidence in the honesty of any particular astronomer, but because the same things are attested by many different astronomers; who are so far from combining together in a false account, that many of

them rejoice in any opportunity of detecting each other's mistakes.

Now an unlearned man has just the same sort of reason for believing that there are ancient copies, in Hebrew and Greek, of the Christian sacred books, and of the works of other ancient authors, who mention some things connected with the origin of Christianity. There is no need for him to place full confidence in any particular man's honesty. For if any book were forged by some learned man in these days, and put forth as a translation from an ancient book, there are many other learned men, of this and of various other countries, and of different religions, who would be eager to make an inquiry, and examine the question, and would be sure to detect any forgery, especially on an important subject.

And it is the same with translators. Many of these are at variance with each other as to the precise sense of some particular passage; and many of them are very much opposed to each other, as to the doctrines which they believe to be taught in Scripture. But all the different versions of the Bible agree as to the main outline of the history, and of the discourses recorded; and therefore an unlearned Christian may be as sure of the general sense of the original as if he understood the language of it, and could examine it for himself; because he is sure that unbelievers, who are opposed to all Christians, or different sects of Christians, who are opposed to each other, would not fail to point out any errors in the translations made by their opponents. Scholars have an opportunity to examine and inquire into the meaning of the original works; and therefore the very bitterness with which they dispute against each other, proves that where they all agree they must be right.

5. All these ancient books, in short, and all the translations of them, are in the condition of witnesses placed in a witness-box, in a court of justice; examined and cross-examined by friends and enemies, and brought face to face with each other, so as to make it certain that any falsehood or mistake will be brought to light.

No one need doubt, therefore, that the books of our English New Testament are really translated from ancient originals in Greek, and are, at least, not forgeries of the present day; because unbelievers in Christianity would not have failed to expose such a forgery.

But in the case of the books of the Old Testament, we have a remarkable proof that they could never have been forged *by Christians* at all; because they are preserved and highly revered by the unbelieving *Jews* in various parts of the world at this day. These are the Scriptures which the *Jews* at Berea were commended for searching with diligent care. In these they found the prophecies to which the Apostles were accustomed to refer, as proving that Jesus was the promised Christ, or Messiah. And the history goes on to relate, that the consequence of their searching those Scriptures was, that "many of them believed."

Prophecies

LESSON IV.

1. But these Old Testament Scriptures are, in some respects, more instructive to *us*, even than to the

persons who lived in the Apostles' time; on account of the more complete fulfilment of some of the prophecies that has since taken place.

In the times of the Apostles, the religion of Jesus Christ was, indeed, spreading very rapidly, both among Jews and Gentiles; but still it was but a small and obscure portion of either that had embraced it, compared with those who either knew nothing of it, or rejected it with scorn and hatred. Now, Jesus is, and has been for many ages, acknowledged as Lord, in all the most civilized portions of the world. His disciples overthrew the religions of all the most powerful and enlightened nations, and produced, without conquest, and without the help of wealth, or of human power, or learning, the most wonderful change that ever was produced in men's opinions, and on the most important point. The number of those who profess Christianity is computed at about two hundred and fifty millions; comprehending all the most civilized nations of the world. And to estimate properly the greatness of the effect produced, we should take into account that there are about one hundred and twenty millions of persons whose religion is so far founded on Christ's, that it could never have existed, such as it is, if Christ had never appeared,—I mean the Mohammedans; for though these have departed widely from the religion which Jesus taught, and regard Mohammed as a greater prophet than He, yet they acknowledge Jesus as a true prophet, and as the Messiah, or Christ; and profess that their religion is founded on His.

2. This should be taken into account; because what we are now speaking of is the great and wonderful effect produced,—the extraordinary change brought about in the world,—by Christ and his Apostles. So great is this effect, that every man, whether believer or unbeliever, if not totally ignorant of history, must allow that Jesus Christ was by far the most important and extraordinary person that ever appeared on earth; and that He effected the most wonderful revolution that ever was effected in the religion of mankind. Yet this wonderful change was made by a person of the Jewish nation,—a nation which was never one of the greatest and most powerful,—never at all equal in the fame of wisdom, and knowledge, and skill in the arts of life, to the Greeks and several other of the ancient nations. And all this was done by a person who was despised, and persecuted, and put to a shameful death, by the Jews themselves, his own countrymen. If, therefore, you were to ask any unbeliever in Christianity, "Who was the most wonderful person that ever existed? and who brought about the most extraordinary effect, in the strangest and most wonderful manner?" he could hardly help answering that Jesus of Nazareth was the person.

And then you might ask him to explain how it happened (supposing our religion to be an invention of man) that all this had been foretold in the ancient prophecies of the Old Testament; in books which are carefully preserved, and held in high reverence, by the unbelieving Jews at this day.

3. You may find such prophecies as I am speaking of, in various parts of the Old Testament. As, for instance, it was prophesied that a great blessing to all nations of the earth should spring from the nation that was to descend from Abraham (Gen. xii. 18).

Now, when the descendants of Abraham did actually become a nation, and did receive, through Moses, a religion which they held in the highest veneration, they would naturally expect the above prophecy to refer to the extension of that very religion. And any one of them professing to be a prophet, but speaking really as a mere man, would have been sure to confirm that expectation. Yet it was foretold, that the religion which the Israelites had received from Moses, was to give place to a new one: as in Jer. xxxi. 31: "Behold the days come [are coming], saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers," &c.

You may find other prophecies to the same effect in Jer. xxxii. 40, and xxxiii. 14; Ezek. xxxvii. 26; Micah iv. 1.

It was prophesied, likewise, that it was not to be by the whole Jewish nation that these great effects were to be produced, but by one particular person of that nation; and, what is still more remarkable, that this one promised Saviour was to be "despised and rejected" by His own people: as you may read in Isaiah lii. and liii. And yet that He was (though put to death by them) to establish a great and extensive kingdom. For prophecies of these several points, see Isaiah ix. 6, xi. 1; Ezekiel xxxiv. 23.

Now many of these prophecies were delivered (as the unbelieving Jews of this day bear witness) six hundred years before the birth of Jesus: at which time, and also at the time when the Gospel was first preached, the Jews were so far from being a great and powerful people, that they had been conquered and brought into subjection by other nations. So that, according to all human conjecture, nothing could have been more strange, than the delivery of these prophecies and their fulfilment.

4. And the proof from these prophecies is made very much the stronger by the number of distinct particulars which they mention; some of them seeming, at first sight, at variance with each other; but all of them agreeing with what has really taken place. Such a prophecy is like a complicated lock, with many and intricate wards, when you have found a key that opens it. An ordinary simple lock may be fitted by several different keys, that were not made for it: just as a loose general kind of prediction—of the coming of some great conqueror or the like—may have been made by guess: and may be found to agree with several different events. But the more numerous and complicated are the wards of a lock, the more certain you are that a key which exactly fits it must be the right key: and that one of them, the key or the lock, must have been made for the other. And so it is with prophecies that contain many distinct, and seemingly opposite particulars, when we see the event fulfilling all those particulars.

5. This fulfilment, by the wide spread of Christ's religion among various nations, though it was expected by the early Christians, had not been seen by them, as it is by us. They saw, however, that what Jesus had done and suffered did agree with the prophecies of the Old Testament: that He was born at the time when it had been foretold that Christ was to come, and when the whole Jewish nation were in expectation of His coming:—that He was acknow-

edged by His enemies to have wrought those miracles which had been prophesied of: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing" (Isaiah xxxv. 5; Luke vii. 22); that notwithstanding this, He had been rejected and put to death, as had been foretold; and that His disciples bore witness to His having risen from the dead, agreeably to other prophecies: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (*i.e.*

the grave); neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm xvi. 10; Acts ii. 27).

All this led them to conclude, when they examined candidly, that the miracles which they saw, were not the work of evil spirits, but that the Gospel did come from God. On the other hand, we, who have not actually seen the miracles which *they* saw, have an advantage over them in seeing such an extraordinary fulfilment of prophecy, in what has happened since their time.



Marvellous Temples and Tombs

Baalbek's Wonderful Temple

MR. FRANK G. CARPENTER, who has been visiting various wonders of the world, contributed the following concerning ruins unearthed in the valley of Lebanon, under the direction of German archaeologists, to the St. Louis "Times-Democrat," February 19, 1911. Lack of space prevented publication until now.

"I am in the Valley of Lebanon, the high, narrow plain which lies between the two ranges of the Lebanon Mountains. The word Lebanon means "white," and the Lebanon Mountains are the White Mountains of Syria, the higher peaks of which are now covered with snow. These mountains extend north and south parallel with the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. They begin a little below the border of Asia Minor and lose themselves in the Holy Land. In reading of them I have always considered them hills. They are higher than any mountains of our country east of the Mississippi, and the average height of the range nearest the coast is a thousand feet greater than that of Mount Washington. Mount Hermon is over 9,000 feet high, and Jebel Makmel measures 10,200 feet. The Valley of Lebanon itself is twice as high as the topmost peaks of the Blue Ridge of Virginia, and it slopes from here to the north as far as Aleppo and to the south beyond Dan, where rises the Jordan.

The Ruins of Baalbek

"It is in this little valley, which is less than 100 miles long and from five to eight miles in width, walled by these mighty mountains, that lie the ruins of Baalbek, the most wonderful temples known throughout the ages. I have spent hours in wandering through them, and their immensity and beauty steadily grow. I despair of being able to describe them, and can only hope to give you bits of the details. I have seen most of the world's mighty ruins. In the past year I have wandered through the tombs of the Mings outside Mukden, Manchuria; have stood upon the Temple of Heaven in Peking, and have climbed the great Chinese wall. I have gone through the Temples of Karnak at the hundred-gated city of Thebes, far up the Nile; have taken photographs of the Colossi of Memnon and have measured the stones of the pyramids with a two-foot rule. Not long ago I visited the Temple of Borobodor in the heart of Java, to describe its three miles of wonderful carvings, and last year I spent

some time in the forts of the Moguls at Delhi and wrote of the Taj Mahal and its wonders. I have also seen Tingad, the excavated city on the edge of the Sahara, and have lately gone through the Colosseum at Rome and inspected the equally wonderful amphitheatre which lies at El Djem, in the heart of the Tunisian desert. All these are wonderful, but Baalbek is their superior.

"Baalbek was well known in the days of the Phoenicians, and it was a great city in the time of Christ. It was about a hundred years after that that the finest of the temples, the ruins of which still exist, were constructed. It was when the Roman civilization was still in the height of its glory, and when the Emperors were building cities in North Africa, in Asia Minor and in other parts of the world. They put up the temples here in honor of Baal, and had in them smaller temples to Venus and Bacchus. They worshipped Baal, the god of the sun, as one of the greatest of their deities, although they had other gods without number.

The God Baal

"As to the worship of Baal, there have been gods of that name back almost to the beginnings of history. It is a question, indeed, whether the word Baal did not mean Lord, being a general term for male gods of various kinds. Later on the Greeks considered Baal the god of the sun, classing him with the god represented by Helios and the city of Heliopolis in Egypt. The worship of Baal runs through the Bible. Samuel rebuked the Israelites for bowing down to him, and Jezebel had 400 priests of Baal who were confounded by Elijah.

"Here at Baalbek the finest statue was of this god. It was of gold, and it represented a beardless young man clad in armor standing between two golden bulls. He held a whip in his right hand and a thunderbolt and some ears of corn in his left. There were also statues of Mercury and Venus, a Hall of Bacchus, and statues and statuettes of exquisite workmanship. These images were destroyed by the early Christians, who threw down parts of the temples and broke up the carvings.

In the Great Temples

"It is impossible to give pictures of the ruins and of the mighty temples as they were in their wonderful beauty. The ruins of themselves cover more than ten acres, and the Great Temple alone was about

300 feet long by 160 feet wide. It had a roof upheld by Corinthian columns, six of which are still standing. These columns are eighty feet high and twenty-two feet in circumference. In entering the temples I went up a gigantic staircase, a great part of which has been destroyed, and came into what is known as the forecourt, which is about 200 feet from one side to the other, the floor of which was paved with mosaic.

"We next went through another court known as the court of the altar, which must cover five or six acres. It is a mass of marble and granite, gigantic columns and delicate carvings being thrown helter-skelter together. Beyond this and up a series of steps are the ruins of the Great Temple, which cover, I venture, an area as great as that of the Capitol at Washington. At the left is the exquisite Temple of Bacchus, and everywhere are great shafts of marble so wonderfully carved that they would be treasures in any museum.

Wonders of Mechanical Engineering

"All this, however, gives no idea of the construction. People wonder how the mighty stones of the pyramids were put into place, and books have been written to show how the obelisks were taken from the quarries to the sites where they have served as monuments. The work of this temple was a far greater mechanical triumph. The materials for it, including columns weighing hundreds of tons, had to be brought up the steep Lebanon mountains and carried over passes higher than the tops of the Alleghenies. There is granite here which came from far up the Nile; there are marbles from Greece, and limestone blocks weighing hundreds of tons from the quarries nearby. The temple has walls sixty feet high, and the mighty columns, seven feet in diameter, and, including the pedestals and capitals, as tall as an eight-story house, rest upon a platform which is more than fifty feet high. These mighty pillars are put up in three blocks, each twenty feet or more in height and seven feet in diameter. They are so placed that each looks like one solid block, and the erection was without the aid of machinery.

"In the walls of the temple foundation are what are, I venture, the biggest building blocks ever gotten out of the quarry by man. One of the walls, which has been recently uncovered by the Germans, has three great limestone blocks, each of which measures sixty-four feet in length, thirteen feet in width and twelve feet in thickness. If such stones were placed end to end it would take only about eighty of them to make one mile, and if they were laid down between the Capitol and the Treasury at Washington they would fill the sidewalk of Pennsylvania avenue with a wall reaching to the height of the second stories of the buildings on that street, from one structure to the other. These stones were brought from a quarry which lies to the side of Baalbek more than a mile from the temples. Some of them have been placed upon the walls at a distance of thirty or more feet from the ground, and they are so accurately laid that a knife blade cannot be driven in between them.

"As to the size of these blocks, I got an idea by visiting the quarries. Just outside that from which the stones came is one which was cut out of the rock,

but for some reason or other was not carried to the structure. It was dragged only a few feet away from the quarry, and to-day it lies there on its side, half sunk in the earth. I crawled upon its top and took a run over it. It is so wide that you could drive two motor cars abreast upon it without risk of falling over the edges, and an English traveller here says that a cricket match might be played upon its face, putting the stakes at the right distance apart and giving the bowler at least two feet at the end for his run. This stone is one solid block as smooth as a marble column and accurately square. Each side of it measures fourteen feet and it is about seventy feet long. Stand it on end inside a modern ten-story flat and it would fill ten rooms one above the other, each room fourteen feet square and seven feet high. It has been estimated to weigh 1,500 tons and it would be a fair-sized load for thirty freight cars on the modern railroad track.

"Think of moving stones like that out of the mountains and up and down hill for a mile without the aid of iron and steel machinery or electricity or steam. That is the kind of work the Romans did 1,800 years ago. All through the temples you may see examples of how they lifted great masses into place and that of masses of carvings more beautiful than those of our buildings to-day. On some of the blocks still in the structure I saw bunches of grapes no bigger than my thumb as beautifully cut as though made by nature. There were also cupids and cherubs, exquisitely carved. It was said of the artists who built the great temples of Delhi and Agra in India that they worked like Titans and finished like jewelers. The same was true of the Romans of the reigns of Antonius, Caracalla and Nero."

Egyptian Excavations

"The archaeological excavations carried out by Daninos Pasha have resulted in the discovery of the necropolis of Heliopolis, which place was the intellectual centre of Egypt for over 4,000 years, and the town at which Moses received the sacerdotal and military training which enabled him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. The necropolis is situated in the desert a little more than three miles to the east of the Matarieh Obelisk. There are many burial pits cut out of the rock in the last spurs of the Arabian range. Those which have been excavated by Daninos Pasha were from 65 to 220 feet deep. They were filled to the top with sand, and contained embalmed human bodies and the skeletons of sacred animals and birds. Undamaged ibis eggs were found. Unfortunately, most of these tombs were ransacked years ago by Romans and Arabs hunting for treasure. Only about 5 or 6 per cent. of the tombs have escaped the ancient treasure seekers. Some pillars discovered in the neighborhood of the necropolis showing a man adoring the sacred animal, the bull Apis at Memphis and Mnevis, the black bull at Heliopolis, indicate that there is in the newly discovered necropolis a Mnevisseum which is sure to contain objects and documents of the greatest interest. It is on the discovery of this Mnevisseum that Daninos Pasha is now concentrating his efforts.

Mariette Pasha, during his search lasting fourteen months for the purpose of finding the Serapeum, found out of sixty-four tombs sacred to the bull Apis only four which had escaped the ravages of treasure hunters. Marvellous jewels and other objects of great artistic and scientific interest were discovered by him in these four tombs, and are now in the Louvre."—Melbourne "Age."

According to a writer in the "Illustrated London News," many of the objects found in the above mentioned necropolis or cemetery have an extraordinarily modern appearance. They include fine linen, basket-

work, beds, bracelets (made of flint), sandal-carriers, and dinner trays. This cemetery, he says, seems to have belonged to the capital city which preceded the founding of Memphis, and dates from the earliest historic age to the period of the building of the Pyramids, during the dynasties O to IV.

The above items concerning Baalbek and Heliopolis are of interest to students of the Bible because they throw light on the religions and customs of nations referred to in Scripture. They are also of special interest to "Advocate" readers because they confirm statements made in our issues of September, 1910, and April, 1911, in connection with the consideration of the prophecy of Isaiah 19: 19, 20. They confirm our statement that the Great Pyramid at Gizeh, while undoubtedly a remarkable structure, is not more remarkable in construction than some other ancient buildings. The claim that the size of its stones is a proof that the Great Pyramid was of divine origin, or built by a race of people brought to Egypt under divine providence to construct it as a monument to Jehovah, falls to the ground when it is seen that the stones at Baalbek are larger and required an even more marvellous engineering feat to place them in position. To build the pyramids the huge blocks of stone were hauled over level country; to build Baalbek even larger blocks of stone were carried over mountains. The temple at Karnak (Egypt) has stone pillars sixty-two feet high and eleven feet six inches in diameter; Baalbek's pillars are eighty feet high.

The Temple of Solomon

The fact that the Phoenicians under King Hiram of Tyre assisted in the construction of the temple of Solomon is well known; it is not so generally recognized that a Phoenician was the chief director of works. (2 Chron. 2: 13, 14.) The Israelites had not the skill to hew timber like the Sidonians, therefore Solomon desired that Hiram's servants work with his servants in order that the latter might learn. It was no simple matter to send the huge timber from Lebanon to Jerusalem, for it had to be first brought fifteen miles down to the sea, and then shipped in floats to a convenient point (probably Joppa), from which it could be hauled over the hills to Jerusalem. The hugeness of the undertaking is shown by the fact that Solomon levied 30,000 men out of all Israel and sent ten thousand men per month by courses to Lebanon. Beside these hewers of wood, Solomon had 70,000 men that bore burdens and 80,000 hewers of stone in the mountains. These were composed of "the strangers that were in the land." (2 Chron. 2: 17, 18.) The latter brought "great stones, costly stones, hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house."—1 Kings 5: 5-18.

That the levy in Lebanon had strenuous work to do is shown by the fact that each levy worked only one month and rested two months. (1 Kings 5: 14.) The 80,000 hewers in the mountains were doubtless also employed in relays, as well as the burden bearers.

The immense number of men employed in the undertaking gives the solution to the puzzling question as to how these immense weights were moved and placed in position, in the absence of modern machinery. The answer is, by man power. A brother attached to the British forces in China during the Boxer rebellion tells us that there he saw loads of

many tons drawn by hundreds of coolies attached to low sleds. In Egypt and Palestine, as in China to-day, labour was plentiful and cheap. Solomon was careful of the labourers on the temple; not so the Egyptians in the erection of their monuments. The atrocities in the Congo and in Peru in our own day show what slave-drivers can do.

After referring to the statement of 1 Kings 7: 10 that the stones in the foundation of the court, temple, etc., were "costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits," Rawlinson, in his *History of Phoenicia*, says:—

"The explorations made upon the spot reveal an architecture of this kind, but one even more massive and surprising. The great area, upon which the temple stood, was built up on all sides from the irregular surface of the natural rock so as to form a nearly level space. The wall now rises everywhere from fifty to sixty feet above the present surface of the ground, and in places descends eighty feet more below the present surface. Thus it had an original height of from 60 or 70 to 140 feet. In places it is built from bottom to top of large squared stones, bevelled at the edges, and varying between three feet six inches and six feet in height. The stones, which are laid in regular courses, without cement, are of very different lengths, the longest hitherto discovered measuring thirty-eight feet nine inches. It is estimated that this stone does not weigh less than 100 tons! Many of the other blocks are from half to two-thirds of this weight; and altogether it must be said that the builders found no difficulty in conveying up a steep hill . . . masses of a size which modern architects scarcely use in their foundation stones. The massiveness of their work is fully on a par with that of the Egyptian pyramid kings."

As to how the huge stones are cut at the quarries, probably the same method was employed as is in use in Greece to-day. With chisel and hammer a straight, narrow groove is made the length of the stone desired. In this groove a fire is made. When the stone is hot, water is poured into the groove. The result is a perfectly straight fissure, separating the stone from the mass of rock.

The Egyptian Bull and the Golden Calf

Another interesting point to be noticed is that in Baalbek the god Baal was represented standing between two bulls. The bull was the principal sacred animal of Egypt, and received honorable burial, as shown by the recent excavation of sixty-four rock tombs sacred to the bull Apis. In some instances, pyramids were built for their remains, similar to those built for the kings. One of the signs of the Zodiac is Taurus, or the bull, thus indicating how the ancients combined the worship of nature as represented in animals with that represented by the stars.

When therefore the children of Israel in the wilderness turned their hearts back again to Egypt, it was natural that they (possibly under the influence of the "mixed multitude" which came out with them) should express their rebellion against God and Moses by making a golden calf such as had been familiar to them in Egypt. The effort of the rebels was to give to the deities of Egypt the credit for their preservation in the wilderness rather than to Jehovah, and they desired the continuance of their leadership. When they had sacrificed to the image, it is said that they "sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play" (Exod. 32: 6), thus showing that they had fallen so far as to indulge the abominable practices associated with idolatrous rites. During the subsequent centuries both the Egyptians and

the Phoenicians were instrumental in leading the children of Israel into idolatry at various times and under various forms, but to-day we see all their gods overthrown and dishonored, and the God of Israel demonstrated before the nations as the only infinite and true God, though all men are not as yet ready to acknowledge it.

Nebuchadnezzar and Darius acknowledged the greatness of the God of Israel, but they would with equal pleasure have acknowledged the gods of any other nation successful in encounter. (Dan. 3: 28, 29; 4: 34-37; 6: 25-27.) Not that they gave up the worship of their own gods when they praised Jehovah. Nebuchadnezzar was what would in our day be called a liberal-minded man. Those whose religion is false may acknowledge a score of other false religions. It is only the worshipper of the true God who cannot compromise with evil. "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him."—1 Cor. 8: 5, 6.

Marvellous as were these great ancient temples in architecture and construction, and gratifying as they

must have been to the pride and senses of their worshippers, they were after all doomed to perish, because they did not fully meet the needs of men. The only temple acknowledged by Jehovah was that at Jerusalem, and of it our Lord declared that there should not one stone be left upon another. The worship there conducted could not make the corners thereto perfect, because there was of necessity yearly remembrance made of their sins. How much then should we appreciate that worship of the true God which is permitted to us, in a temple "not made with hands," and by Christ Jesus, the true Altar, upon Whom, and through Whom alone, we may approach the Father, receiving forgiveness of sins so complete that God remembers them no more. Upon that Altar, too, we may offer gifts of praise and thanksgiving, more acceptable than those of bulls and goats. As the temple is greater, and the Altar is greater, than the temple and altar at Jerusalem, so is the High Priest and Mediator greater, by Whom this complete worship has been inaugurated. While rejoicing therefore in the beauty and simplicity of the worship, let us ever honor and adore the Mediator through whom these blessings are made possible to us. —R. B. H.



Increase of Travel and Knowledge

THAT A GREAT increase in travel and knowledge should take place in the latter days was foretold by the Prophet Daniel. That some of the "knowledge" referred to was the Gospel truth, and that the running to and fro referred largely to the wide spreading of the glad tidings we may well believe, since Daniel's interest was not so much in knowledge in general as in knowledge concerning the purposes of God. The "wise" should come to understand this kind of knowledge, but the wicked should not understand.

But there have been also a great increase in general knowledge and multiplied facilities for travelling about. And the result predicted, "a time of trouble," has come, and will be with us still more insistently, as the forces of disintegration continue their work on the foundations of society. Whether or not Mr. Mallock had the Bible statement in mind we do not know. The following extracts and comments are from "The Literary Digest":—

Mr. W. H. Mallock, the clever author of the "New Republic," writes in "The Nineteenth Century and After" (London), to show that the Socialists are wrong, that poverty is not on the increase in the British Isles, and to point out what he believes are the real causes of the popular discontent. He seems to think they exist largely in the mind. Every one who knows Mr. Mallock's writings will acknowledge that he is an honest man who is often witty and even mordant in his criticism of men and things. No one will accuse him of uttering wilful and misleading paradoxes. He must be credited with sincerity, therefore, at least, when he tells us that the causes of labor unrest are three: increased facilities for travel; the expectation of those who are better off than their forefathers that they can obtain better economic

conditions if they shout loud enough; the excitement of modern education. In this connection he quotes the following anecdote of Edward John Phelps:

"The late Mr. Phelps, for many years American Ambassador in this country, when I was once walking with him on a lonely road in the neighborhood of the Highland Railway, said suddenly after a long silence, 'The devil never found a truer note for his voice than the railway whistle. There it goes, from one end of the country to the other, crying to all the boys and girls, "Come away, come away, come away." And when they go, they find the place they have gone to better in no way than the place they have left behind.' In these few words we have a profound analysis of a large part of that contemporary unrest which is commonly supposed to be confined to the ranks of labor."

The attraction of the town is being felt also in France, "the classic home of peasant ownership for a century." Yes, at the antipodes:

"The attraction of the towns, even in Australia, is exerting a similar influence. A movement so general evidently can not be due to economic conditions of any one particular kind. It is rather due to the disturbing effect on the imagination of an enlarged vision of conditions which are continually increasing in variety, any one of which our increased facilities of movement tend to present as possible, and which are bewildering by their competing promises—promises never fulfilled, or fulfilled but to some small degree."

The second cause is the fact that people cherish inordinate expectations, which he explains with great clearness:

"That there exists in this country, despite the general spread of well-being, a population precariously nourished and inadequately housed, which, small as it may be in proportion to the present population as a whole, yet equals in number the entire population of England at the time of the Norman Conquest, may unhappily be accepted as true; and that such poverty, if it can never be entirely removed, may yet be reduced to relatively negligible dimensions, must be one of the chief hopes and objects of every sagacious statesman."

It is, however, very doubtful whether the utmost progress possible in this direction would even modify the sort of labor unrest which is characteristic of the present time.

The grounds on which this assertion is made are not far to seek. One is the well-known fact which is exemplified by all classes alike—namely, that after the fundamental needs of the human body are satisfied and have been supplemented by the provision of such secondary requisites as are practically made necessities by the habits of whatever class may be in question, each further addition of wealth, as soon as the recipients are habituated to it, ceases to be felt as any addition at all. Those who were contented before are not thankful now. Those who were discontented before are just as discontented still. What makes discontent—apart from actual privation or the anxiety which comes from the fear of it—is not what people have got, but a comparison of what they have got with that which they have been stimulated into thinking that they can get and ought to get."

Mr. Mallock is plain in his denunciation of the system of modern education. He thus castigates the bright Socialist essayist, George Lansbury, Laborite M.P., who "declared that much of the modern unrest in the labor-world is due to the fact that education has made the laborer impatient of such tasks as the hewing of wood and drawing of water, and so forth."

"But what Mr. Lansbury and others omit to notice is this—that education, in the sense of general culture, while rendering such tasks distasteful, does nothing to diminish their necessity, or in any way to alter their character, by enabling those who perform them to perform them with greater ease. Without imputing to Mr. Lansbury unduly luxurious tastes, we may assume that when the weather is cold one of his normal requirements is a fire and that a pork-chop, a herring, a slice of coal, form no infrequent articles of his diet. But in order that Mr. Lansbury may be warm while he elaborates expositions of Socialism, somebody must be a hewer of wood, or—more literally—of coal; in order that he may eat his chop, the hands of some of his comrades must be red with the blood of pigs; and in order that by his morning fire he may have a 'bit of fish' for his breakfast, other comrades must toil all night among the tempests of the North Sea. Does education, in the sense of general culture, make fire and food less necessary for Mr. Lansbury himself? Or does it in any way modify the circumstances under which they are obtainable for him by the efforts of others? Does it make coal-getting a process as easy as the picking of buttercups? Would it enable the sticker of pigs to substitute for his customary bloodshed some 'death by a rose in aromatic pain'? Would any amount of general culture enable the North Sea fisherman to calm the waves at his will, and reduce his calling to a pastime like that of catching carp in a marble basin at Versailles?"

He sums up his own views of the matter in a form which sets his seal of approval upon technical trade-schools, such as are powerful agents of good in this country and in Europe. He evidently does not believe in teaching conic sections to boys who will never do more than drive crows from the corn or work in a nail factory. Greek and Latin are not necessary for the man whose skill must be exercised in designing or making fashionable footwear, in driving an engine or an electrical motor, or even in engine-trimming. He enforces the ancient maxim—the cobbler must not venture beyond his last. Thus we read:

"So far as labor in general is concerned, the only kind of education which equips the laborer for the performance of it is purely technical, and consists mainly of the performance of such labor itself and the knowledge and dexterities thereby acquired. It often does not even require any mastery of the art of reading. But although education, in the more general sense of the word, results in no such enlargement of the laborer's productive efficiency, it tends to produce in his mind an illusory consciousness that it does so: that hence he deserves a correspondingly increased re-

ward, and that, failing to get it, he suffers some correspondingly increasing wrong.

"In other words, the modern experiment of applying to the masses at large a system of education modelled, so far as its general character goes, on that which had previously been applied to a limited class only, has had on the majority thus far, all over the world, the effect of increasing their expectations without doing anything to increase their industrial power of satisfying them."

Society is confronted with many problems, and the above touches upon only one of them, namely, How can the upper classes be continued in power, and the middle and lower classes unalterably fixed in their respective positions, if the two latter are allowed to know as much as the former? Time was when education was confined to the upper class, and obtained with difficulty by a few bold spirits from the middle class, who ventured to intrude into the halls of learning. But when the generous minded among the learned wished to share education and general culture with the masses, thus seeking what they considered the highest welfare of the individual, they only brought further complications into the social order; because they have not been able to gratify all the fresh needs of the masses thus created.

Unrest was brought about by increase of knowledge in the Apostles' days, as their writings show. Some of the believers were masters, others were slaves. The natural effect of the gospel is to give love of liberty and disregard for human bondages. The effect upon some of the slaves was to cause them to run away from their owners. The apostle Paul wrote the Corinthians admonishing every man to abide in the calling wherein he was called, *with God*; that is, let him work out the Christian principles in his life and character in the position in life in which he finds himself. Yet if any slave could become free, no doubt it would be a good thing if he used that freedom in the service of God. (1 Cor. 7: 20-24.) Similarly, husbands and wives were unsettled, wondering whether the gospel should separate the believer from the unbeliever; but no, the intent of the gospel was not to put such a spirit of unrest into the believer as to unfit him for patient living with the partner, even though the latter refused to become a believer. The increase of knowledge, combined with the grace of God, should help the believer to live a holy life in the presence of the other, and give wisdom in dealing with his (or her) frailties.

Other believers thought the gospel delivered them from the necessity of working for a living, and the apostles admonished such to attend diligently to business, to work with their own hands, to provide things honest in the sight of all men.—1 Thes. 4: 11, 12; 2 Thes. 3: 6-12; 1 Tim. 5: 13; etc.

It may have been considerations such as these that caused the Church of England and other established churches to instruct the farming and artisan classes through the catechism to ask God to teach them how to behave themselves "toward their betters." But, more likely, it was the apprehension of their own bodily discomfort should these classes cease to minister to them as their servants. So now, after a half century of training youth in book learning, the pendulum swings back again, and the masses are to be taught that which is necessary to make them good mechanics or good household servants, while the "culture" and the learned profes-

sions are to be reserved for the upper and the upper middle classes.

But the Christian, as the Apostle exhorts, should not worry himself about class distinctions; he should seek to do God's will to the best of his ability in whatever sphere of life he finds himself. A true Christian does not feel himself debased by service to others, neither does he feel himself a superior creature when he receives service from others. The Master Himself set an example in placing character, humility and goodness above wealth and social caste. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. So should his disciples seek not elevated positions of ease, but opportunities for service. The poor may rejoice if the acceptance of the gospel brings them into fellowship with persons of a higher station in life; but equally should the rich rejoice because the fellowship of the gospel brings them down to a lower level. (James 1: 9, 10.) The reason for this is, that Truth, as such, may be considered the great riches shared by all, and that the body of Christ

may be counted the class of all classes to which all, high and low, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, consider it equally an honor to belong. Those who dishonor the fellow members of the body, dishonor the Lord who called them into that body.

Let us, then, while rejoicing in the benefits which the increase of travel and of knowledge, both sacred and secular, brings to us, not allow ourselves to be drawn into class struggles and sectional bitterness, after the manner of the unregenerate world; let us not despise those whom Society places beneath us, nor revile those whom Society places above us, but let us love deeply and sincerely *as brethren* all whom the Lord Jesus Himself is not ashamed to own as such. He whom Jesus loves, I am honoured in being permitted to love. The meeting which the Lord Jesus blesses with His holy presence, I am honored in being permitted to attend. It is those, after all, who have learned these lessons, who are truly educated; they are the "wise" who shall "understand."



"The Rest of the Dead"

—Revelation 20: 5—

THE GRAND TRUTHS for which the "Advocate" stands have never enjoyed a great measure of popularity. Reasonable and glorious though they be, these teachings have never—from apostolic times to the present day—seemed to appeal to large numbers of people. Many, even, of those who have so far given assent to these things as to admit their entire reasonableness and their worthiness of acceptance have not identified themselves with them, but have held to, and by the influence of their presence and means have supported, other teachings admittedly not in agreement with the Scripture on very important points. The frequency with which this occurs is remarkable; it illustrates a trait of the fallen and imperfect human nature—inconsistency of conduct and words.

We have no grievance against those who act in this way, though we have sometimes had feelings of disappointment in connection with such persons. If there be any loss in these cases, it will certainly not be on the part of God Whom we serve in our proclamation of these truths. The loss will be theirs who have acted inconsistently. They have had diamonds in their hands, and they have dropped them for pebbles.

But there has been more than the indifference arising from inconsistency. The entirely reasonable and scriptural teachings based upon the Word have had to meet active opposition. Some of this hostility has manifested itself among professed unbelievers; this is expected, and one is not surprised at having to meet it and deal with it. Other—often more bitter—hostility manifests itself among those who profess to love and serve the God of Heaven, and His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The reason for this enmity often lies in the fact that the opposers have some other doctrine for which they desire acceptance instead of the one they are opposing. Therefore, it is necessary always to give heed to the warning of the Apostle, and to be ready to contend

earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.—Jude 3.

Nearly every teaching the "Advocate" holds forth as truth, with a "thus saith the Lord" to back it, has been opposed more or less, and some of the fiercest opposition, as far as we are aware of it, is directed against that statement of the most gracious purpose of God which asserts that—

The long promised, oath-confirmed blessing of all the families of the earth in the Seed of Abraham, which began at the first advent of Jesus Christ, the promised Seed, will not cease at Christ's second coming, but will continue, and in the Thousand Years following, during the reign of Christ and His joint heirs, the blessing will be extended to those who have died without having had it.—Gen. 12: 1-3; 22: 15-18; Heb. 6: 13-18; Gal. 3: 16; Acts 3: 25, 26; 15: 14-18; Gal. 3: 29; John 14: 1-3; Col. 3: 4; Rom. 8: 18-21; Isa. 25: 6-9; 1 Cor. 15: 54; 1 Tim. 2: 4-7.

The plainest statements of the "Advocate" in elucidation of the above scriptural teaching are the constant subjects of misrepresentation by opponents. We have been accused of teaching that another opportunity for salvation is to be extended to those who have died unsaved, but we teach no such thing, as those who have attentively read the "Advocate," "Bible Talks," and our other publications very well know. A future opportunity is by no means another opportunity. Our understanding of the Scriptures is that God's purpose is to bring all men to an accurate knowledge of the grand truth taught in 1 Tim. 2: 4-7. If any one has been brought to that accurate knowledge in the present life, the divine purpose in respect of that individual has been so far fulfilled, and the responsibility thereof is upon him. We do not set ourselves up to judge individuals, and decide that they have or have not been thus accurately enlightened. But we do say that he is very reckless in his statements who asserts that the

mere fact of a person having lived brings him within the range of the responsibility that belongs to those only who have been fully enlightened. And we do believe that there are statements in God's Word which assure us that His dealings will show Him to be much more generous and liberal than many of His people are prepared to give Him credit for being.

The Case of the Sodomites

Take, for a very enlightening instance, the case of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. Those people are referred to as having reached the extreme of wickedness (2 Peter 2: 6-8), and their overthrow is an example to all sinners. (Jude 7.) But it is also stated that they were taken away (Ezek. 16: 50) without having had the enlightenment which, had it been granted them, would have led them to repentance and salvation. More peculiar still, the miracles and teaching which were withheld from the people of Sodom, who would have profited by them, were granted to the people of Palestine who scorned them.—Matt. 11: 23, 24.

What is the explanation of such dealings on God's part? Why did God not send His Son to Sodom, which He said would have repented; and why did He send His Son to Israel, which He knew would not repent under the mighty works and wonderful words of Jesus? The only possible answer to this riddle is found in the recognition of the work of the future age, in which Sodom shall be brought back to her former estate (Ezek. 16: 53-55, 60-63), when God will be pacified toward Sodom and Israel and Samaria and others for all that they have done.

This is the altogether reasonable and scriptural as well as eminently satisfying teaching that the "Advocate" stands for, and on account of which it meets much opposition among Christian people. Without looking into the Scriptures that are constantly cited as justifying the teaching, without an attempt to answer the Riddle of the Sodomites, some, like the silversmiths of Ephesus whose craft was endangered by the Gospel, denounce this Good News as "dangerous." Others fear that in accepting this teaching they would be presuming upon the love and generosity of God. To these we would say—Be Bereans! Search the Scriptures daily, whether these things be so. Prove all things, and hold fast the good. (Acts 17: 10-12; 1 Thess. 5: 21.) If you find that your conception of the love of God is not broad enough, nor long enough, nor deep enough, nor high enough, enlarge the borders of your mind. Do not allow fear to prevent your stretching your mind in every direction to the utmost limit authorized by the divine Word. Let your mind and heart be enlarged sufficiently to permit you to take in the gracious promises of God, and rejoice in His goodness.—Eph. 3: 17-21.

An Alleged Scriptural Objection

With great satisfaction to themselves, some of the opposers point to Rev. 20: 5—"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." "The rest of the dead" here referred to are those not included in the first resurrection, and we are asked, if those dead are not to live again until the thousand years are finished, what becomes of the teaching that they are to be blessed during the thousand years?

The answer to this is that the portion of Scripture

quoted is an unauthorized addition to the Word, and is therefore not a valid objection to the teaching. The most ancient manuscripts of Revelation are only two in number—the Sinaitic and the Alexandrine—and they are separated by a chasm of about four hundred years from the next later manuscript that could be cited as evidence on the question of the authenticity of these words. Of these two manuscripts, the older is the Sinaitic, which is generally recognised as being about a hundred years more ancient, and therefore that much nearer the original sources, than the other of the two, called the Alexandrine manuscript. This latter contains the disputed words, while the Sinaitic, the oldest Greek manuscript of the Revelation now available, omits them. This evidence is good, and it should be acceptable and satisfactory to all. The Vatican MS. No. 1209, which, like the Sinaitic MS., is of the fourth century A.D., omits the entire Book of Revelation, so cannot be cited in this matter.

An effort is made to discredit the strong evidence of the Sinaitic manuscript by saying that its omission of the disputed words is "a mere error," this allegation being based on a surmise that the copyist overlooked the sentence in question. The ancient manuscripts were written by hand, being copied from others still more ancient. They were written in large capital letters, called "uncial," and there was no space between words, nor was there any punctuation. The following will serve to illustrate the manner of writing the passage in Revelation 20, in the Alexandrine MS., which retains the disputed words:—

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LIVEDTILLSHOULD~~BE~~ENDED~~THE~~
THOUSANDYEARS~~TH~~ISTHERESUR
RECTIONTHEFIRSTBLESSEDAND**

A Groundless Assumption

It is assumed by those who desire to discredit the evidence of the Sinaitic MS. against these words, that the Sinaitic copyist had before him a manuscript containing the disputed words. They assume further that when the copyist had written as far as the first occurrence of the phrase "thousand years," he lost his place in the copy as he looked from it to his own work, and that when he turned his eyes again to the manuscript from which he was copying, his glance fell upon the phrase "thousand years" in its taken-for-granted second occurrence, and that he went on from that point, thus omitting from his work in the Sinaitic MS. the sentence which states that the rest of the dead would not live until the thousand years were finished.

This is quite ingenious, but it should be realized by all that it is *pure assumption*, and that there is not the slightest proof for it. The manuscript from which the Sinaitic scribe copied is not available; it cannot be produced, and no man now living has ever seen it. How then dare they presume to suppose that it contained the sentence which is not found in the Sinaitic? And how can they expect us to receive such a groundless assumption as truth? Not at all!

Evidences from other Scriptures

In other parts of the Scripture there are passages which sustain the Sinaitic MS. in its omission of the sentence under consideration, and show that there is no room for it.

In Rom. 8: 19-21, the Apostle tells of the great blessing that is to be given to the whole creation which was made subject to death on account of Adam's sin. (Rom. 5: 12.) The creation, he says, "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." This means that those who have died are to be brought back from death's bondage, so that they may receive the blessing on the terms of faith and obedience on which it will then be offered.

When is this to take place? He says—"The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." The sons of God are those mentioned in Rom. 8: 16-18, who in this age suffer with Christ in order that they may also be glorified together. These shall be manifested in their glorious position of kings and priests at the second advent of the Lord. "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also be manifested with him in glory." (Col. 3: 4, R.V.; Rev. 20: 4.) This manifestation is what the groaning creation is waiting for; when it occurs, the creation shall be blessed, both that which groans to-day, that which was groaning in Paul's day, and, in short, all the creation that was made subject to the bondage of death, not willingly, but because it was the divine sentence. The inspired Apostle says nothing about the groaning creation waiting a thousand years after the manifestation of the sons of God in their glorious position with Christ, the King; he instructs us that the blessing to the rest of the creation will begin forthwith; it is only waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God in order that it may begin. He thus vindicates the Sinaitic MS.'s omission of the words about "the rest of the dead," and he shows that the MSS. which say that the rest of the dead will not live again until the end of the thousand years have had serious error introduced into them.

In 1 Cor. 15: 54, the Apostle refers to the glorification of the Church, the joint heirs with Christ, and speaks of the event to follow. He 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." He leaves no room for a thousand years to intervene between these two events. The swallowing up of death victoriously is to begin immediately the church is glorified—"THEN." Now the swallowing up of death in victory means a feast of fat things in the Kingdom ("mountain") of God; it means the destruction in and by means of this Kingdom of the veil and covering of death which is spread over all nations; it means also, thank God! that salvation will be offered to those who will be brought out of the graves; for "It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him [the entire groaning creation, subject to the bondage of death, has waited now for thousands of years], we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isa. 25: 6-9.

Thus again is the Sinaitic MS., the most venerable copy we have of the book of Revelation, shown to be correct, and its omission of the first part of Rev. 20: 5 is shown to be in full agreement with the apostolic teaching and with the apostolic interpretation of Old Testament prophecy which declares that immediately the Church is glorified the blessing of the others is to be proceeded with. There will be no delay of a thousand years in the start of that great work.

We conclude, therefore, that those who put forth ingenious surmises as to how the Sinaitic copyist might have made a mistake in not writing, "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished," are themselves greatly in error. Their surmises are not only groundless, being gratuitous assumptions without a shred of documentary evidence; they are also in direct opposition to the Apostle's teaching concerning the blessings of the groaning creation and the swallowing up of death in victory, which he shows are to take place immediately after the glorification of the saints with Christ at His second coming. (Rom. 8: 19-21; Col. 3: 4; Rev. 20: 4; 1 Cor. 15: 54; Isa. 25: 6-9.) Thanks be to God for the good news! Let us do all we can to tell out the good tidings to others!

The Parables of our Lord

THIS new volume, which we trust will be helpful to readers, is approaching completion. It is hoped that it will enjoy a large circulation, and that under Divine Providence it may be used of the Master in His service. As the initial expense of bringing out a new book is great, and as our resources are limited, we take the liberty of asking our friends to send in advance as many orders as possible for this book. Your kind and prompt compliance with this request will be a very material assistance in the task in hand, and we shall be correspondingly thankful for your co-operation. The new book will be of approximately the same number of pages as "Bible Talks," and will be bound in handsome cloth, with gilt lettering. The retail price will be 2/6 (60 cents) per copy, but to "Advocate" readers the price will be 1/6 (35 cents) per copy. Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 5d. (10 cents) per copy. Advance orders and remittances may be sent to Melbourne, London or Brooklyn.

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Gifts unto Men

"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. . . . And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."—Eph. 4: 8-12.

THE "FATHER OF LIGHTS," from Whom comes every good gift and every perfect gift, has been very liberal to His human creatures. Even though they have not always been mindful of His generosity, He has continued to give them many benefits. He has given rain and fruitful seasons to the unjust as well as to the just, filling their hearts with food and gladness, for which even those who knew God have not at all times been thankful to Him. Besides these temporal mercies, which are granted to all, He has given His dear Son to be the adequate sacrifice for the sins of all mankind—the sacrifice which can really take away sins. And He has promised that to those who obey His Son He will grant the gift of eternal life through Him. Besides this, He has promised a new heavens and a new earth—a new order of things on this planet—in which righteousness will be the prevailing influence, so that the time will come when God's will shall be done on earth even as in heaven.—Acts 17: 28, 29; 14: 15-17; Matt. 5: 45; Rom. 1: 21; Heb. 10: 10; Rom. 6: 23; Heb. 5: 9; 7: 25; 2 Peter 3: 13; Matt. 6: 10.

It is a great error to suppose, as some have done, that the God of heaven has no interest in the human race except to condemn and punish them. True, He did cause the sentence of death passed upon the original sinner in Eden to descend to all of his posterity, thus condemning all on account of one man's sin (Rom. 5: 12); but He did this in order that He might economically provide for the salvation of all through the obedience and sacrifice of another one. (Rom. 5: 18, 19.) Had each of us been tested separately in the manner of the testing of Adam and Eve, we cannot doubt that we must have gone wrong as they did. To have tried each individual, or couple, separately would have meant taking much time and pains merely to demonstrate

a foregone conclusion; and if arrangements were to be made for the salvation of all these separate and individual sinners, there must have been as many Redeemers sacrificed as there had been penalties pronounced. But God's way is best; He anticipated the foregone conclusion of so many separate tests by causing every one of us to be included in the original condemnation, by being born under it and its effects, in order that by one sacrifice the redemption of all of us might be accomplished and the way to His favor opened. All this is God's own plan, and by it and the measures for its accomplishment He has shown the extent of His interest in our race. He so loved the whole world as to give for us His only begotten Son—"the unspeakable gift." (John 3: 16; 2 Cor. 9: 15.) The kindness and love of God our Savior toward man has appeared; His blessings are shed upon believers abundantly through Jesus Christ, so that we are justified by God's grace through faith in Christ's blood and by the same divine favor are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.—Titus 3: 4-7; Rom. 5: 1, 2; Eph. 1: 7.

Moreover, God's arrangements for the publication of the opportunity for salvation are complete, though at the present time their adequacy is not very apparent. Vast multitudes die daily without hearing the good news concerning the salvation in Christ; other multitudes died before His efficacious sacrifice had been offered, and of course they did not hear of it. But God has graciously caused it to be revealed in His Word that He has not overlooked these multitudes who died in helpless ignorance of the only Name through which it is possible to be saved (Acts 4: 12); who therefore could not believe in Him of whom they had not heard; who could not call upon Him in whom they were not able (on account of their ignorance) to believe; who therefore have not been saved; because salvation is only for those who call upon the name of the Lord.—Rom. 10: 13, 14.

But, as before stated, God's arrangements are complete, and His purpose in respect of those who

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have died without a thorough knowledge of the truth is clearly outlined in His Word. When brought back from death, "the land of the enemy," in which is "no work, nor device, nor knowledge" (Jer. 31: 15-17; Eccl. 9: 4-6, 10), these shall be enlightened; for Christ died for them as much as for us. (John 1: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4-7.) God loved them so much that He sent His Son to die for them (John 3: 16); Christ loved them (and us) so much that He willingly came down to earth, was made "a little lower than the angels," and *by the grace of God* tasted death "for every man," *for every one of us*. (Heb. 2: 9.) Can any one show cause why those who have died in ignorance of the only Name, and therefore unsaved, should not be fully enlightened on the subject of salvation in due time? Why, God loves even those nations that sought (often successfully) to seduce Israel into the worship of Baal, and whom He commanded Israel in those days to destroy with the sword (which they did not always do); for He says that if after they are brought back, they will show themselves diligent to learn the Lord's ways, as they formerly were diligent to mislead God's people, they shall be built up in the midst of God's people; but if they will not obey they shall be utterly destroyed. (Jer. 12: 14-17.) Let this statement of God's purpose in respect of those nations whom He commanded in the ancient days to be destroyed because their iniquity had come to the full, and who would ultimately have fallen into decay on account of their wickedness, vindicate His character of love and justice. It is a complete answer to those who accuse the Almighty of cruelty toward those ancient peoples whom He caused to be summarily removed in war, instead of allowing them to degrade themselves still more, thus to have made salvation more difficult for them when it shall be offered to them under conditions of enlightenment after the veil of death shall be swallowed up and they shall be brought back. (Isa. 25: 6-9.) When all the circumstances are considered, it must be apparent that their summary destruction was not cruelty on God's part, but kindness.

Why Not Now?

The fact that the affairs of the world have been going on in much the same way for thousands of years, with no very striking manifestation (that is, not striking to the casually careless observer) that such things as have been briefly outlined above are included in the divine purpose, is no proof that they will not be done. The Almighty is Master in the Universe, and what He has arranged will be done—each detail in its proper season. It is not for God to be limited, but for men to cultivate a wider vista than that bounded by the parish pump and the village green. Instead of restricting the grace of God to their own day and generation, it is for men to take the wide and spacious view—the scriptural panorama—of the majestic progress of the divine purpose through the ages. Instead of attempting to crib, cabin and confine the dealings of the Infinite with man into the man's limited measure of time this side the grave, it is for men to recognize that the Almighty is not to be thus bound,

and that since it is His purpose to deal with some of them after they come back from death, they must needs accept it so, and bow to His will.

Still, it seems a not unreasonable question to ask, Why has God appointed to enlighten most men and offer them salvation after they shall be raised from death? Why does He not enlighten all now, and have done with it?

The way that God has adopted gives a present experience with sin and imperfection which should be useful to those who will be enlightened after their resurrection without then having to wrestle with the deceptions of the adversary, which will be restrained for a thousand years. They should be helped, by contrasting their experiences before death and after resurrection, to choose the path of obedience and to forsake sin. The present experience, however, is a severe one, and not all have had or are to have it to the same extent, for a tremendous percentage of the race dies before reaching years of accountability. When these children come back "from the land of the enemy"—death (Jer. 31: 15-17)—the Kingdom of God will be ruling in the earth; righteousness will be the order of the day, and the resurrected children will have what would appear to be the very great advantage of growing up under the influence of that Kingdom, being trained in right habits which will not afterwards, at the cost of much pain and trouble, need to be broken.

As a matter of fact, certain other features of the divine purpose have been under way up to the present, and the Scripture plainly tells us that the administration of the blessing of general enlightenment is deferred until the accomplishment of these details. During the ages before Pentecost, there were some who obtained a good report through their faith, and died without having received that which was promised them. They will be great ones ("Princes"—Psalm 45: 16) in the earth during the Thousand Years of the Kingdom Age. Since the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the invitation has been proclaimed that those who believe in Jesus should follow in His steps, and should suffer with Him, with a view to becoming His joint heirs in glory, and to be manifested with Him in His glory at His second coming. (Phil. 1: 29; 2 Tim. 2: 12; Rom. 8: 14-18; Col. 3: 4.) The blessing of the groaning creation as a whole is deferred until the manifestation in glory of the sons of God—those who have suffered with their Redeemer, Mediator and High Priest. When these sons of God and joint heirs with Christ shall be changed into His likeness (1 John 3: 1, 2) and made partakers of His glory, honor and immortality (1 Cor. 15: 49, 50, 53, 54), there will be no further delay of the general blessing, but forthwith death shall begin to be swallowed up victoriously, and those that are in the dark prison shall begin to show themselves, that they may partake of the "feast of fat things" prepared for them in the Kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 15: 54; Isa. 25: 6-9; Rom. 8: 19-21; Isa. 49: 9-12.) The fact that the joint heirs with Jesus—a people for God's name (Acts 15: 14)—had to be taken out from the nations is the reason why God does not enlighten all men and offer salvation to them in this life, for this is

not to be done until the joint heirs are taken out and glorified.

The High Calling

The joint heirs will be more than princes; they will be kings and priests, and shall reign with Christ the Thousand Years, taking part in the dispensing of the blessings during that time. Extraordinary honors are reserved for them, and many of God's creatures, both heavenly and earthly, have taken a lively interest in their calling. The angels desire to look into these things, but they are not for them; rather, the angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who are to inherit the greatest of all blessings. The holy prophets who, under inspiration, spoke beforehand of these things enquired and searched diligently into the meanings of their inspired utterances; but they were told that these wonders were not for them. (2 Peter 1: 21; 1 Peter 1: 10-12; Heb. 1: 13, 14; Matt. 13: 6, 10.) Even John the Baptist, most honored of the prophets, being neither "bridegroom" nor "bride" but a "friend," occupies a less distinguished position than the least important member of the glorious Kingdom. (Matt. 11: 11; John 3: 29-31.) The Lord Jesus Christ Himself is deeply interested in those who are in the High Calling race; to such, and for their welfare, He gave the "gifts unto men" mentioned in our text, that they might grow up into mature and steadfast Christians, being no more as babes tossed about with every doctrinal windstorm.—Eph. 4: 14.

Range of Influence of the "Gifts"

These "gifts" from the Lord to His Church are intended to be profitable to the saints in respect of both knowledge and character. The body of Christ is to be edified or built up in love, and is to be established in true knowledge. (Eph. 4: 14, 16.) The "gifts" would assist the saints to the knowledge; but every saint needs for himself to receive the knowledge after proving it to be good, and needs to obey it, in order that by obedience to the truth his soul may be purified unto unfeigned love of the brethren. If any be a hearer only, he is self-deceived.

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
—John 17:17.

"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."
—James 1: 21, 22.

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."
—1 Peter 1: 22. Sinaitic, Vatican 1209 and Alexandrine MSS. omit "through the Spirit" from this verse.

The "gifts," then, are given to the Church by the Lord, that the Church might be helped by them to make its calling and election sure, and that the saints might be overcomers in the conflict they are engaged in. This being so, the Lord's people should recognize the divine goodness and grace in giving them these helps by the way, and should seek to derive as much spiritual profit as possible from those whom they can recognize as the Lord's "gifts" to them for their instruction in the truth and upbuilding in the character of love.

The "Gifts"

"And HE gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."—Eph. 4: 11, R.V. In the Greek text, "HE" is emphatic.

These are the "gifts" that the Lord gave to His Church for their instruction in the true doctrine, that they be not "tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine," and for their upbuilding in the character of true and sincere love for the brotherhood in Christ. It behooves us to consider them attentively, so that we understand the Lord's purpose and co-operate with Him, and not be found fighting against Him.

APOSTLES. Next to the Lord Jesus, the Head, the apostles are the great ones in the Church. With the exception of Paul, the apostles were associated with the Lord before His crucifixion, being then also called His disciples. In those days they had a measure of power given them to work miracles (Matt. 10: 8), but they were not alone in the enjoyment of this power, for it was conferred upon other seventy as well. (Luke 10: 1, 9.) It was not until after our Lord had risen from the dead and ascended up on high that He gave the apostles as "gifts" to the Church, and then they entered upon the unique position and work reserved for them and not to be occupied by others. It was our Lord's work to ratify the New Covenant by the shedding of His precious blood on Calvary (Matt. 26: 28); but it was given to "the twelve apostles [sent ones] of the Lamb" to have their names written in the twelve foundations of the Holy City, so that no one can enter the New Jerusalem (covenant) or become a citizen thereof, either now or in the future age, without seeing their honored names and giving attention to their teachings as he enters any of the gates and progresses along the 144 cubits of the passage through the walls. (Rev. 21: 14; Gal. 4: 24-26.) We have not the benefit of the personal presence of the apostles with us now, but we have their authoritative, Spirit-inspired words to guide us, and to these we constantly refer as the basis and authority for the teachings we give out. The twelve sent ones of the Lamb are placed by divine decree in their position of authority; the Church had nothing to do with that (Gal. 1: 1); the Church has to recognize the twelve in the position in which God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ have placed them as "gifts" for the instruction and edification of the body of Christ.

The ability to work miracles and speak by inspiration did not particularly distinguish the apostles of the Lamb from other believers in their times, because others had those supernatural powers more or less. The manifestation of supernatural power which differentiated the apostles from other believers was in their ability, by the laying on of their hands, to bestow miracle working powers upon other believers in Jesus. Though all believers in those days were favored with miraculous ability in one or more directions, such as healing, tongues, interpretation of tongues, etc., they could not impart these abilities to other believers, newly entering into the faith. It required one of the twelve sent ones of the Lamb to do this. (Acts 8: 14-20; 19: 6.) This limitation (of power to confer miracle working abilities) to the twelve apostles of the Lamb explains how the

miraculous abilities gradually passed away from the Church after the decease of the apostles (1 Cor. 13: 8), and also shows why the claim to possess such abilities by people in this day should be rejected at once.

It is to be noted also, that the twelve sent ones of the Lamb were not chosen or elected by each other, neither by vote nor by lot. Neither did they elect the Lord Jesus to be their leader. He was the Christ by divine—not by human—appointment, and their relation to Him as apostles was ordered by Himself. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."—John 15: 16; 6: 27; 10: 36.

PROPHETS. These are the public expounders or orators. Sometimes they were seers, or foretellers, also, but not necessarily so. In the times immediately after Pentecost, the prophets often spoke by inspiration for the benefit of believers (1 Cor. 12: 10; 14: 22, 29-32); but since the miraculous abilities passed away from the Church, the prophets have only that knowledge that is derived from the written Word, which the Holy Spirit assists them, as it assists all believers, to understand, and which they, as prophets, are able to explain connectedly and lucidly before the congregation of believers for the instruction and edification of all, which is the purpose of the Lord in giving them as "gifts" to the Church. Prophets may be of either sex.—1 Cor. 11: 4, 5.

EVANGELISTS. These are the carriers of the good tidings into new country, among people who have not heard it before. They are "gifts" to the Church for the purpose of attracting new believers to the Faith which they preach. Though some will be more conspicuous than others in the work of evangelization, yet every believer may be an evangelist, both by word and by his or her consistent life. When severe persecution came upon the Church at Jerusalem and scattered all the members except the apostles, we are told that "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word." (Acts 8: 4.) Sometimes the evangelist preaches to practically a whole city (Acts 8: 5, 6); sometimes to one person (v. 35); sometimes with great success, as Philip at Samaria; and sometimes with but little result, as Paul at Athens.—Acts 17: 32-34.

In the early days, and indeed for many centuries, the work of evangelization was mostly done by means of the spoken word. Now we have the additional means of the printed word, which can be effectively used to disseminate the knowledge of the good news, and those who might never be able to speak for five minutes to a concourse of strangers can now carry the message from house to house by means of books and tracts. A great door of opportunity is open to all, and it should be entered by all.

PASTORS and TEACHERS. These are Christ's "gifts" to His people for the purpose of assisting the members of His body individually and in small groups, their work being more intimate than that of those who discourse to assemblies. A pastor is a shepherd, and as the shepherds in Palestine knew their sheep by name, so should the pastor of the Lord's sheep know them individually, and be able to give individual assistance where required in knowledge or in character building. A teacher must

needs have much of the Holy Spirit as well as a good knowledge of the truth to be imparted to others; for the teacher has to deal with points that might never be brought up in a large assembly. The teacher must be able to take the learner's standpoint and lead him thence to the right position. Few can do it.

Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers; these are the "gifts" of the Lord which He gave to His people when he ascended up on high. The number of the apostles was limited to twelve;* no limit is fixed for the others. One individual might exercise himself in several of these capacities for the benefit of the body of Christ. Paul did much evangelizing, also much exhorting or comforting and confirming of the brethren, which was more especially the work of the prophet. (Acts 20: 1-11.) When he stayed long enough at a place, Paul also did the work of pastor and teacher, edifying the saints privately, from house to house. (Acts 18: 11; 20: 20.) Judas and Silas were prophets, and when they visited Antioch with the apostolic letter from Jerusalem, they exhorted and confirmed in the faith the Gentiles in Antioch who had become believers. But Silas also did the work of an evangelist in company with Paul, travelling with him and Timothy through Macedonia. (Acts 15: 32, 40; 16: 1-12.) Timothy was prophet, teacher, pastor and evangelist, to exhort, instruct, and reprove, and to carry the Gospel into new parts. (1 Tim. 4: 11-16; 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17; 4: 1-5.) And Titus was the same. (Titus 2: 15.) Priscilla and Aquila (the ancient MSS. and R.V. put the names in this order) were teachers to expound the way of the Lord more perfectly to Apollos, the eloquent evangelist. (Acts 18: 24-26.) The New Testament is most interesting and instructive in its references to the activities of the early Church.

Members Set in the Body as God Pleases

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers. . . . Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers?"—1 Cor. 12: 28, 29.

Of Aaron we are told that he honored not himself to be high priest, but was called of God to that office. "So also," says the Apostle, "Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 5: 4-6; John 6: 27; 10: 36.) We have seen that the apostles did not constitute themselves such, nor were they authorized to add to their number; their Lord Himself called those whom He desired to have as His apostles. (John 15: 16.) It is perhaps by way of allusion to the Lord's order in this particular that Paul says of himself that he was "an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus

*It is fully recognized that others than the twelve are called apostles, as Barnabas and Epaphroditus. But it is to be carefully noted that these were not "apostles of the Lamb." Epaphroditus was "your apostle" (Phil. 2: 25, R.V. margin); that is, the "one sent" by the church at Philippi to visit Paul. Barnabas was "one sent" from Antioch (Acts 13: 2, 3); Paul was also for a time "one sent" from Antioch, besides being at all times an apostle ("one sent") of the Lamb.—Acts 14: 14; 26: 15-17.

Christ, and God the Father" (Gal. 1: 1); and again that he was "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God." (Eph. 1: 1; Col. 1: 1.) Men could not make the Messiah; they were to recognize Him whom God had sealed. Neither could men make an apostle of the Lamb; but they could and should recognize in that capacity those whom the Lord had set in that position in the body.

But if God—or Jesus Christ by the will of God—set the twelve apostles of the Lamb in their position, it is equally a fact, according to 1 Cor. 12: 28 and Eph. 4: 11, that the prophets and teachers have been "set" in the body by the same divine power and authority. The prophets and teachers have not been called and set in their places by audible words or miraculous demonstrations, as were the twelve apostles of the Lamb, but by the quieter operation of the divine Spirit (1 Cor. 12: 8), working as it will, and to be recognized by those concerned.

The same principle, precisely, has been followed by the Lord in respect of the "bishops" (leaders of congregations) and "deacons" and "deaconesses" (assistants to the bishop or overseer of each congregation). These are referred to in 1 Cor. 12: 28 as "governments" and "helps," set in the Church according to the divine pleasure.

False Apostles, Prophets, etc.

The fact that God has given His Son to be Head over the Church which is His body (Eph. 1: 22), and that He has set in the Church apostles, prophets, etc., according to His own counsel, has not prevented false apostles, false prophets, and even false Christs, from arising, who have deceived many unwary ones, or such as were not right with God. (2 Cor. 11: 13; 2 Peter 2: 1-3; 1 John 2: 18; Matt. 24: 4, 5.) Satan has ever been busy to counterfeit, and if possible to counteract, the work of God in order to beguile God's people from their simplicity as Eve was beguiled in Eden. To serve his ends he has transformed Himself into an angel of light and His servants into ministers of righteousness. (2 Cor. 11: 3, 14, 15.) In pursuit of their purpose, these falsifiers deceitfully promise "liberty" to those whom they would dupe. True liberty is a precious possession of God's people—liberty from sin and from the Mosaic law, and liberty to do right; but the saints do well also to remember that they are servants—bondslaves of the Lord Jesus Christ, servants of God unto righteousness, servants of each other. The false prophets exalt liberty above its proper place, and emphasize it as though it were the principal thing to be sought and maintained, thus driving out of the minds of those being deceived the thoughts they should have about other things of great value to the Christian. "They speak great swelling words of vanity." "While they professe them liberty, they themselves are the bond servants of corruption." (2 Peter 2: 18, 19.) Liberty is good; it is excellent; it is necessary; but there are several sorts of liberty, and the saint of God must inspect closely to see of what sort the liberty is that is being promised him, lest he fall into a worse bondage than that which binds him to God and His people. Examine the prophesyings that come your way; prove them, and hold fast only that which is good.—1 Thess. 5: 20, 21; 1 John 4: 1.

How has God's Power Set the Members?

If God has not interfered to prevent the uprising of those who claim to be teachers of truth but are not, how has His Spirit operated to set in their proper position in the body those members whom He would use for the instruction in doctrine and edification in love of the membership as a whole? The attentive contemplation of the divine operation in this matter brings to view one of the most striking and beautiful examples given us of a consistent following of a principle through all stages of the work of disseminating the truth.

1. In the first place, the knowledge of God's purpose was possessed by no one save God Himself. The plan was of His own devising, without consultation with any one.

"Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?"—Isa. 40: 13, 14; Rom. 11: 33-36; 1 Cor. 2: 16.

2. The Father communicated the information to the Son. But not all the knowledge was given the Son at the time of His first advent to earth, for He admitted before his crucifixion and again after His resurrection that certain items were still retained by the Father in His own power. (Mark 13: 32; Acts 1: 7.) After His ascension, He being then the "Lamb as it had been slain" (Rev. 5: 6), the Son was able to take the seven-sealed book from the Father, and open the seven seals thereof. (Rev. 5: 3-7.) This was probably the time when the Father gave the Son the items which had not before been made known to Him.—Rev. 1: 1.

"The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth."—John 5: 19, 20.

3. It was the duty of the Son to pass the word on further. In discharge of this duty, He committed the truth to the twelve apostles. Though He preached publicly, He favored the apostles with special explanations and revelations. Paul being particularly abundant in revelations.

"I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." "Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."—John 17: 8; 12: 49, 50; Matt. 13: 11; 1 Cor. 15: 1-4; Gal. 1: 11, 12; Eph. 3: 3; 2 Cor. 12: 7.

The apostles recognized that the Gospel was a trust committed unto them, and they so wrote of it.—1 Tim. 1: 11; 1 Cor. 9: 17; Titus 1: 3; Gal. 2: 7.

4. The apostles not only preached the Gospel, but sought out certain ones younger than themselves to whom they committed the Gospel trust in their turn.

"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: which some professing have erred concerning the faith." "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us."—1 Tim. 6: 20, 21; 2 Tim. 1: 13, 14.

As the apostles travelled about preaching the Gospel committed to them, and believers increased

in numbers in the various cities, the apostles appointed elders in every congregation, thus instituting the "governments" and "helps" mentioned in 1 Cor. 12: 28. (Acts 14: 23, R.V.) Not only did the apostles do this themselves, but they also instructed those younger brethren of the next generation, to whom they had committed the Gospel trust, to do the same, and gave them instructions how to do it. (Titus 1: 5-9; 1 Tim. 3: 1-15.) It will be observed that vs. 14, 15 show that Paul gave Timothy the detailed information concerning the bishop (v. 2), the deacons (v. 8), and the deaconesses (v. 11), for his guidance in appointing them. These are the "governments" and "helps" already referred to. If these "elders" rule well, they are to be counted worthy of double honor, especially they that labor in the word and doctrine.—1 Tim. 5: 17.

5. Finally, Timothy, to whom Paul had committed the Gospel trust which he had received from the Master, was himself charged with the duty of looking out faithful men, who would be able to teach others, and to whom he could pass on the trust, committing to them what had been entrusted to him. But he was not to lay approving hands suddenly on any man.—1 Tim. 5: 22; 3: 6, 10.

"The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."—2 Tim. 2: 2.

Thus the Scripture instruction concerning the manner of passing on the Gospel truth carries us from the heavenly Father, its author, down to the second generation beyond the apostles. The Father chose the Son, and committed the words to Him. The Son chose the apostles by the will of His Father, and committed the words to them. The apostles, following the same principle, chose certain of the brethren—locally and at large—according to characteristics described in 1 Tim. 3: 1-13 and Titus 1: 5-9, and committed the sound words to them, instructing these in their turn to commit the message to faithful men for the benefit of others. This was the programme to be followed throughout the age, and it had been well for the Church had she adhered to it. But no; as the Apostle Paul predicted, so it came to pass. Some of the teachers and leaders forgot that they were to be "guides" to God's

people (Heb. 13: 17, margin), and sought to be lords over His heritage. (1 Peter 5: 1-4; Acts 20: 28-30.) Some of the taught became restive and impatient under even the mildest "guidance," and would not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, and contrary to the advice of the Apostle James, they erected "to themselves" *heaps* of teachers having itching ears, who would turn them away from the truth unto fables. (2 Tim. 4: 3, 4; James 3: 1.) Doubtless it is this fact of the Church going wrong in the matter of teachers that has made it necessary for the Lord providentially to raise up from time to time during the Gospel age special men like the Reformers, who would make a *fresh start*, coming away from the errors in which the Church had become involved.

That the Father must have made the very best choice when He chose to commit the message to His Son our Lord, will not be questioned; nor will any doubts arise as to the wisdom of the Son in choosing whom He did for His apostles. Beyond that, it seems feasible and reasonable to believe that the apostles, having been specially inspired, would make the best choice of those to whom the Gospel should be further committed, and that those who had been taught by the apostles, and had enjoyed their confidence, would be best equipped to follow the instructions laid down in 1 Tim. 3 and 2 Tim. 2: 2; and so on from generation to generation. And as any one gave out the message, those who heard it would be expected to consider it well, to prove all things, and to hold fast the good. Even the apostolic preaching was thus scrutinized, and those who searched the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so were commended for their diligence. Being persuaded of the truth, the believers would then wish to do all in their power to carry it further. Noting their zeal for the service, the ones best equipped in the truth would take pleasure in assisting them to bear a part, whether as evangelist, pastor, teacher or prophet, as seemed suitable; and so our Lord Himself would in this manner—His Word instructing, His Spirit leading, and His Providence overruling—continue His gifts to the Church. "HE gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."—Eph. 4: 7-15.

Matthias or Paul?

THE following letter is as good a presentation of the case for Matthias as we have seen. In reply, we give our reasons for believing that Matthias was not the Lord's choice as successor of Judas, but that Paul was. We grant that our correspondent sincerely desires to know the truth on the matter, and believe that he and other readers will give us credit for the same sincerity. The point is not, perhaps, a vital one, and yet, as Bible students, we all desire to come as near the truth as possible upon every subject upon which the Scriptures give sufficiently clear testimony to enable us

to form a positive opinion. One must consider not only the advisability of being correct in matters of apparently minor importance, but also what larger errors may afterward grow out of, or depend upon, the apparently small error.

Numerals are inserted for convenience in referring to the points:—

In a recent article in the "Advocate" you allude to Paul as the apostle chosen by the Christ to fill the vacancy resulting from the fall of Judas the betrayer. I have never been able to reconcile that view with the facts as stated by Luke, as well as Paul's statement in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians.

[1] The account of the choosing of Matthias, as given in Acts 1, is straightforward, is a part of the inspired Word, and just as reliable as any portion of the history of the Church as given by Luke. The book of Acts was written over 30 years after the incident of the choosing of Matthias, and nowhere in all the book does Luke give the slightest intimation that he believed that God ignored the choice. On the contrary, he shows, by several statements, that he believed the choice of Matthias was entirely regular and was approved of the Lord.

[2] At the conclusion of the account he says: "And he (Matthias) was numbered with the eleven." Thus we see that Luke must have understood that he was one of the twelve.

In the 14th verse of the 2nd chapter it is stated: "Then Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said:" showing clearly that Luke understood that [3a] Peter, with the eleven, constituted the twelve apostles, which must have included Matthias. It is [14] wresting the Scriptures to change the reading (as some do) and say, "with the others of the eleven."

Again, Chapter 6, vs. 2, we read, "The twelve called the multitude of the disciples together," showing plainly that Luke understood there were then twelve apostles. [4] Obviously Paul could not have been included, as he was then a persecutor of the Church.

Luke was very intimately associated with Paul during almost his entire ministry. Is it at all probable, if he understood Paul was chosen to take the place of Judas, as one of the twelve apostles, that [5] he would not have plainly recorded so important an event? He not only fails to make such record but [6] nowhere does he hint that the record given in the 1st chapter was not of the Lord's appointment.

[7] In Acts 1: 21, 22 we read: Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Evidently Paul could not have filled the bill, as thus marked out by the apostle.

[8a] This choice was not made by the apostles: "And they prayed, and said [8b], Thou Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou hast chosen. . . . And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles."

[9a] But it is urged, the choosing of Matthias was before the days of Pentecost, and the apostles' action was without inspiration and therefore could not have been valid. Evidently Luke did not so view the case, as, after thirty years in which to become properly informed in the matter, [9b] he deliberately includes this act of the apostles, in his inspired history.

[10] To me, the apostles had not received the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but they were sufficiently inspired to receive the approval of the Lord Jesus, as well as [11] the sanction of the inspired historian. See Matt. 16: 19-28; 18: 19, 20; Luke 24: 45; John 20: 22.

[3b] Turning to 1 Cor. 15: 5 we read: "And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve." This could not have included Paul, as he surely did not see Jesus at that time; besides, he then had no sympathy with Christianity. True [14] Matthias was not then an apostle, but [12] he was when Paul wrote; and that he was included with the twelve is evident from the account given in Acts 1: 20-26. [13] Either Paul made a mistake in his statement, or the above interpretation is correct. Verse 7: "After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles." This evidently did not include Paul, as the following verse clearly shows: "And last of all he was seen of me also,*as of one born out of due time."

Your Brother in the Truth,
U.S.A.

Luke as an Historian

1. The office of an historian, strictly speaking, is to narrate events. When he does more, when he comments on the events, or seeks to ascribe motives to the various participants, or criticises their actions, he becomes a commentator or critic. One of the most noted of modern histories—Ferrero's History of

Rome—is celebrated because the writer reconstructs not only the events of the period but the probable dispositions, motives, philosophies and theories which led the personages under review to act as they did.

In marked contrast with this modern writer, Luke wrote the Book of Acts without comment, either of approbation or criticism. The absence of criticism is no more apparent than the lack of commendation, as may be seen by a careful perusal of the book. He does not criticize the high priest and others who put Peter in prison (Acts 5: 17), nor Gamaliel for his failure to advocate openly the cause of the disciples (Acts 5: 34-39), nor the Grecians for murmuring against the Hebrews in the community which existed for a short time (Acts 6: 1), nor does he condemn Saul for persecuting the Church. (Acts 8: 1.) And so on, one might go through the entire book, and see a simple statement of events without a passing of judgment upon any of the individuals concerned. In the speeches made by Peter, Paul, Stephen, and others, motives are ascribed and criticisms offered; for example, Stephen mentions a thought in the mind of Moses (Acts 7: 25), but these are not Luke's comments or criticisms.

The absence of comment on the action of the Eleven in the matter of Matthias does not therefore prove Luke's endorsement of their action, nor yet the Lord's acceptance of Matthias as the substitute for Judas in the apostleship.

Another Instance of No Criticism

In Acts 21, Luke relates that while Paul and his company were on the way to Jerusalem they tarried certain days at Caesarea, where a prophet from Judea, named Agabus, met them, and warned Paul concerning what would befall him at Jerusalem. And Luke joined the other brethren in the endeavor to persuade Paul not to go to Jerusalem. At Jerusalem, however, Paul allowed himself to be persuaded to purify himself with others at the temple, according to the Law, as a means of pacifying the Jewish converts who, he was told, were "zealous of the law," and might be prejudiced against Paul if they knew he no longer kept the Law. (Acts 21: 17-27.) Thus Paul, who for many years had been teaching the Jews resident in Greece and Rome that the Law had been abrogated, that they were dead to the Law by the body of Christ, in order that they should be married to another, even to Jesus Christ (Rom. 7: 1-4), was misled into doing what he had expressly told other believing Jews not to do. As a consequence, Jews of Asia, who knew his teaching, raised an uproar, and the final result was that Paul was taken a prisoner to Rome, whereas he might otherwise have travelled there a free citizen as he did in the provinces.

It may be that Paul needed this experience to confirm him completely in the Gospel teaching that believing Jews were no longer under the Law, but under Grace. At any rate, the letters which he afterward wrote to the Galatians and Colossians from Rome are most positive in declaring that though the Law served a useful purpose as a pedagogue to bring the Jewish nation to Christ, yet after Christ came He nailed that Law to His cross; that therefore the believing Jew was delivered from

the bondage of the Law, and that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek. (Col. 1: 14; Gal. 3: 13, 24, 28.) Paul explains that at Antioch he withstood Peter to the face because he was to be blamed. Peter, realizing the liberty which the Gospel gave, had eaten with the Gentiles, but when some Jews came from Jerusalem who were prejudiced against the Gentiles, Peter separated himself from the Gentile converts. This was, according to Paul, not walking "uprightly." (Gal. 2: 11-18.) Little did Paul realize when reproving Peter that himself should be led into similar dissembling when he should find himself at Jerusalem among those very Jews. Not that Paul at Jerusalem refused to eat with Gentiles, but that he pretended to be an observer of the Law, when in reality he was not. The account plainly states the reason for his entering the temple; namely, fear of arousing the prejudices of "many thousands of Jews" who were still ignorantly continuing to observe various ordinances of the Law. In Acts 24: 12 and 25: 10; 26: 21, Paul denies that he was doing anything in the temple to justify the treatment he had received at the hands of the Jews, but he does not insist that it was right for him, as a Christian, to undergo the Jewish ceremony of purification. Rather, he attributes their opposition to the fact of his preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles and the dispersed Jews. The Lord's commendation (Acts 23: 11) was not given to Paul's attempted purification in the temple (for it was never completed, the uproar having abruptly terminated the proceedings), but to his having testified to the Gospel truth.

For our present purpose the point to be observed in all this is that Luke makes no comment whatever upon Paul's course, either of praise or blame. He relates the events as matters of historical interest. It is therefore from other Scriptures, including Paul's own subsequent writings, that we discern Paul's mistake in starting to purify himself according to a Jewish rite, after having become a Christian.

Similarly, it is from other Scriptures, and not from Luke's comments (for he made none), that we discern the mistake of the Apostles in attempting to fill the place of Judas.

Still Another Instance

In Acts 16: 1-3 we read that Paul had Timothy circumcised in order that the Jews might be favorably influenced. Here again we find "dissembling" by one who knew the inappropriateness of imposing a Jewish rite upon a Christian believer, and again do we see the mistaken wisdom of catering to the weaknesses or wrong points of view of persons to be reached with the truth. Paul had in Timothy a most excellent illustration of the power of the Gospel apart from fleshly ordinances, and lost a fine opportunity of giving the Jews an object lesson in Christian Liberty.

Luke makes no comment on the circumcision of Timothy; he merely gives Paul's reason, and the well-informed reader can see its inadequateness. Especially can we see this when we read Paul's subsequent remarks on the subject of circumcision—

"Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to

every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." See also Phil. 3: 2, 3; Rom. 2: 29; Col. 2: 10, 11.

There are some who claim that Paul was right in circumcising Timothy and in purifying himself in the temple, because Luke makes no criticism. Our view is that in both cases Paul allowed himself to become an opportunist, controlled by considerations of policy, just as Peter did when he separated himself from the Gentiles, as already referred to. The absence of criticism by Luke is not an endorsement of their conduct in these respects.

2. When therefore Luke states that Matthias was "numbered with the eleven," we understand him to be recording the matter as viewed by the Eleven, and without expressing his own opinion either for or against. It is in contravention of the facts as above stated that our correspondent asserts that Luke "must have understood" that Matthias was one of the twelve. More likely Luke considered that his detailed account of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and of his travels as an apostle, would show who it was that the Lord had chosen as the successor of Judas.

"The Eleven," "The Twelve"

3a. This raises the question as to how the terms, "the eleven" and "the twelve" are used in the New Testament. Our correspondent errs again in his statement of what Luke "understood." We deny that Acts 2: 14 proves that Matthias was acknowledged by Luke to be the twelfth apostle of the Lamb, in place of Judas. To us the language conveys that Luke ignored Matthias and referred to the Eleven Apostles whom Jesus had chosen. Again in Acts 6: 2 the use of the term "the twelve" does not prove that Matthias was the Lord's choice as Judas' successor. At most it would show that in harmony with their belief that he had been chosen, the apostles associated him with themselves in their counsels. Luke therefore recorded the event from the apostles' then point of view, and not necessarily from his own.

From a reading of all the passages in which the apostles were called "the twelve," it will be seen that the term was used as a title. (Matt. 26: 20; Mark 11: 11.) Even after Judas had committed suicide, and there were only eleven apostles, they were still called "the twelve." (John 20: 24.) In a number of instances the part is taken for the whole. John 21: 14 says, "This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to His disciples, after that He was risen from the dead." But in this instance not all the disciples were included to whom He manifested Himself the first and second time. On this occasion only seven of the apostles were present.—John 21: 2.

Similarly the term "the eleven" was used as a title.—Luke 24: 9, 33; Acts 2: 14.

3b. When Paul says that "He was seen of Cephas, then of 'the twelve,'" he is using the term as a title, and not meaning to intimate that Judas was present. As a matter of fact, Thomas also was absent on the occasion on which the Lord first showed Himself to "the twelve" (John 20: 24), so there were only ten disciples present. On the next occasion Thomas was present, making eleven. In both cases it was appropriate for Paul to speak of the

group as "the twelve," because that was the title by which the Lord's specially chosen disciples were known. It is possible that Luke used the term "the twelve" in this way in Acts 6: 2, meaning those of the original twelve who were at Jerusalem; namely, "the eleven."

4. If the above explanation of the use of the term "the twelve" as a title be correct, the Apostle Paul was not excluding himself from the twelve chosen apostles of the Lamb when he alluded (1 Cor. 15: 5) to the eleven disciples at Jerusalem as "the twelve;" but neither was he including Matthias, for at that time none of the lesser disciples had attempted to occupy the place vacated by Judas.

5. Luke's description of Paul's conversion and vision of the risen Lord was a plain record of an important event. That he did not comment on it as showing that the Lord chose Paul instead of Matthias was only in harmony with his usual practice of avoiding personal comment. It should be noted in this connection that Luke also gives full reports of Paul's speeches, in which his claims as an apostle were set forth.—Acts 22: 6-21; 26: 13-22.

6. This statement of our correspondent is strangely constructed. The question is not as to whether Luke's record of the choosing of Matthias is an accurate statement of fact. It is agreed that Luke truthfully records the process by which "the eleven" sought to fill the place left vacant by Judas. The question is not as to the reliability of the record, or as to whether or not Luke was guided by the Holy Spirit in making the record. The question is rather as to whether "the eleven" were justified in their procedure. Later on, we shall endeavor to show from the Scriptures that they took upon themselves something which the Lord did not authorize them to do, and that Matthias was not the Lord's appointment.

God's Way or Peter's?

7. Our correspondent says, "Evidently Paul could not have filled the bill, as thus marked out by the apostle." The italics are ours. Our correspondent has well expressed it, that Paul did not fulfil the requirements mentioned by Peter; but it is well to remember in this connection that Peter's requirements were not always the Lord's. We speak of the period prior to Pentecost; and our readers will readily recall two instances of Peter's mistaken enthusiasm, while the Lord was yet with them. When the Saviour began to tell the disciples how He must suffer, and be killed—

"Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee [Gr., Pity thyself], Lord: this shall not be unto thee.—Matt. 17: 21.

The Lord could not fill the bill, "as thus marked out by the apostle," for the simple reason that Peter's requirements differed from God's. He spoke of what was outside his knowledge, and beyond his province as a disciple or learner. It was not for Peter to tell the Lord what to do, but to listen respectfully while the Lord explained what God had ordained. And the Lord turned, and said unto Peter—

"Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."—Matt. 16: 23.

But it was not long before impetuous Peter again spoke concerning things he understood not. Jesus took Peter, James and John into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them, and with Him appeared Moses and Elias talking with Him. Without waiting to hear what the Lord would say in explanation of the "vision" (vs. 9), Peter proposed to build three tabernacles—one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias. In this case also the Lord could not "fill the bill," for while Peter yet spake, a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud gave directions quite different from those which Peter proposed. Peter proposed to perpetuate Moses and Elias, as well as Jesus. The voice of God passed by Moses and Elias, and said of Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces and were sore afraid. A little more of this awe and fear when the vision opened would have prevented Peter making such a blunder. The same is true of the days before Pentecost. More awe and fear and waiting for the Lord to speak first, would have prevented Peter essaying to superintend the selection of another apostle.

Activity in God's service is a very good thing, but there are times when it is better to wait for guidance than to blunder along into doing something the Lord does not want done. Later on, after the resurrection, when the Lord had appeared twice to the disciples, Peter was still so full of his own ideas and plans, that he said, "I go a fishing," without stopping to consider what the Lord wished him to do. Then the Lord appeared unto the disciples again, and told Peter of His plans for him—to feed the sheep and lambs.

These several instances of Peter's impetuosity and lack of judgment, before he received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and so could act under special divine guidance, help us to understand his impatience while waiting in the upper room and his anxiety to be doing something, whether appropriate and necessary, or not. He could not watch one hour in the garden; neither could he wait ten days till Pentecost.

8a. Our correspondent says, "This choice was not made by the apostles;" but verse 23 says, "And they appointed two."

8b. The apostles appointed two, and then prayed to the Lord to indicate his choice between those two—a very practical way of telling the Lord that he must take one or the other of those selected by the apostles in accordance with Peter's specifications! They might have allowed the Lord a wider choice! In this case we believe the Lord did the kindest thing possible, as on the Mount of Transfiguration—went quietly on with his own plans, without troubling to answer Peter's ill-timed remarks and suggestions.

9a. The objection here referred to, as taken by those who oppose Matthias, is a very good one, notwithstanding our correspondent's rejection of it. The Lord had told the disciples to *tarry* in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high; not to choose apostles or do anything else. The word translated "tarry" is *kathizo*, meaning, "to sit or set down." Their action in attempting to select an apostle was therefore not only out of

place, but an act of disobedience to the Lord's express command.

9b. We repeat that Luke's narration of the apostles' action is not an endorsement of it.

10. The Lord Jesus' approval of the disciples before Pentecost was not based on their inspiration, as our correspondent seems to intimate, but upon the fact that they sincerely accepted Him as the Messiah and continued faithfully with Him in His trials. (Matt. 16: 16-19; Luke 22: 28-30.) Matt. 16: 23 and other passages already referred to show that the disciples did not have the Lord's approval in everything. To these may be added our Lord's criticism of their constant bickering among themselves as to who should be greatest (Mark 9: 33-37), and His rebuke when they desired fire to be called down out of heaven to destroy the Samaritans. (Luke 9: 52-56—Portions of vss. 54 and 55 are omitted from ancient MSS.) He had given them power to work miracles, but these powers were given that they might do good to others, and not for the purpose of choosing fellow apostles.

The texts cited do not prove the point claimed. Matt. 16: 19-28 covers a variety of subjects, and includes a severe rebuke of Peter. (Vss. 21-23.) Verses 16 to 19 refer to Peter's confession as the rock upon which the Church is to be built, and has nothing to do with the question in hand. Verses 24-27 contain a promise of reward to the faithful, and verse 28 is a prophecy of the vision on the mount soon to be given, and described in chapter 17.

Matt. 18: 19, 20 must be taken in harmony with such passages as John 15: 7. If two agree upon something which it is consistent with God's will to perform, He will do it, but not otherwise. Those who "ask amiss" must not be surprised if they do not receive their requests.—James 4: 3.

Luke 24: 45 says the Lord opened the understandings of the disciples that they might understand the Scriptures concerning His death and resurrection.—See verses 44, 46.

John 20: 22 is the nearest to a support of our correspondent's position, but does not really uphold it, because verse 23 explains the purpose of the Holy Spirit as thus breathed upon them; namely,

"Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

Thus it is apparent that in none of the passages cited were the apostles given authority to choose a substitute for Judas. They might heal sickness, cast out devils, etc., also they might give assurance to the truly penitent that their sins are forgiven, or condemn the unrepentant as being under God's condemnation. But all these activities were to cease while they tarried at Jerusalem, waiting for the power promised them from on high.

12. No, Paul did not include Matthias among the twelve. He did not mention his name, and we have already explained the use of the term "the twelve" as a title.

Matthias and Justus among the Five Hundred

13. Paul made no mistake in the use of the term. In his reference to the witnesses of Christ's resurrection he mentions three manifestations. To Peter, then "the twelve" (that is, those remaining of

the original twelve), and then "above five hundred brethren at once." The latter company, we should say, included Matthias, for Peter describes both "Joseph called Barabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias," as equally eligible to office. If Matthias had no greater claim to the office than Justus, it is self-evident that he was not one of "the twelve" referred to by Paul, but one of the "five hundred."

14. Our correspondent calls it wresting the Scriptures to say that Acts 2: 14 means that Peter stood up "with the others of the eleven." But further on in his letter he interprets Paul as referring to Matthias as one of "the twelve" before Matthias had been chosen! If it is wresting the Scriptures to discover a method of harmonizing Acts 2: 14 with other Scriptures which show Paul as the successor of Judas, then what is it but wresting the Scriptures to assert that Paul called Matthias one of "the twelve" who saw Jesus before his revelation to the five hundred? We should prefer, however, in a matter of this kind, not to say that anyone is "wresting" the Scriptures, but rather that some have not fully considered the case in all its details and bearings. If the desire of each is to discover the Lord's will, let us not wrest any of the Scriptures, but see how they can all be reasonably and harmoniously understood.

Casting Lots

Another matter which Peter apparently overlooked when proposing to choose one by lot was this: Did the Lord purpose to guide the Christian believers by the lot, as He did the children of Israel under the Law Covenant, or had the Lord a new and different method, more suited to the New Covenant and its new law of Love?

The first mention of the "lot" is in Lev. 16: 8, 9, 10, in connection with the choice of a goat for a sin offering; "one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scapegoat (or Azazel)." The next mention is in connection with the division of the land. (Num. 26: 55, 56; 33: 54; 34: 13; etc.) Both these lots were cast by the Lord's expressed command. The cities of the Levites were divided unto them by lot. (1 Chron. 6: 54-81.) The order of service of the priests was determined by lot. (1 Chron. 24: 3-19.) When the temple and the wall of Jerusalem were rebuilt after the captivity, Nehemiah restored the lot also. (Neh. 10: 34; 11: 1.) In all probability Saul was chosen king of Israel by lot, though the word itself is not used in describing Samuel's mode of procedure (1 Sam. 10: 17-21), the Lord's overruling being manifest in that He had previously anointed Saul for the office. (1 Sam. 10: 1.) Solomon's view of the lot is referred to in Prov. 16: 33, "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord;" and its common use among the people is shown by the fact that they cast lots for our Lord's garments, as it was foretold by the prophet they would do.—John 19: 24; Psa. 22: 18.

The "lot" is thus shown to have been in some cases a solemn ordinance, a divinely directed method for determining the Lord's will; in other cases, it was a convenient method of division of spoils. When exercised in conformity to the Lord's will, He undoubtedly directed the issue. But when exer-

eised under other circumstances, and without His sanction. His guidance could not be expected.—Joel 3: 3.

Not a New Covenant Arrangement

The lot is nowhere mentioned in the New Testament as an institution to be perpetuated under the Gospel. The followers of Jesus were not to be so guided in their affairs, and for a good reason. The law (of love) is to be written on their minds and hearts, and they are given the guidance of the Holy Spirit and of the written Word. Peter and the other disciples in the upper room were not aware of all that was implied in the change from the Law to the New Covenant; but we who see that the Law and all its arrangements were done away in Christ can see that the lot as a divine institution also passed away.

The Case for Paul

The Lord Himself chose the original twelve apostles. They did not choose Him, nor did they choose each other. They accepted Christ because He was God's choice—the Sent of God, the Anointed. (Heb. 3: 1.) They accepted one another because they had no choice but to receive whomsoever the Lord had chosen.—

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you."—John 15: 16.

"Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?"—John 6: 70.

The latter passage shows that the choice of the twelve, made by our Lord during His earthly ministry, was not absolute. The power to heal diseases, cast out devils, etc., was given to Judas, as well as to the others, and was only for the time of His earthly ministry; the main reason for their choice being that they might be instructed in the Scriptures and be eye-witnesses of His experiences, that they might subsequently be His witnesses in all nations beginning at Jerusalem. The choice therefore of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, whose names were to be in the foundations of the New Jerusalem as permanent instructors in the Gospel, must be dated, not from their first selection, but from the time that the Lamb was exalted to heavenly power and authority, and made Lord of all.

An Apostle—One Sent

The word "apostle" means "one sent forth." The Lord Jesus was an apostle, sent of God. (Heb. 3: 1.) Paul and Barnabas were apostles of the Church at Antioch, having been "sent" on a missionary journey under its auspices. (Acts 14: 14; 13: 1-3.) Others of the early disciples, sent out by various churches, might appropriately have been called "apostles." But as there was only One, sent directly by God, namely, the Lord Jesus, so there were only twelve sent directly and specially by the risen Christ. As the resurrected Lord He sent out the eleven who had endured in much weakness to the end, and as the resurrected Lord He called and sent out one to fill the place of the unfaithful Judas. These twelve are distinguished from the other apostles by the title already referred to, "the twelve apostles of the Lamb."—Rev. 21: 14.

It has only to be shown therefore that Paul was personally chosen and sent by the risen Lord to

prove that he, and not Matthias, was the Lord's choice for the vacancy in the apostleship. On the way to Damascus the vision of the risen Lord appeared to him above the brightness of the noon-day, so that he became in truth an eye-witness of the resurrection. His commission as an apostle was no less plainly stated than that given to "the eleven." To these He said—

"Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."—Matt. 28: 19.

"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things."—Luke 24: 47, 48.

Paul's Commission

Paul's commission as explained to Ananias was—

"He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."—Acts 9: 15, 16.

As expressed by himself in his great speech before Agrippa, Paul received a definite commission when he heard the voice of Jesus saying, Paul, Paul, why persecutest thou Me?—

"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me."—Acts 26: 15-18.

In Acts 22: 6-21 Paul relates his experience, how the Lord spoke to him, and said, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee what thou shalt do. Ananias is quoted as saying—

"The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard."—Acts 22: 14, 15.

Paul an Apostle of the Lamb

The above strong language, commissioning Paul as an Apostle of the Lamb, plainly indicates the induction of Paul into the office vacated by Judas, for it is similar to that given the Eleven just before His ascension. Paul is commissioned as an eye-witness of the resurrection, and as a preacher of the forgiveness of sins. Moreover he, like the other apostles, was told to begin at Jerusalem, and it was from there that he went to Cæsarea, and began his missionary journeys among the Gentiles, so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, "I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ."—Rom. 15: 19; Acts 9: 15, 16, 26-30; Gal. 1: 18.

It is thought by some that Paul was a special or thirteenth apostle sent to the Gentiles, and with a different mission from that given the Eleven before the ascension. He is called the "great missionary to the Gentiles." No doubt he deserves this title for his work among the Grecians. It must be remembered, however, that Paul, as well as the Eleven, was told to go first to the Jew, and that Peter and others also journeyed among the Gentiles, preaching first to the Dispersed of Israel, and afterward turning to the Gentiles. "To the Jew

first, and also to the Greek," was the Lord's command, observed by all the Apostles of the Lamb.—Rom. 1: 16; Acts 13: 26, 32, 33, 46-48.

The Signs of an Apostle

Some in Paul's day sought to minimize his influence by denying that he was a duly accredited Apostle of the Lamb. He was therefore under necessity of continually re-iterating the fact of his call and commission, and asserting his authority. (Rom. 1: 1; 1 Cor. 1: 1; 2 Cor. 1: 1; Gal. 1: 1; Eph. 1: 1; etc.) There is a world of meaning in his oft-repeated phrase—"an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God;" and to the Galatians (Did he have Matthias in mind?), "Not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead." He writes to the Corinthians—

"Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds."—2 Cor. 12: 12.

What were the special and peculiar signs of an apostle of the Lamb? They were not only the exercise of spiritual "gifts," such as tongues, healings, etc., but the demonstration of ability to *confer gifts upon others* by the laying on of hands.

Philip the evangelist could preach the gospel with power, and could himself work miracles; but when the "gifts" were to be conferred upon the resultant believers the apostles Peter and John came from Jerusalem to lay hands on them. (Acts 8: 14-17.) If it can be shown that Paul had this power of con-

ferring gifts, then we have proof positive that he was ordained by the Lord Jesus as the successor of Judas in the apostleship, since there are only twelve "apostles of the Lamb" (Rev. 21: 14), only twelve to sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.—Matt. 19: 28.

This evidence is found in Acts 19: 1-7. The believers at Ephesus did not know of the baptism of Jesus or of the Holy Spirit until Paul visited them. They were then baptized. "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied." Paul fulfilled to the believing Ephesians the office which Peter and John had served to the believing Samaritans. In the case of Timothy also, we read that he received the gift of God by the laying on of Paul's hands. (1 Tim. 1: 6.) Could there be any stronger testimony to the fact that Paul was one of the twelve chosen apostles of the Lamb?

We desire to recognize everyone in the office in which the Lord has placed him, and we are far from wishing to fall short in any recognition which may be due to Matthias; nevertheless, the foregoing testimonies of the Scripture place insurmountable obstacles in the way of acknowledging Matthias as the successor of Judas, while they seem to us (and we hope to our esteemed correspondent and others) to afford conclusive evidence that Paul should be so regarded.

"And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."—Rev. 21: 14.



Pray without Ceasing

—1 Thess. 5: 17.—

THAT THE WAY of access to the throne of God's grace has been opened and made free to all who recognise and accept the sacrifice, mediatorship and advocacy of Jesus is the outstanding fact of Christianity.

Approaching God by prayer in all the circumstances of his life is the grand privilege of him who believes.

Beyond all question this privilege is the greatest of all granted to the fallen race. It is the source of comfort and strength in "all your afflictions." There is sweet peace and rest in the assurance that having laid the matter before the Lord in faith and simplicity He now has it in hand.

How much worry, fretfulness and fear would be gone into the dark recesses, could we but realise better the inestimable advantages the faithful believer has over the rest of the world in being able to carry all his cares to the Lord. What joy and peace there are in the many assurances of the Father's love for His "sons."

Its Necessity and Importance

Our Lord Jesus many times duly impressed his hearers with the necessity and importance of prayer. The apostles were as frequent in exhorting the churches to its observance. But in the text before

us is an exhortation which at the first seems to lie beyond the range of possibility.

When the apostle wrote to the Thessalonian brethren he well knew the severity of the opposition they would meet, having experienced it himself there. (Acts 17.) In all his own arduous and turbulent life he found strength and consolation in the sacred privilege of prayer, and he would not have these brethren neglect it, but urges them to pray, and to pray *without ceasing*.

What a task was this! Were they to begin praying and never to cease? Were they to be speaking to God for the twenty-four hours of every day of their lives? The text says so, seemingly. But this surely cannot be. In the first place, such a thing would be nearly impossible. And, secondly, their lives would soon be terminated by the process; while the purpose for which they were called (viz., to be prepared for the heavenly kingdom by a life of faith and obedience) would be defeated.

The Thessalonians had just come out of idolatry (Ch. 1: 9), and had all of the defilements of mind and character common to the heathen to "put off," and much of the opposite sort to "put on." (Col. 3: 8-17.) Time therefore would be required for this very necessary work in themselves. Neither are these excellencies of character attainable only

by prayer. Moreover, there is nothing in the life of the apostle himself which would allow us to suppose that he held this view of his own words.

What Is Prayer?

It has been suggested by way of explanation of this strange text that the significance of "to pray" is not that one should leave every other occupation and engage in direct prayer to God, but that to "set the Lord ever before me" (Ps. 16: 8) while at work or play is what is to be understood. So setting the Lord in or before the mind constantly is praying "without ceasing."

Again it has been said that desire or longing for God may be counted as prayer. Such a longing or desire may be with one at all times (making allowance for the state of unconsciousness during sleep), and thus he would be praying "without ceasing." Exactly such a thought as this is expressed by the poet:—

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire
Uttered or unexpressed."

Thinking or Wishing not Prayer

These definitions of what prayer is or might be are seriously at fault, inasmuch as they do not take account of the inspired definition.

Such a determination to "set the Lord ever before me," and to long for and desire God and every good thing, are scriptural, and therefore commendable, but they do not constitute a prayer. What constitutes a prayer is to "utter" what is in the "soul," as Paul says—

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

Having this definition of prayer by the same apostle, we are in possession of the key which will enable us to understand his meaning when he exhorts to "pray without ceasing."

In considering the text as it stands, there are two words which are to be understood, in order to complete the sense. With these added the text reads—

"Pray without ceasing" (to pray).

But the apostle's thought is at once apparent, if instead of using the word itself we substitute the inspired definition of it in each case. Thus it reads—

"Let your requests be made known unto God without ceasing" (to let your requests be made known unto God).

Thus we gain the idea that we are to make our requests known unto God without ceasing to do so. That is to say, Do not get weary, but persevere; do not on any account cease to make known your requests as they may arise.

This is the import of the parable of the Unjust Judge (Luke 18: 1-7), while Paul again in Eph. 6: 18 exhorts to perseverance in watchfulness and continuance in prayer.

Persevering Prayer

The apostle further elaborates these thoughts when he says, "Continuing instant in prayer" (Rom. 12: 12); that is, continue steadfast, or constantly diligent, in prayer. If you are in trouble or distress, do not wait till to-morrow, but make the trouble known unto God, be earnest and persevering in prayer, and do not fail to continue that practice. Undoubtedly the Father knows all about it, but these Scriptures show it as His desire that, for your own benefit, you should be continually praying, and

thus ready to embody in prayer the needs and desires and thanksgivings of each moment.

The record of a clear case of this kind is found in Neh. 2: 1-8. Nehemiah prayed earnestly before going into the King's presence, and also while he yet stood before the King; and God greatly blessed him, granting his request. The King was more gracious and generous than Nehemiah at first dared hope.

The urgency of watchfulness and prayer at the present time, when the indications of a speedy ending of the present age seem so clear, is shown in Luke 21: 36, "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass (vss. 7-35), and to stand before the Son of man." To escape from these things—the distress of nations with perplexity, false teaching, the fear of the things coming upon the earth, the shaking of the powers of heaven, etc.—will be a special blessing for those who take heed unto themselves, so that their hearts are not overcharged with surfeiting nor intoxicated by the false doctrines at this time rampant in the earth, and in whom the cares of this life have not been allowed to grow up as thorns in a wheat crop choking the good seed (vs. 34), but who watch and pray always (vs. 36).

Faith a Pre-requisite to Receiving

If as it has been seen, an emphasis has been laid on the importance of prayer to the life and growth of the Christian, a place of no less importance has been given to Faith by the sacred writers. Indeed, one cannot very well be considered without the other. Have we no further instruction than that prayer is the making of your requests known unto God, even if to this we add strong desire for the matter under request: is there nothing more? There certainly is. Faith, belief, that God grants all good things to his people, is a pre-requisite to an acceptable prayer.

Our Lord went to a deal of trouble to make this plain to the disciples, and used the circumstances of the cursed fig tree to force home the truth that Faith in God is as important as the request. (Mark 11: 21.) The three requisites to be exercised before "ye shall receive" your requests are given in their order in Mark 11: 24.

First, Desire. This is necessary before there would be any prayer, or any "making known."

Second. As already seen, the Desire would be of no value without Prayer, or the making it known.

Third. Added to these there must be Faith, firm belief, that God grants requests.

There is, however, a limitation to be placed upon the "whatsoever things ye desire," as we shall shortly see. And the text does not say that the requests will *at once* be granted, but rather, as rendered by the Emphatic Diaglott, "believe that you *will* receive, and you *shall* have them." The answer to requests may be immediate or deferred, according to the wisdom of God, but if faith be exercised the answer will most certainly come. Therefore, "Have faith in God" (vs. 22), continue to believe, keep making the request; persevere, and never let go the strong desire, and "ye shall receive."

The true child of God would not, if he knew it, desire anything contrary to the will of God, much

less would he pray for it; while the least belief that God would grant such a request would be quite beyond his thoughts.

What should we Pray For?

It may reasonably be asked, Has God by the Divine Word enlightened us at all on this question?

Yes; there are many things mentioned which it pleases God greatly to have his children desire and pray for. Some that come first to the mind are—

Those exhortations and examples to pray for the brethren.—Col. 1: 4; 1 Thes. 1: 3.

For the Holy Spirit.—Luke 11: 13.

For spiteful people and persecutors.—Matt. 5: 44.

For wisdom.—Jas. 1: 5.

For harvest laborers.—Matt. 9: 37, 38.

That the Kingdom of God may come, and His will be done on earth.—Matt. 6: 10.

For daily bread, and forgiveness of sins.—Matt. 6: 11, 12.

For deliverance in temptation by fleshly lusts.—Matt. 6: 13; Jas. 1: 13-16.

For deliverance from the evil one.—Matt. 6: 13.

A beautiful example of a prayer for the brethren is given in Col. 1: 9-12.

It is plainly declared that God's will is in all of these requests, and they may be presented with the assurance that He will grant them in due time, according to His wisdom.

But there are many things in the experience of the believer which should be made a matter for prayer (being a part of the "everything" of Phil. 4: 6), and about which God has not expressed anything in the Word as directly and plainly as in the above given examples.

Thy Will be Done

If we have not the Divine Testimony to assist us in respect of a doubtful thing, and yet make it a matter for prayer, as it is our privilege to do, the desire may be expressed, but subject to another and greater desire; namely, that God's will be done, and not ours.

Two noteworthy examples of prayer made in this way are given in Matt. 26: 39, 42, 44, and 2 Cor. 12: 7-9.

Our Lord's one supreme desire was to do the Father's will, yet here is another desire conditionally expressed—"If it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Similarly Paul and the "thorn in his flesh." He had a great desire that it might be removed, and three times he prayed about it. But when he realised that God's will was otherwise, inasmuch as "my

grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness," his reply was, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities."

We have thus a principle established for our guidance in all matters about which there may be doubt. It is right to present them at the throne of grace, and with frequency, but always subject to the superior desire that God's will be done.

It is to be observed that both these requests were answered in a way fully understood by the petitioners, but neither was granted. The answer in these cases was, "No." For Judas and the multitude were permitted to come (Matt. 26: 45-47), and Paul had a word specially given in which he was told that the infirmity must be borne. Both were glad that God had graciously revealed His will, and, being understood, submission was at once made, without repining, in implicit faith that the thing desired in each case was not the best nor as great a blessing as what the Father's love had designed for them.

His faith in God His Father enabled our Lord Jesus to overcome in His darkest hours, and Paul had the grand assurance at the end of his journey that he also was an overcomer.—2 Tim. 4: 7, 8.

Victorious Faith

If we fight a good fight, and keep the faith unto the end of our course, we shall be "overcomers," as Paul was. But Faith is the essential in order to overcome, for "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1 John 5: 4.) To those who exercise faith and are at last "overcomers" is to be granted a power almost unbelievable. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne" (Rev. 3: 21), and he shall have "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."—Rev. 2: 26, 27.

That the invitation to "sit with me in my throne" is now given to those of the fallen race of men who shall, as the "overcomers," be instrumental in overturning the nations, that the kingdom of God may be set up in the earth and the promised blessing to all earth's families take its wider fulfilment, is the great fact of our time.

But when the age in which that much-to-be-desired kingdom is established has come, the opportunity of participating "in my throne" shall be forever closed.

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." (Heb. 10: 35.) "Hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."—Heb. 3: 6.

—F. S.



The Field* is the World

WHEN an observer wishes to follow the action on a field of battle, he gets upon the highest hilltop with a good pair of field glasses. When a Christian wishes to understand what is transpiring on the great battle-field of the world, he gets up into the mountain of God, and views the panorama through the magnifying and clarifying glasses

of God's Word. Just at present there is much to interest him. Events transpire rapidly; what is a sensation to-day is forgotten to-morrow. This very confusion tends to blur sensibility, and lessons which could be learned are continually brushed aside for new sensations of the moment.

But one thing stands out plain to see, and that is,

that the great driving force of this world is *Selfishness*. With all the talk of peace among the nations, and of "live and let live," the iron hand is still to be felt under the glove. The nations still measure up to the imagery by which they are represented in Daniel—horrible, devouring beasts. Even those most "civilized," and displaying most anxiety to conserve the general welfare, tolerate within their borders systems and combinations well represented by the octopus and the boa-constrictor, curling round and squeezing the life out of the small competitor.

The Near East

is now the centre of interest, not only for political, but also for religious and moral reasons. The Sultan as the head of Mohammedanism is a more striking figure than as a mere governor over a rapidly diminishing territory. And the attitude of "the powers" toward the various parties to the conflict is an object lesson on the extent to which money and expediency rule the world.

What bearing has the war in the Balkans on the fulfilment of prophecy? we are asked. Our day is the time when all the kingdoms originally included in the Roman empire are to go down before the Kingdom of God and Earth's New Ruler. Where the Mohammedan Turk is pushed back, the Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic neighbours advance. This in itself is not a triumph of Christ's kingdom, because the apostate churches of Christendom no more represent Christ than do the followers of Mohammed. They may, doubtless do, represent (under pressure from Protestant nations) a higher type of civilization than do the Turks, but they are far from representative of Christ and His spirit of love.

Britain has millions of Mohammedan subjects in India and Egypt whom she would not wish to irritate by active opposition to Turkey. Besides, many of her financiers are said to have investments which require the stability of Turkey. The Anglo-Saxons do not mind seeing the Slav fight the Turk, the Russians are interested in the success of the Slav and the Greek Church, while Austria would be pleased with some arrangement which would lessen the tight pressure on the Roman Catholic population of Turkish provinces.

The Turk has been known as a fearless, even ferocious, fighter, especially under the fanaticism of his religion. So far in the present war the odds seem to be against him, and he is said to lack enthusiasm. If that is so, then Islam has become a formalism, and no longer warms the heart, while the disintegrating influence of political strife during the past few years has diminished patriotism. No nation fights vigorously except for a common cause for which all hearts burn, or for a religion which its adherents believe to be divine. If the awakened Ottomans realize that their backward state is due in large measure to their slavery to the Koran, they will more and more abandon it. News from the front shows that starvation and general unpreparedness for the fierce onslaughts also demoralized the Turks.

Islam Divided

The Sultan is not, however, as great a man as he once was. The Young Turks did not hesitate to depose Abdul Hamid, notwithstanding his headship

over Islam. There are, in fact, two parties among the Mohammedans; some favorable to the Sultan, others rendering obedience to an eastern potentate whose name is not often mentioned in the west.

"Might makes Right"

And now the Powers, having seen that "Might" is with the Allied Balkans, are arranging to declare that they are "Right." This is the usual way. They will also see various ways in which "Right" means that they who are mightier than the Allied States should receive substantial shares of the victors' spoils.

Progress In China

We do not expect a child to learn to walk without having a few falls and bruises. Just so we must not expect China to become a first-class modern power without a few mistakes. As a beginning, 70,000 miles of railways are to be built; manufactures are to be encouraged, mines developed; the whole country opened to foreign capital and enterprise. Reforms of all kinds are to be made. Opening up the country will facilitate education and missionary enterprise, and many millions who have never heard of the Bible will have copies placed within reach. "Knowledge will be increased," and the "taking out a people for his Name" will progress there as in other countries.

China is now what Europe was in the Middle Ages. Possibly the Lord has allowed some countries to be thus backward, in order to afford us an example of what we were; to show us that our progressive civilization is not due to our own greater intelligence, but to the Lord's goodness in sending the light of truth into our lands. As we watch their efforts and blunders, their failures and successes, we can get some idea of how we appeared to the Lord during the period of European awakening.

Ireland and Home Rule

This question is largely a religious one, though the politicians dealing with it profess to do so on strictly non-sectarian lines. What makes the people of Ulster feel "queer" is that their ancestors settled in Ireland for the purpose of upholding the union with England and to counterbalance the Catholic population of the south. Now, after having performed the service for generations, they are to be themselves thrown to the mercy of the Catholic population.

Items of Interest

"DR. HARKOV, a Russian savant, once affirmed that Samara, on the right bank of the Tigris, near Bagdad, is the oldest city extant. Relics now discovered show that Samara flourished before the arrival of the Semites in Chaldea or Mesopotamia, 3,000 B.C."

"REV. DR. ADENEY, in his presidential address at the Congregational assembly, Manchester, stated that the prosperous churches should help to secure equitable conditions for the whole community. England's greatest economic requirement was a living wage. Agricultural laborers wanted habitable cottages instead of picturesque ruins. Posterity would be amazed at the callous complacency of modern Christians towards penury and squalid misery."

"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 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."

THE CIVILIZATION of ancient Rome attained an enormous development in Northern Africa, as evidenced by the ruins of great Roman cities and important aqueducts still to be seen. Dr. Leiter (Paris), who recently investigated the matter of the climate of Northern Africa, asserts that it is much the same to-day as it was then—the decline of agriculture being due to the negligence of the inhabitants. The re-acquisition of Tripoli, a former Roman province, by Italy, may result in a return of prosperity to the district.

IN VARIOUS parts of the world bread is obtained from trees. For example, in the Molucca Islands the starchy pith of the sago palm furnishes a white floury meal, which is made into flat, oblong loaves and baked in curious little ovens divided into small oblong cells just big enough to receive the loaves. In Lapland the inner bark of pine trees, well ground and mixed with oat flour, is made into cakes, which are cooked in a pan over a fire. In Kamtschatka pine bark and birch bark are used for bread without the addition of any other substance, being reduced to powder by pounding, made into loaves, and baked. Along the Columbia River bread is made from a kind of moss that grows on a species of fir-trees. After being dried, it is sprinkled with water, allowed to ferment, rolled into balls as big as a man's head, and baked in pits, with the help of hot stones. Travellers who have tasted it say that it is by no means unpalatable. The Californian Indians collect the pollen of cat-tails in large quantities by beating it off the plants and catching it in blankets. They make bread of it. But as a delicacy they prefer bread of grasshopper flour.

"A SCIENTIST has estimated that a banana plantation will feed twenty-five human beings when a potato field of the same size would support but two, and a wheat farm only one. He also ascertained that chestnut groves, with full-grown trees, produce six times as much food per acre as any cereal crop. In view of these facts it has been suggested that a time may come when the staples of human food will be mainly derived from trees, greatly to the advantage of the race."

"IN THESE DAYS of cheap literature, when the masterpieces of British writers can be had for 4½d., it is interesting to note that just 1,000 years ago the Countess of Anjou gave 200 sheep, one load of wheat, one load of rye, and one load of millet for a volume of sermons written by a German monk."

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 "GO FORWARD" plan of laying aside something on the first day of each week, and sending the amounts monthly for the help of the Good Work.

27G, 7/-; 28G, 5/-; 29G, 10/-; 30G, 6/8; 31G, 5/-; 32G, 18/-; 33G, 7/-; 34G, 10/-; 35G, 5/-; 36G, £1; 37G, 5/-; 38G, £1; 39G, £1/5/-; 40G, £1; 41G, 5/-; total for 2 months. £8/8/6 (\$40.94); previously reported, £29/5/2 (\$142.19); total for 4 months £37/13/8 (\$183.13).

The "Advocate" Sustaining Fund

Voluntary donations to this fund have been received as under, since our last report. As the "Advocate" is regularly published at a financial loss, it is obliged to depend upon the loving co-operation of its friends until it shall become self-sustaining. Let the good work continue!

64G, 2/-; 65G, 11/9; 66G, 4/-; 67G, 1/-; 68G, 1/-; 69G, 8/6; 70G, 2/-; 71G, 1/-; 72G, 1/-; 73G, 4/-; 74G, 2/-; 75G, £1/13/3; 76G, 4/6; 77G, £1; 78G, 1/-; 79G, 1/-; 80G, 2/-; 81G, £2/2/-; 82G, 1/-; 83G, 1/-; 84G, 1/-; 85G, £1; 86G, 2/-; 87G, 10/6; 88G, 4/6; 89G, 2/-; 90G, 1/-; 91G, 2/-; 92G, 2/-; 93G, 5/-; 94, 15/4; 95G, 10/3; 96G, 4/-; 97G, £1; 98G, 2/-; 99G, £1; 100G, 1/-; 101G, 2/-; 102G, 7/5; 103G, 1/-; 104G, 1/-; 105, 15/7; 106, 7/6; 107G, 2/-; 108G, 11/9; 109G, £9/18/5; 110G, 2/-; 111G, 4/-; 112G, 1/-; 113G, 1/-; 114G, £1; 115G, 13/6; 116G, 1/-; 117G, 1/-; 118, 2/6; total for 2 months, £27/19/3 (\$135.90); previously reported, £31/9/8 (\$153.00); total for 4 months, £59/8/11 (\$288.90).

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E. C. HENNINGES, EDITOR

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No. 9

Messages and Messengers

THIS YEAR'S One-Day-Conference at Hampton-on-Sea proved most enjoyable and profitable. Some pronounced it the best yet held. It was marked by a unity of spirit and oneness of thought most refreshing to all. When it is considered that six brethren delivered a "message," and that each was in harmony with the other, as well as heartily endorsed by all present, we have reason to feel confident that the Holy Spirit had guided in the preparation of the discourses, in answer to our united prayers, and that the Lord Himself was present to bless their delivery to each one present. May we ever be ready to hear His messages to us, and to honor Him by obedience to them!

As usual, the Conference opened with an address to the children, entitled, "A Great Man's Advice,"

which we hope to publish in a later issue of the "Advocate." This month we have pleasure in presenting the main topic of the day—"Messages and Messengers"—which was divided as follows:—

1. How to Distinguish between Good and Evil Messages and Messengers, and the Responsibility of Hearers toward Them.
2. Is the Genesis Message *re* the Creation and Fall of Man reliable, and What is the Significance of the Penalty for Sin there pronounced?
3. What is the Message concerning God's Limited Dealings in the Past in regard to Salvation?
4. The Message for our Day.
5. The Glorious Message of Salvation in the Future Age.

Good and Evil Messages and Messengers

How to distinguish between them ; Responsibility of Hearers

RIGHT THROUGH the ages there have been Messengers and Messages, both Good and Evil, and it will be necessary for us to briefly review a few of them, in order to see the consequences of obedience or disobedience to each.

In Gen. 2: 16, 17 we have God's message to our first parents. It was a simple one, and yet a good one. They were permitted to enjoy all the luxuries of that well-watered garden, which truly must have been a paradise, with but one restriction; namely, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—"Thou shalt not eat of it." Even with the simplicity of the message, there came a penalty for infringement of it, which was quite just. God, who was their Creator, and therefore their owner, required obedience, and this was sufficient for the test, obey and live, or disobey and die.

In chapter 3: 1-6 we find the serpent, as the instrument of Satan, taking the part of the Evil Messenger, and in a very subtle manner coming with his mes-

sage. It was his very plausibility that caused our first parents to become disobedient to God's message; and by their disobedience they brought upon themselves and their posterity the penalty prescribed beforehand, as elaborated in verses 16-19.

We might refer also to Moses, God's messenger to Pharaoh, saying, Let my people go. We see the trouble Pharaoh brought upon himself and the people of Egypt through his hardness of heart. God sent many messages to the children of Israel, from the time they left Egypt until they reached the promised land, which required the strictest obedience, and which brought upon them many troubles and trials through disobedience.

True and False Messages Contrasted

Turn now to 1 Kings 13: 4, and see both good and evil messages. When the man of God had delivered his message against the altar in Bethel and restored the withered hand of King Jeroboam, he was obedient

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.

to the word of the Lord in that he would not tarry to eat or drink, although invited by the King to do so. But when the temptation came in a more subtle manner, he failed (See verses 15-19), and his disobedience brought its penalty. It might be argued that it was not right that he should be punished so severely, when it was a "prophet" who deceived him, and took him in to eat and drink. But whether the invitation came from a prophet of God or from any one else, did not alter the case. He had the word of the Lord, and by it he must stand. This should also be a lesson to us, not to take what any one says, not even a prophet, if that word is not in strict accordance with the Word of God. The Apostle Paul tells us something to this effect, when writing to the Galatians, who were being removed to another Gospel (which was not another), saying, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.—Gal. 1: 6-9.

Obedience, Blessing; Disobedience Cursing

Turn now to Jeremiah 11: 1-5. Here we have the message given to Jeremiah to deliver to the people, and with it responsibility and penalty attached. "Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and say thou unto them, . . . Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant, which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you; so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God." This message is also spoken of in Lev. 26: 3-12, in which rich promises are made, but on certain conditions, which are also referred to in verse 14 and onward. Thus we see how the message of God to the Jews required the strictest obedience, and how when obeyed, it would bring to them all the material blessings required by human beings—rain in due season, the land to yield her increase, trees to yield their fruits; eat bread to the full, dwell in the land in safety, peace in the land, etc. And the curse pronounced against disobedience (vss. 14-39) shows how God requires obedience from his people.

Good Messages Not Always Pleasant

Now turn to Jonah 1. Here is another message, and also a messenger. Jonah, the messenger, had a message delivered to him, to go and preach against Nineveh, on account of their wickedness, but Jonah did not seem favourably disposed to go. He saw what he thought to be a loophole to get out of his responsibility. He paid his fare to Tarshish, but he was mistaken in thinking to get away from the presence of the Lord, because God could bring such experiences upon him as would test him, and force him to come to a definite decision, either to obey or disobey. After going through terrible experiences, as many of the people of God often did in olden times, Jonah learned the lesson, and prayed unto the Lord by reason of his affliction, and was heard and delivered. He was delivered after he came to that point in which he said, "I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord." (Jonah 2: 9.) So he went

with his message, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

Certainly it was not a very pleasant message; it was one that might bring him into reproach among a wicked people. May-be this was what he sought to avoid. But see how the people of Nineveh received his message. (Chapter 3: 5-10.) They repented, and brought forth works meet for repentance, and were therefore saved from the calamity which was preached against them.

Again we find Jonah displeased; he did not remember his disobedience or God's forgiveness of him. So God brought another experience upon him, in order to show him his foolishness. May we profit by Jonah's experience, and when a message is given us to deliver let us go forth willingly and deliver the message. A telegraph messenger goes with his message, knowing not what may be the consequence; he delivers his message, and leaves the rest with the receiver and sender. So if we deliver God's messages faithfully, we can truly leave the rest with God and the receiver; and if the receiver is in the right attitude of mind, we have the promise of God that the spirit of Truth will guide him into all Truth.

Evil Messages to Please the People

Now let us see what is the guiding principle of the evil messengers, as described in Ezek. 13: 2-7—"Prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts;" also Micah 3: 5, 11, 12—"The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us?" Thus we see it was either the imagination of their own heart, or else they wanted to be agreeable to the people or to make money, and only used the name of the Lord as a cloak.

We have referred to but a few messages and messengers of the Old Testament; we might refer if time would permit to many others; but now we will turn to the New Testament, and see the messages and messengers connected more especially with our day.

Angelic Messengers and Their Message

"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. . . . Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2: 10, 14.) With this message alone we might spend the whole of the day, and then not exhaust it; but, seeing there are others to follow, who will deal more minutely with the different messages, I must content myself by giving a brief outline of some of them. This is a good message, and yet, how little thought of: "On earth peace, good will toward men." This is the angelic message, and God's desire; yet how many who profess to have God's word at heart spurn the thought of good will toward men. Instead, in the imaginations of their own minds, they have made up an evil message and read it into the Scripture. Their message is quite contrary to God's message. Instead of peace and good will, they have pain and torment, both mental and physical, and that to all eternity. This is not in harmony with the rest of the message, nor with

any other portion of Scripture, and therefore it is evil. The message is good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.

Good Messages turned to Evil

There are three ways in which good messages may be turned into evil messages; first, by misquotation, and basing a false teaching on the altered reading; second, by misinterpretation of a passage correctly quoted; and third, by misapplying a passage to some other age or object than that intended.

One instance of misquotation is found in Heb. 9: 27. This passage is often read, It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment. How often is this verse used to exhort perishing sinners to come to Christ, to escape the awful judgment which is hanging over them, not knowing at which moment their future will be sealed, with no opportunity of a release. I am not saying this because exhortations to sinners to come to Christ are wrong, or because they do not need warnings, but for the reason that other Scriptures are more suitable to the purpose than this one; and besides, the punishment for sin, as will be shown by the address to follow, is not eternal torment.

Why not take the passage with its context, and see really what the Apostle is speaking about? If we read the chapter, we see that the Apostle is seeking to show that the sacrifices of the law are inferior to that of Christ. By leaving out that small word "as," Verse 27 is cut off from its context, and the failure to quote verse 28, "So Christ was once offered," leaves the sentence unfinished. Thus a passage which contains a message of hope and promise concerning the blessings to follow the death of Christ as the true sacrifice for sin is turned into an evil message—evil because it perverts the truth.

Messages Misconstrued

There are many instances where good messages are turned into evil ones by misconstruction. One of these is found in 2 Cor. 6: 2. If we read the verse with its context we see that it is a quotation from Isaiah 49: 8—"In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages, etc." This is a message of hope and blessing, following the opening of the New Covenant; for it speaks of the prisoners going forth, and of them in darkness showing themselves.

Satanic Misuse of Scripture

The third method of turning a good message into an evil one is illustrated by Satan's temptation of our Lord in the wilderness. Each time he was turned aside with, "It is written." So with the second temptation Satan adopts the outward form of adherence to God's Word, and also says, "It is written," making a correct quotation of Psalm 91: 11, but misapplying it to another object than God intended. It is this most subtle of all temptations that needs most to be guarded against, for Satan's messengers are still transformed into angels of light, and quote Scripture to serve their own ends.

Our Responsibility

We might turn to many other passages which, like these three, are turned into evil messages, when really they are good messages, but we can see from these few examples how to distinguish between the good and the evil. Is the message in harmony with the rest of the Scripture? If one verse says, "Behold now is the acceptable time," and another verse says, He "will have all men to be saved [or preserved], and come to a knowledge of the truth," we need to search the Scriptures and see who or what the passage is speaking about. May-be the message is written to Jews, or to unbelievers, or to Christians. The necessity of carefulness in these respects, is the reason the Apostle exhorts us to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen not needing to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2: 15.) No need to study heathen mythology, but the Scriptures, the word of truth. We might do a lot of study to no effect, but if we compare scripture with scripture, while seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the promise is that we shall be guided into all truth.

Our responsibility toward the Good Messages is described in John 5: 24—"He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life." The responsibility is in hearing and acting on what we hear. Also James 1: 22, 25—Be ye doers of the Word. Simply glancing at the Word now and then, like a man beholding his face in a glass, and straightway forgetting what he saw, is not enough. It must be constantly and faithfully *lived*, and its precepts and commands must be obeyed to the best of our ability, with His help.

We have also a responsibility to the Good Messages, to carry them further. The truth is not given to us that we may selfishly enjoy it, but that we may each of us become a messenger to carry the glad tidings to others still in ignorance of it: for the Lord commanded all His disciples to shine as lights in the world, and also said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

I trust we have now seen, from the few illustrations given, how to distinguish between good and evil messages, so that we may not be deceived by the subtlety and plausibility of the evil messages, but may understand and believe the good messages, and realize our responsibility to obey them and to help others to do the same.

—H. S.

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Is the Genesis Message Reliable

Re the Creation and Fall of Man; and What is the Significance of the Penalty for Sin there Pronounced?

BEFORE WE can answer the question as to whether the Genesis message is reliable or not, it will be necessary for us to read the record. We cannot form a judgment upon something which we know nothing about; we cannot come to a proper conclusion unless we consider the evidence.

The record of the creation of man is found in Gen. 1: 16-28.* This is a general statement. In the second chapter the creation of man is described in detail—how the man was formed of the dust of the ground, breath breathed into his nostrils, and he became a living being. Afterwards he was placed in the garden, to dress it and keep it, so that he was by no means meant to be idle. Then a command was laid upon him, in which was embraced Wisest Counsel and Ethical Instruction. Then the animals were brought before him, and he gave names to them all. And only after this was the woman created and brought and given to Adam to be his wife.

It is worthy of notice that there is not any opposition (not even by the serpent) to the account here given of man's creation, so that it stands by itself, without any opposition of the Adversary.

The closing verses of Chapter 2 are in complete harmony with the statement of Gen. 1: 26, 28. The newly created pair were of the same bone and flesh; that is, they were human beings as distinguished from the animals; they were to cleave to one another, and to both was given the dominion over the earth and all the animal creation.

We conclude that the Genesis account of creation is reliable because it is contained in the Scriptures of truth, written under inspiration of the Holy Spirit. There is no adequate reason why we should discard the Genesis account and accept other theories, ancient or modern, many of which are fantastic imaginations, while others appear to be but modified forms of the Genesis narrative. The Bible account is not only inspired, but it is the most reasonable, and the most in accord with facts as we know them to-day.

The Temptation and the Fall

We will now read the account of the Temptation and Fall of our first parents, found in Gen. 3: 1-24. Here is a record of how sin came in at the beginning, and how death came as a punishment for sin. Is this record reliable? We should say it is, for the same reason that the account of creation is reliable; namely, because it is found in an inspired Book, and because the truth of its statements is confirmed by other inspired utterances. Our Lord Himself referred to the "beginning," when Adam and Eve were the only married pair (Matt. 19: 4-6), and quotes

Gen. 2: 24. And Paul refers to the temptation by the serpent as an historical fact well known to his readers. (2 Cor. 11: 3.) The Lord and the Apostles had the Genesis record before them, and never cast doubt upon its reliability, but rather confirmed its truth.

What is the Significance of the Penalty for Sin There Pronounced?

In what we have just read, the great contest arises in the statement given by God, and in what the Serpent said, "Thou shalt surely die," on the one hand, and "Thou shalt not surely die," on the other.

As the outflowing teachings regarding the Immortality of the Soul, with its result in bliss or misery for all eternity, or purgatory with its misery for a limited time, all hang on, and stand or fall with, the truth or otherwise of the above statements, we will look at the root of the matter first, and then perhaps will be better able to deal with the branches.

In weighing up any statement, the character of the one who makes it must of very necessity be taken into consideration, because upon that very quality will the truth or otherwise of the statement depend.

It is therefore not without great signification that we get the character of the Serpent painted for us, with one living stroke, in Gen. 3. So let us examine that: "The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field." To be subtle is to be artful, crafty, cunning, treacherous. Subtlety is the application of knowledge, used always in a bad sense. Wisdom, on the other hand, is the practical application of knowledge, always in a good sense, for self and others.

The Significance of Character

The Creator's character, for wisdom and knowledge, for justice and truth, for goodness and mercy, is abundantly testified to in His Word, and in His works, as Deut. 32: 4; Dan. 2: 20; Prov. 3: 19, 20; Psa. 89: 14; 100: 3-5; 19: 1.

The Serpent's character is also given, in that brief and graphic statement already quoted. Its meaning is as true to-day as ever, and the Lord Jesus still further reveals the true character of the Adversary, who spoke through the serpent, and declares that, "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it." "He was a murderer from the beginning."—John 8: 44.

"When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own." What a great statement! When he speaks a lie, he holds it to be just the right thing to say. His mind has been so long engaged in deception, that to him a lie is the thing that's right; and he can speak of nothing else, for he himself is a liar, and the father of it.

What then remains for us to do? Shall we take into consideration the statement of one who has such a character as this? Shall we consider his words, as

* The reader is requested to read the passages cited from Genesis, they being omitted here to save space.—Ed.

if possibly there were a vestige of truth therein? Or shall we conclude that when one is *so positively and habitually a liar* any statement he makes can not reasonably be considered?

Why Believe a Lie?

If what he says is all lies, there is no vestige of truth therein, and so nothing at all for us to accept to our advantage. As in all courts of justice lying witnesses are held up to reproach, all their evidence put away, and they are dismissed, with at least heavy reproof, we will just do the same, and have nothing to do with either the lie or the father thereof.

As Satan's lying character is the very *root* of the statement "*Thou shalt not surely die*," the branches (the immortality of the soul, eternal torment, and so forth) all fall with the parent stem, so there is no need to try to bring to the ground that which is there already.

The Truth Spoken by God

The other statement (in direct opposition to Satan's lie) was, "*Thou shalt surely die*,"—Gen. 2: 17.

The manner in which man became alive was that breath was breathed into his nostrils, so he lived, became a living man, being or soul. And when the sentence was pronounced upon Adam, he was to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, till he went back to the ground from whence he was taken; as he was taken out of the dust, so he was to go back again.

If the man, made from dust, got life—the right or privilege to live—lost that right, by failing to comply with the conditions by which he might live, and went back again to the original position in the dust, what was left? If there was only dust at the beginning of the creation of man, then when he went back to the first position there was *nothing but dust*. There was nothing put into man, only breath, or the power to live by breathing. So when the breath of life departs, man dies. Death is simply the loss of life, the ceasing to live. Life is kept up, or sustained, by a breathing process. Death is a failure to keep the breath going. Death then seizes all man's powers, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot; thus nothing is left that death does not touch—Man surely dies.—Ezek. 18: 4, 32; Rom. 5: 12.

Witnesses to Truth of Genesis

At the mouth of two, or at the mouth of three witnesses shall every word be established. (Deut. 19: 15.) The word of God in Genesis is sufficient of itself to all who hold the Scriptures to be inspired. But He has used others besides Moses as His witnesses to record the truth; and so we find the Genesis account corroborated by other testifiers—the prophets, the twelve apostles and our Lord Himself.

We ask, Who is meant by "us," in Gen. 1: 26? And in reply John speaks, "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." (John 1: 1-3.) "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."—John 1: 14.

Again we ask, Who is the seed of the woman mentioned in Gen. 3: 15? And Paul as witness replies,

"Not as of many, but as of One. And to thy seed, which is Christ."—Gal. 3: 16.

Does Gen. 2: 7 correctly state that Adam was formed first? Paul answers, "Adam was first formed, then Eve."—1 Tim. 1: 13.

Was Adam deceived? Adam was not deceived.—1 Tim. 1: 14.

Is Death the Natural or Unnatural Order? (Compare Gen. 2: 7; 3: 17-19.) Paul testifies, "By one man sin entered, and death by sin."—Rom. 5: 12, 18, 19. Death therefore is the Unnatural Order introduced by sin.

What does the Seed of the Woman, Christ, do for us?

1. *John the Baptist*—"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."—John 1: 28.

2. *Paul*—"He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures."—1 Cor. 15: 3, 4.

3. *Paul*—He tasted death for every man.—Heb. 2: 9.

4. *Isaiah*—"He poured out His soul unto death."—Isa. 53: 12.

5. *Peter*—He died "that He might bring us to God."—1 Pet. 3: 18.

6. The whole Household of Faith testifies. Who are they?—See Rom. 5: 1 and 1 Cor. 15: 1-4.

7. The twelve apostles guarantee all this, and seal it with their testimony.—Rev. 21: 14.

8. The Prince of Life Himself, in His risen and glorified estate. (Rev. 21: 20.) "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore, and have the keys of hell (hades) and of death."—Rev. 1: 18.

All these bear testimony to the Scripture truth, how that Jesus *died* for our sins; and, unless we were *surely dead*, then there were not any need for Jesus (or any other) to die on our account.

The whole race of Adam is condemned to death, and there has been no withdrawal of that sentence; all mankind are witnesses to the fact that all die. No escape from death is possible except in the one way which God has provided, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus is the Father, or life-giver, to all of Adam's children who will accept Him as such, and walk in the pathway of obedience; which is the way of life.—1 Cor. 15: 22, 45, 47.

Regarding the popular teaching that those who have not surely died have gone to heaven—or somewhere else—the Lord Jesus at his first advent declared that there was no man in heaven. (John 3: 13.) Even King David, Peter said, was not in heaven, only dead and buried.—Acts 2: 29, 34.

Therefore it is abundantly attested that the Genesis account of the creation of man is entirely reliable, and that the signification of the sentence there pronounced is Death. In deed and in truth, man does surely die.

And yet there is Hope for man, and for that Hope we give to His great name our grateful song of praise. Amen.
—T. V. S.

Concerning God's Limited Dealings

In the Past in regard to Salvation; What is the Message?

OUR BROTHER has shown that the Genesis account of the creation and fall of man is reliable, and that the penalty for sin is death. He has shown that man of himself could never regain his lost estate. He could never redeem himself; nor could man redeem his brother. Such is the position and condition of man by nature—helpless and hopeless. Viewing him as such, we will consider God's message to him, the first reference to which we find in Gen. 3: 15—The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

That God's dealings with men in the past have been limited, is clear and significant. The Prophet Amos, one of God's messengers to Israel, is very emphatic on this point. "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O house of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3: 1, 2.) Could there be anything clearer than such a statement—"You only have I known of all the families of the earth"?

There appears to be nothing in the character of the family of Israel to indicate why God should so have favored them. Although God had been so gracious and patient with them, they have been described as a stiffnecked and rebellious people. It would be helpful, just here, to look back and see who this family is, and where they came from.

Passing over the period between the promise given in Eden and the Flood, we find in Gen. 9: 18 that of the three sons of Noah who went out of the ark one was named Shem.

Gen. 11: 10-27.—Of this man's descendants was one Terah, the father of Abram.

Verse 31.—Terah took Abram, his son, and Lot, the son of Haran, and Sarai, Abram's wife, and went forth out of the land of Ur of the Chaldees. From verse 28 it would appear that this was their home, their birthplace.

The Exclusive Message to Abraham

In this city, far away south-east of Canaan, on the great river Euphrates, we find Abram, to whom God sent a Messenger, with one of the most important and blessed messages the world has known:—

"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing."

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."—Gen. 12: 1-3.

Here we have Abram called out from his home and country to a land that was to be shown to him, and God would bless him and make of him a great nation. This, to a man like Abram, in his day, would be a most desirable thing—of itself a great blessing. But the chief part of this promise was that which follows; viz., "In thee shall all families of the earth

be blessed." It was good indeed to receive the blessing for himself and his family; but to be the channel of blessing to all the families of the earth, was more than could then be fully understood or appreciated.

Doubtless God foresaw in Abram the man of faith that we now know him (from the Scriptures) to have been. And so Abram obeyed the call, and came away from the land of his nativity, and into the promised land he came. But not before he had tarried on the road at Haran; where, we read, he stayed till the death of his father.

In the land of Canaan Abram had little or no rest. Famine in the land caused him to go down to Egypt, and here he cannot rest; for back he comes again to Canaan. Even here trouble follows on trouble. His nephew Lot has become rich in cattle and sheep. The herdmen of Lot and Abram are constantly quarrelling, and this is a cause of trial to Abram, till he and Lot part. Lot casts his eyes on the well watered plains of the Jordan, and leaving Abram, settles down there.

Now we have Abram alone with his own family and substance—left for God to deal with. This seems to be the finish of the command or call given to him away in Ur of the Chaldees. Lot seems to be the last of the kindred from whom the Lord had called him to come away.

Abraham's Faith in the Promise

Once more God speaks to Abram; we will read it. (Gen. 13, from verse 14.) Here again God promises to make of him a great nation. This renewal of the promise seems a fresh training and testing to Abram, for up to this time he has no child. Of this Abram makes mention to God.—Gen. 15: 2.

Now a definite promise is given him, that he is to have a son. (Gen. 17: 1-5.) When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord God appears to him, repeats the promise to him of being the father of nations, and changes his name from Abram to Abraham, meaning the father of a multitude. Sarai's name is changed to Sarah, meaning the mother of nations. (Verse 15.) Still they have no son. Again (Chap. 18) the Messengers of God renew the promise of a son who is to be the heir to the blessings promised. After twenty-five years of waiting, this son of promise is born, Abraham being now one hundred years old.

When Isaac has grown to manhood Abraham experiences the greatest trial of his life. (Gen. 22: 1-3.) The Lord calls upon Abraham to take this only son, so long promised, and on whom so much depends—him through whom the promises are to be fulfilled—to take him and offer him for a burnt offering on a mount to be shown to him.

It would surely be pardonable if Abraham had resisted such a demand, and reminded God of his promise in this their only son.

But no: Verse 3 tells us he rose up early in the morning, and took his son Isaac, and all that was necessary for the offering; and when the time came he bound his son on the altar, and was in the act of

plunging the knife into him when the voice from heaven checked him just in time. As for Abraham, he had in heart offered him, and now received him back from death in a figure.—Heb. 11: 17-19.

Once again the messenger of God comes and speaks from heaven, repeating the message of blessing, the promise of blessing to all families of the earth, and confirms it with an oath.—Gen. 22: 15-19; Heb. 6: 13-18.

Finally, we read the account of Abraham's death (Gen. 25: 7-10), and here we will leave Abraham, in whom all our study has thus far been centred; for it appears he is the one man with whom God has been dealing, in respect of his promise to bless all mankind, for a period of over one hundred years.

God's Dealing with Isaac

In the life of Isaac we see many experiences similar to his father Abraham's. He is in trouble through a famine, and is preparing to go down to Egypt, notwithstanding the trouble Abraham experienced there. But the Lord prevents him, renewing the promise made to his father. (Gen. 26: 1.) Here again the Lord is dealing with one man, while he refers to the blessing of all nations. Even the Philistine king Abimelech saw that the Lord was dealing with Isaac in a special manner, for (chap. 26: 28) he and some of his chief men came to Isaac and asked for a covenant to keep peace between them, because the people of Abimelech strove for certain wells of water which Isaac's men found by digging. All these experiences were troubles fitting Isaac for some part in God's great plan, a part which may not have been understood in his days, but was to be of use later on to those who would read the history recorded in the Scriptures. This would be true of the son of Isaac also, him to whom this special favor was to descend.

To Isaac were born two sons. The first was named Esau, the second Jacob. Of these two men—from what we know of their early lives—we are not attracted to Jacob at all: while his brother Esau has in a number of instances acted in a way that calls for our admiration. However, God, who sees not as man sees, has chosen Jacob as the one through whom He will some day fulfil the promise made away back in Eden, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.

So Jacob, after passing some years in a distant part of the country, to which he had to fly from his brother whom he had wronged—years of vexation and disappointment—learned lessons which in after life were helpful to him, and to others who would know of them. By these trials and disciplines he was qualified to be included in the list of faithful ones that we read of in Hebrews 11, who all died in faith.

In Jacob we have come to the last of the individual persons through whom God has been operating as heirs of the promise. A famine in the land is again the cause of men looking to Egypt, where they hear there is corn. So Jacob goes down to Egypt, and settles there with his family. Here he remains with his twelve sons till they grow and become a great nation. Although the Egyptians oppress them, and try to keep them down, God, who had never forsaken them, heard their cry (Exod. 11: 24), and sent Moses, who became their deliverer. He under God's guidance leads the oppressed people out of Egypt, back

to the land of promise. On the way many wonderful and instructive events transpire, each of which has been helpful to them, and also to others following, even to us to-day, enabling us to see the wonderful way in which God has been working out His own plan for the great blessings long promised.

After the wonderful deliverance of this people from the land of their powerful oppressors, and after passing through many trials and testings, referred to in the records of their journeyings, they are found at Mount Sinai, where God deals with them in a way never before known.

God communicates with them through Moses, and covenants with them to bless them if they will keep His commandments and obey all His will. He even makes provision for the repentant rebels. After warning them lest they wander away from Him, He says, I will remember my covenant made with Jacob, Isaac and Abraham. (Lev. 26: 42-46.) Even when in the land of their captors, whither their sins had brought them, the Lord still follows them, and says, "I am the Lord their God."

In Deut. 7: 1, the Lord singles the people of Israel out from all others. In verses 6 to 9 He speaks of them as a holy people unto the Lord. He chose them not for their numbers or greatness, but because He set His love upon them, and because He would keep the oath He had sworn to their fathers. In Deut. 10: 15 He says He chose them above all people.

They are surely a spectacle as they are led along from Sinai, during forty years of wanderings in a barren wilderness; being fed from heaven, their shoes and clothes not wearing out. But God, who has chosen them, sustains them all through this barren place; finally driving out seven nations stronger than they, and settling them in the land of Canaan, where He watches over them to supply all their needs.

Here they remain till their sins of idolatry and disobedience cause God to permit heathen nations to carry them away, to destroy their beautiful temple, and carry all belonging to it to idol temples in heathen lands—all this, and that visible token of God's presence, the cloud above the temple, the Shekinah—all gone.

Has God Forgotten

Has God given up the idea of the blessing He promised in Eden, and began to develop in Abraham, and on through his sons? No! Surely the Lord God who had sworn by an oath, that he would perform all that he had spoken, is waiting patiently; and thus in the fulness of time we read, The shepherds were feeding their flocks by night, when, after the long silence the voice from heaven is once more heard, and the same message comes fresh from God: Luke 2: 8-11—Behold I bring good tidings, which shall be to all people: for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

When Herod sought to know from the priests and scribes where the promised Messiah should be born (Matt. 2: 3-6), they referred him to the Prophet Micah. (5: 2.) "Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings have been from of old, from everlasting."

The Messiah Found

So we find this promised Seed of Abraham, through whom the blessing was to come. We read in Gal. 3: 16, Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ.

When Adam fell through disobedience, he brought down the whole race with him into death, so that the race may be looked upon as dead—"dead in sin"; such has God been considering them. Having dealt with them in the one man Adam (Rom. 5: 12), "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

But, "As in Adam all die, even so, in Christ, shall all be made alive." "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 Cor. 15: 21; 1 John 2: 2.) The Son of man came to give His life a ransom, a corre-

sponding price. This price He paid to redeem the race lost in death.—Matt. 20: 28; 1 Tim. 2: 4-6; 1 Pet. 1: 19.

May we not see here why God's dealings in the past in regard to salvation have been limited? It was one man that brought death into the world, and God dealt with that one man. So it was only one man that was necessary and able to redeem from death. But none was found able till the long promised Seed came, the One of whom the angelic messengers brought the news to the shepherds—good news to all people.

Here I will leave this precious subject, for further dealing, to other brethren—trusting that we may be among that special class who are spoken of as *in Christ Jesus*, who acknowledge Him as the Seed of blessing, that we may be heirs with Him in the Kingdom of Glory, to reign with Him and join in the blessing of all the families of the earth.—Gal. 3: 29; 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12; Rom. 8: 17. —W. H. O.



The Message for Our Day

WE HAVE had the pleasure to-day of hearing something of the Messages and Messengers from the Lord, and now we come to consider the message for our own day. If we take "our day" to be the Gospel age, in which the message of salvation through Christ has gone forth, we find that we have been favored with the greatest of all messages, by the greatest of the messengers, the Lord of all the other messengers, the Prince of Life and Glory, whom the prophets foretold as, "The Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in." And truly our delight is in Him, and in all His messages to us. And our delight is also in the High Calling which He has opened to us, that we might follow in His footsteps.

But coming down to our own particular day, say the last hundred years and the immediate future, we find that there are messages due to us of a special kind. Having come to the close of the age, we must expect that the Lord will give us the light suited to the times, just as He gave it to the Jews and to the Patriarchs in their day, as our brother has explained to us. Like all the messages from God, they require to be thoroughly looked into, that we might have the real understanding of them.

First, then, the Christian should look well about him, so as to find out just where he is, and in what manner he should conduct himself, in a world he has found to be opposed to himself, and especially to the Lord and the Scriptures. He should know what he believes, why he believes, and the present position concerning the messages due to be understood by the faithful watchers.

He should meditate upon and put in practice those messages which tell him what sort of person he

ought to be. He should see that there is a clear cut distinction between the spirit of his mind and that of the world. He should not only see that he is just, but that all he does is in the spirit of love.

In our day, as in past ages, both good and evil messages are given out, and we are under necessity to make choice between them: and not only between good and evil messages, but between good and evil messengers. There was never a day when error was more subtle or the messengers of error more seductive than to-day. Before considering the Lord's message for our time, we might glance hastily at a few modern delusions which serve to distract attention from the divine truth.

One of the most popular of these delusions is that which afflicts the worldly man, and that is self-righteousness—imagining that he can be acceptable to God without the need of a Saviour, and that he is as "good" as the professing Christians before spoken of; who should be just as well as loving in all their dealings.

The worldly man also recognises justice and boasts of it; but he generally sees to it that it is just to himself; and that is where his justice usually begins and ends—at Self. We have to be particular about the meanings of words. To be "just" is grand and beautiful. To-day everybody says he wants to be just, and tries to do everything to the best of his ability. But what a delusion to think that any fallen being can be absolutely just! How can the scales that are off the true balance be just? But still, say they, we can be as just as we know how. Just so; but one small injustice, perhaps, will do more harm than all their just acts of a life time will do good.

Another delusion—Psychical Research; a thing that is gaining ground, and which professes to be searching to define the soul or spirit of man. By this means thousands are drawn away into vain and even injurious experiments, and away from the study of the Scriptures, where full information on the subject is already given. Psychical Research is, in fact, only Spiritism in disguise.

Then there are the Wonderful Scientific Discoveries of our day. Many of them are very useful in manufacture, medicine, the arts, etc. Other discoveries of Science are interesting enough, as explaining the constituent elements of various substances, and showing how various substances act when subjected to heat or cold. But Science is a delusion and a snare when it attempts to explain life, and even to create it, in order to disprove the truth of the Bible. Men say, How wonderful! and fall down and worship this delusion.

It is true that there have been in late years many marvellous mechanical inventions, but it is well to remember that after all there is not so much in them as may at first appear. They only enable us to deal with the same subject by a different method. We still only cook our dinner; now, perhaps by gas, or in another kind of stove not known to our ancestors, but the dinner is cooked, and there is the end of it.

At the same time, we are told so often, that we are living in such a superior age, that we are much more wise than our fathers. And what does it all amount to? Nothing has yet been invented to heal men of sin, or to abolish death, or to cure the appalling poverty and distress in which the majority of our race still live.

Again, Higher Criticism—a something that would have us believe that the Scriptures are anything but inspired, yet it has nothing to give us in their place but man's speculations.

It behoves us then as Christians to be circumspect in our walk of life, and see that we discriminate correctly between carnal and spiritual things. We may well dismiss from our minds all these delusive speculations, and turn to the good things of the spirit of God, for there alone can we learn the truth concerning our day and its message.

The question then arises, How are we to know that our conclusions are right?

It has already been shown how to know the true from the false, how to distinguish an evil message from a good message. It can only be done by God's Word, that being the key, the touchstone by which all truths can be valued, and all untruths made bare.

"Wars and Rumours of Wars"

We have already spoken of three great delusions of our time, but there are two other misconceptions that are worthy of our special attention, because they affect many Christians who are deeply interested in the Lord's Second Coming, and prevent them recognizing some of the true messages of our time. These are, a misunderstanding of the Prophecy of Matthew 24, concerning the signs of His presence, and of 1 Thes. 5: 3, concerning the coming of "the day of

the Lord." Both these passages contain good messages, but by misinterpretation they are turned into misleading, or evil, messages.

Recently there was held in Melbourne a Conference of the churches, concerning the Second Coming of our Lord. The one thing that seemed most prominent in all the addresses was that "Wars and rumours of wars" were a sign of the near approach of the Second Advent. Had the speakers given a little more attention to our Lord's words, they would have seen that they have failed to conceive their import.

The Lord did *not* say that wars and rumours of wars were to be indications of the end of the age. He said, "Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but *the end is not yet.*" "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the *beginning* of sorrows." (Matt. 24: 6-8.) This language implies the very opposite to what is generally considered to be our Lord's meaning. Wars and rumours of wars were to be characteristic of the entire age, and the Lord's people were not to be alarmed or to consider them as anything but what might be expected in an evil world. His presence was to be otherwise indicated; the disciples were to watch for the sign in the "heavens," and He mentions a number of events by which His presence would be recognized by the faithful watchers.

The message for our times may be taken from the words of the Lord of the messengers, as found in Matt. 24: 29-33. This message was given in response to the question asked in Verse 3. Our Lord seems to have taken the opportunity of giving the history of the Church Age, and to have put special stress on the last portion.

It seems to me that our portion commences at verse 29—"Immediately after the tribulation of those days." This seems to be the tribulation of the Church, during the 1260 days, or years, mentioned in Dan. 12: 7, which would end about 1798-9. From that time the Bible has been translated and printed into almost every language.

We have known of many great men thought to be Christian lights (stars) fallen from that position. The spiritual controlling powers (the "heavens") have indeed been shaken, to such an extent and in such a manner as was never before dreamt of. And the "sign of the Son of man" has been seen in the "heavens," while the "elect" are being gathered together "from one end of heaven to the other." This work of gathering corresponds with the "harvest" mentioned in the parable of "the Tares of the Field," concerning which the Lord said, "The harvest is the end of the age."—Matt. 13: 30, 39.

"The Sign of the Son of Man"

All this seems to point to one thing, which is really and truly the "sign" by which we may know where we are and what is the special message for our day. That sign I believe to be the consumption of the "beast" of Dan. 7: 11. This is not to be understood as saying that the slaying is to be done instan-

tauously, but rather that the slaying is a process of consuming by His presence, as explained in 2 Thess. 2: 8—"whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His presence."—See R.V. margin.

The "Beast" and "Antichrist"

The question may be asked, "Who, or what, is this beast?" "Is the beast anti-Christ?"

In a vision the apostle saw a beast rise up out of the sea. (Rev. 13: 1.) This "beast" received from the "dragon" his power and seat and great authority, he had a great mouth speaking blasphemies, and he had power to make all that dwell on the earth to worship him. (Rev. 13: 2-8.) From the description we are able to recognize the "beast" of Rev. 13 as identical with Daniel's fourth beast, "dreadful and terrible," after the development of the "little horn." (Dan. 7: 8.) In chapter 13: 18 the beast is again mentioned, but with a number added for his better recognition. His number is the number of a man.

Has there ever been a man that would answer to all that is said of the system? No. Neither can there be one in the future, because nearly all that he was to do has been done, as can be read in this 13th chapter. But has there been a system that will answer to the characteristics of this "beast"? Yes: the Papacy: all that is written here has been fulfilled in that system. Again, the Papacy is the anti-Christ. "Who is the liar (Diaglott), but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" (1 John 2: 22.) The Papacy supports the doctrine of the Trinity. Now the Trinity denies that Jesus is the Christ, by teaching that Christ is very God. Christ means "anointed." God did not anoint Himself, but one inferior to Himself; that is, His Son Jesus. "He is anti-Christ, that denieth the Father and the Son." According to logical reasoning, they deny the Father by calling Him the Son, and they deny the Son, by calling Him the Father.—See 2 John 7, 9 (Diaglott); John 15: 10.

The Times We are Living In

If we get these facts properly in mind, that there is a system, which is bad, altogether unrighteous; that it is to be destroyed and utterly consumed; then locate that system: is it being consumed? Does it answer to the description in the Scriptures? Yes! Then we know the times we are living in. We are living in the times of our Lord's presence. (Matt. 24: 30.) "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven" (the region of spiritual control, or influence over men's minds). All who see that the power of the Papacy as a politico-religious system has been curtailed since Napoleon's interference with the Pope, one European country after another refusing to recognize the Pope as Universal Sovereign, may see that the "beast" is being consumed, and that the Lord Jesus in His Second Presence is superintending that consumption. They may also see, as the consumption proceeds, the dwindling of the Papacy's power over men in their religious beliefs.

At the same time the tribes of the earth are to

mourn, not because they see the Lord sitting on a literal cloud in the sky, but because "clouds" symbolize trouble. And are not men mourning even now; their hearts failing them for fear? Yes. But is there anything besides trouble facing us? Yes. There is one other thing, to us, and when I say us, I mean, to all those that are watching for His appearing, and can read these signs of the times aright. That thing is a most glorious future, for we know that whatever trouble comes there is to follow it a beautiful peace, when Christ shall reign indeed, when there shall be righteousness on earth instead of sin.

"Peace and Safety"

We have spoken of peace, the peace which the Lord Jesus will bring, for He is to cause all war to cease to the ends of the earth. (Isa. 2: 4.) The peace which we as Christians look forward to is the true and only peace, that which all Christians have prayed for, since our Lord taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come." But before then there is to be another kind of peace, a false peace, as described in 1 Thes. 5: 3—"When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh." There is to be a peace which will be the forerunner of "sudden destruction."

I think we have well entered the peace period of 1 Thes. 5: 1-3. Not that there is real peace in the earth, but that it is being more and more discussed as a desirable thing. We have the Peace Society and its branches, and we hear much of conciliation boards and arbitration courts. Yet the War party seems to do more than the Peace party to keep peace. The War party seems to be the louder of the two, for they say, By being well prepared, well armed, with all the latest weapons of destruction, one nation is afraid of another; a nation will be afraid to proclaim war, because it is so expensive, and the end is uncertain; therefore to be well armed will ensure a greater probability of peace than anything else could.

Now I think we are in the "peace" time, but not quite in the "safety" time, although I also think that is near. Seeing then that these things bring us so near the end, what term would be most appropriate to express ourselves in? None other than the words of our Lord, "When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."—Matt. 24: 33.

Here it is then upon us, it is knocking, it is waiting; the time is fulfilled; and then—

As Christians, what are we to do? Sit still? No. Are we to say anything about the Lord's presence? I should think so; and much, in season and out of season. Not, perhaps, that our speaking or not speaking will alter the facts of the case, but we are witnesses of God. It then behoves us to encourage, to help, to stir up one another, that we may be alive to our position; not to busy ourselves with other people's affairs, we have enough of our own; but to stir them up in the godly affairs, and in all things to be patient, humble, and to the end faithful. —S. S. W. B.

The Trumpet of the Lord

The trumpet of the Lord of hosts re-echoes and resounds
Through Christendom's wide realms. It calls to arms! for
valiant men!

For men with hearts afire with zeal for equity and truth,
Who dare denounce in places high the practices which men
of lower caste must shun, or feel the righteous hand of Law;
Who dare espouse the right of every man and woman, child
And beast, to all of nature's gifts which God
At first prepared in bounty for the race.

The trumpet of the Lord resounds! It calls to arms! to arms!
But who will heed? Will he whose god is Gold turn from
his shrine,

With open ear, and heart, and hand, for poverty's release?
Or will he, heedless, worship till the multitudes upheave,
And parting earth and falling walls his temple's doom
declare?

Will he whom Fame or Pleasure crowns with laurels leave
his throne,

Reveal himself as but a humble man, with heart of flesh?
Will he love others more than self? Or will he boast him-
self

in worthless leaves, until even witless fools his choice deride?
Will he whom Poverty embitters purify his heart,
And cleanse the sphere of his control, lest he be found
condemned

Of faults more heinous than frivolity? Or will he prove
That Selfishness arrays him, too, against the King of kings?

The trumpet of the Lord of hosts resounds afar and near!
In vain the nations rage; in vain the kings sound their
alarms

To drown its voice; in vain the rich and mighty cry out
"Peace!"

In vain the wise men rummage in their varied stores, and
dole

Out "wisdom," "prudence," new in styles and brands, to
attract and please

The gaping crowds; in vain the doctors of society

Their pleasant, palliative pills bestow on patients off

Unwilling; in vain the timid huddle, like a flock

Of frightened sheep expecting mercy at the fangs of
wolves.

The trumpet of the Lord resounds! The forces mobilize!
Come, heed the call! For each must signify his choice
between

The old regime of Selfishness and that which, based on Love,

The King of kings inaugurates. Awake! for subtle are

The machinations of the Arch-deceiver of mankind,

And mighty is the power of Selfishness to blind the mind

And dull the ear of him not yet instructed in the art

Of reading present issues in the light of prophecy.

But he who leans his heart to understanding, and forsakes

The crowded thoroughfares of Self and Mammon, shall

be led

Upon the narrow path of righteousness and truth, and find

The mighty, secret fortress from whose gates ere long shall

pour

The valiant hosts and flying banners of the Conqueror!

—R. B. H.



The Glorious Message of Salvation in the Future Age

WE HAVE been hearing many things to-day as
impressive as they have been instructive.

What has impressed us most, perhaps, is
the kindness of God in sending us any messages at
all.

Surely it is true that we would have been where
the heathen are to-day—in the grossest ignorance and
superstition—had not God chosen to enlighten us by
His messengers.

The sending of His Son as His Chief Messenger
with the chief message places His love and care for
the race beyond all doubt or gainsaying.

The last speaker has been dealing with our own
times, the Message for our Day, but the widest appli-
cation of this subject would embrace the whole his-
tory of the race since the beginning. For there has
been one outstanding feature of human life on the
earth since Adam; viz., it has been steeped in Sin;
the times have been evil times.

Sin has permeated every phase and feature of hu-
man life, and has worked out death in our members,
so that the apostle says:—

"Sin entered into the world, and death by sin."

Had God had no plans or purposes for us, but
had turned us adrift to follow our own course, we
can now see that before a great deal of time had
passed there would be a conclusion of human life on

the earth because it is under the power of Sin and
is dying.—Gen. 2: 17, margin.

The processes of Sin are not constructive but de-
structive, and the logical conclusion of all life under
it must be annihilation.

The "power to live" which was given to the first
pair was very great indeed, so that it has taken many
centuries of time, even under Sin, to reduce its length
to what it is to-day.

If a man did not live to be 500 years or so in ante-
diluvian times, he is counted as having died young.
But if a man reaches 100 years in these times we
think he has done marvellously.

When the present average length of life is considered
however, we begin to see how deep is the pit into
which we have fallen. Thirty-five years, at the most,
is the average length of life to-day; in the early cen-
turies succeeding the Fall it lay between fifteen and
twenty-five times greater.

These are the plain facts of this aspect of human
history.

What are we to conclude chiefly on this evidence?
This: That nothing is permanent under Sin; that
Sin cannot be the basis of an everlasting kingdom,
nor can Sin in anyway be connected with such a
kingdom.

We are glad to say that it is not God's purpose to
allow all life to terminate in the way indicated, but

rather that He will by direct interference *bring* the "times we live in" to a termination.

God is interested in this world's affairs—very interested—and is causing events so to shape themselves as to work out His own purposes for the world's people. His plans will involve the people in unspeakable sufferings, with great loss of life, because He will allow all the present kingdoms and governments to be swallowed up of (world-wide) anarchy.—Rev. 19: 17-21.

He will do all this as part of the process of crushing out sin and the overthrow of the power of an all-but-supreme Ruler whose name is associated therewith. Also for the purpose of introducing something better; better than has been known hitherto of kingdoms and governments.

We are not to understand that the termination of the times we live in will affect the earth itself or any of the heavenly bodies disastrously. Rather than this, the earth itself and the heavenly bodies will be needed, and more urgently than now if possible, for another world-wide kingdom is to be set up in the earth, and it shall "endure forever."—Dan. 2: 35, 44.

Satan has had a grand time during the tenure of the four world-wide kingdoms of Dan. 2, having taken hold of the minds and hearts of men so that the "whole world lieth in the wicked one." (1 John 5: 19.) But he is to be deposed from his present place of power when the Kingdom begins to be set up in power and authority and when the Lord Jesus, whose right it is, will rule, with His joint heirs, the victorious Church, who will be associated with Him in the great and honorable work of setting up the Kingdom—the endurable Kingdom, the Kingdom that shall never be superseded by another.

If as it has been stated, this kingdom is to endure forever, then it is perfectly clear that it must be established on a basis which is, according to the Divine law, permanent in itself.

We have seen that Sin cannot be the basis of a permanent kingdom, for Sin is opposition to God and the laws of which He is the source. Its penalty, moreover, is, in the Divine order, death. So there could be no permanency in a kingdom where Sin reigned—no matter to how slight a degree.

Sin cannot therefore be a constituent part of the Kingdom; neither can death, for death is connected with sin, and is indeed the chief evidence of its power.

We are not to understand that only the grosser forms of sin are here meant, but the more refined forms also, even to the finest ramifications of which it is capable.

Men must not only not "*do*," they must not *think* wrongly. In the kingdom which is to endure, *righteousness* must be so fixed in the nature of each individual member that evil thoughts (much less evil deeds) cannot, simply *cannot*, be the outcome of the life processes.

That is to say, Sin and every tendency thereto must have been so far removed from the centre of all thought and action in each individual, and righteousness so fully and firmly fixed in its place, as that the ordinary processes of thinking, speaking and doing will be good and not in any degree evil.

We have this stated in the wonderfully forceful and clear language of our Lord in Matt. 7: 17, 18.

The business of the Future Age is to grant all people an opportunity to become "good." Those who succeed in reaching such a state of blessedness will not and cannot while they remain as "good trees" bring forth evil fruit in thoughts or actions. Or, as it may be otherwise stated—

Anything and everything which is opposed to the Divine Laws, and which in itself so re-acts on the physical, mental and moral processes as to influence them unfavorably; that is, in the direction of death, cannot be in a kingdom which is to endure.

With our knowledge of the fact, then, that evil has permeated all things, reaching to the extremist limits of the functions of life, we come to see what the Kingdom of God on Earth, when fully established, is to be:

Widely and Wonderfully Different

from anything that has been known hitherto—if we except the Edenic conditions at the beginning.

We see also something of what is to be done by Jesus and His associated joint heirs in the future age; for this age is designed for the purpose of accomplishing Perfection in all the details of human life by clearing out Sin and all its consequences.

Now it is quite plain that if a thousand years are allotted for the work of perfecting humanity, it is not going to be accomplished by a sudden stroke. (Rev. 20: 4.) It is also clear that the subjects themselves will have to put forth effort, otherwise so great a time would not be required.

Hence we see that the Kingdom of God, although represented in Jesus and His joint heirs, and the perfected worthies of the past age, will not be on the earth in the fullest and strictest sense, until the Lord Jesus has by His reign brought about perfection in the race; until all enemies have been put under His feet, and until He has delivered up that Kingdom to the Father.

Our Lord Jesus will begin to put His enemies "under his feet" very early in the Kingdom reign.

Next to Satan who is to be bound (Rev. 20: 2), and ultimately destroyed (Heb. 2: 14), the two principal enemies are Death and Sin.—1 John 3: 8.

The death which is a legacy from our first parents will be destroyed, inasmuch as all are to be taken out of it, and it shall have no more power over any.

Death Swallowed up Victoriously

The purpose to raise the dead has, like all of His plans, been in God's mind from the beginning, and was early intimated to Moses, when in connection with the incident of the burning bush He said—"I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," notwithstanding the patriarchs had been dead for hundreds of years.—Exod. 3: 16.

Our Lord comments upon these words when refuting the Sadducean belief that there was to be no resurrection. (Luke 20: 27; Acts 23: 8.) He says—

"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto Him."—Luke 20: 38.

The Saviour tells the Sadducees that they were in error in denying the resurrection, for so certainly will it come to pass, that God himself speaks of the dead patriarchs as though they were alive. The Apostle Paul alludes to God's method of reckoning in connection with the promise of a seed to Abraham because He called him, "a father of many nations," while he

was yet as good as dead (Rom. 4: 19; 17), the nations being at the time non-existent—"who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not [*i.e.*, which do not exist] as though they were [existing]." (Rom. 4: 17.) Thus a principle is established which should always be borne in mind when other similar Scriptures are being considered.

But the Pharisees (who believed in the resurrection) advanced a telling argument against the Sadducean idea. They said that God had promised all that land to Abraham and to his seed for an everlasting possession. (Gen. 13: 15; 15: 18; 17: 8); yet Abraham died there without having owned so much as would support the sole of one of his feet. (Acts 7: 4, 5.) This was known to the Sadducees.

Therefore, the Pharisees rightly argued that if God is to fulfil His promise to Abraham He must raise him from the dead and grant him his goodly portion in the land where he may dwell forever.

But this question of raising the dead should be forever settled by the direct statement of Paul in Acts 24: 15—

"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

The Work of the Kingdom Age

That the work of raising the dead is part of the operations of the Kingdom Age is intimated in John 5: 28, 29—

"... the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment."

The "hour" was not then, nor after His resurrection, nor even immediately after His ascension, nor yet at Pentecost. As the Saviour was speaking of the literal dead, and not here referring to the figuratively dead in "trespasses and sins," this resurrection could not be until after the work of taking out a "people for His name" had been done.—Acts 15: 14.

The resurrection of them "that have done evil" is particularly referred to in Matt. 25: 31, 32—

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, ... then ... before him shall be gathered all nations."

In the Revelation we have it plainly stated that the nations that are to be "gathered" consist not only of those living when the time for the "gathering" comes, but also of all those in the dust of the earth as well.—Rev. 5: 11-13; 15: 4; 20: 12.

It is stated that there is a time coming when all nations shall be gathered before him. When is that time? "When the Son of man shall come in his glory"; that is, at the second advent (Mark 8: 38; Rev. 20: 11, 12), or the beginning of the Future Age.

It is to be noted that His angels or messengers are to come with Him "in His glory." This is a clear reference to His joint heirs—the victorious Church; for they are the ones who are promised a share in His glory. (2 Thess. 2: 14; 1 Pet. 5: 10.) It is evidence that they will be raised and glorified while yet "those that have done evil" are lying in the grave. The same is to be said of the Worthy Ancients who have received a good report through faith (Heb. 11) and are therefore amongst the good.

Consistency therefore requires us to take the view that the "nations" of Matt. 25 are composed of those

who have not, for various reasons, had an opportunity in the past or the present age.

The Scriptural language with regard to them is that they are "evil"—evil in the sense that they are not raised amongst the good. This is a resurrection distinctly of the unenlightened millions, many of which will be glad to embrace the blessings vouchsafed; but some will not—there will be some goats—and thus the two classes (sheep and goats) will be developed.

The Truth Spread Abroad

Before the final disposition of the resurrected millions is made they are first to be invited to a great "feast."

"And in this mountain (Kingdom—Dan 2: 35, 44) shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines, ... of fat things full of marrow."—Isa. 25: 6.

This "feast" is to be spread out, in an abundance never before known, before all nations throughout the entire age.

The wine of true doctrine will flow freely, while all the good things which the Lord of Hosts provides will be free to all. "Rise up then and drink," is the invitation, "eat;" appropriate all His bountiful provision to yourselves.

"Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. ... Come, ... eat, ... buy wine and milk, without money and without price."—Isa. 55: 1.

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, ... proceeding out of the throne of God. ..."—Rev. 22: 1.

"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."—Rev. 21: 6.

"And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. 22: 17.

"Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear and your soul shall live."—Isa. 55: 3.

That is the invitation; that is the feast. It is a fat feast. It will not be of the lean kind that the nations have been getting for centuries past in the various heathen religions, nor yet the Christianity of to-day with its conflicting creeds and God-dishonoring doctrines. The "wine" will be "well refined" of all error and given out in abundance, "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea," and "in that day there shall be a root of Jesse which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it ["him," literally] shall the Gentiles seek—Hallelujah!—Isa. 11: 9, 10.

Fully conscious of God's mercy in raising them from the dead, and of His provision of the great feast to which they all will have been *freely* invited, and that if they "hear" (obey) they shall live, the resurrected millions in a spirit of praise and thankfulness are prophetically described as saying—

"Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, ... We will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."—Isa. 25: 9.

Righteousness and Life

By thus prophetically indicating the Spirit which will take possession of the millions of that time, does not the prophet show us that they are now coming to see that whereas sin signifies death (of which they have had experience) righteousness signifies life? Are they not learning that continued life is only possible by full obedience to the Divine Laws; and that they

so appreciate "his salvation" that they are turning towards things that are right and consequently turning from things that are wrong?

An acknowledgment of the goodness of God and a spirit of thankfulness and appreciation of His favours toward them are certainly a new attitude for the nations to take, and are essential to their reform.

We are bound to say that the initiatory work of fixing righteousness in their characters has begun. They are becoming members of the Kingdom; have started on their probationary course, which, if continued in, will end in the goal set before them—perfect holiness.

So far as the individual is concerned this alone is the foundation on which the Permanent Kingdom can rest, and that is it which God is determined to have in each kingdom member.

Isaiah says that the people "will learn" in that day—

"When thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."—Isa. 26: 9.

Now whether these candidates for eternal life, these aspirers after holiness, are sincere at heart or not, will soon be manifest in outward acts.

If they are in full sympathy with the King and the Kingdom work, they will begin forthwith to display His spirit in acts of kindness and love to their neighbours. This is figuratively expressed, and perhaps with a considerable amount of literalness, too, in Matt. 25, as feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, being kind to strangers, etc.

The absence of any such acts of kindness and love would prove them out of sympathy with the King and the Kingdom work; would, in fact, show them in the unfavorable light of rebels against the Divine Government.

Anyone who could, or would, under the circumstances and conditions of the Kingdom Age, *persist* in a course of evil would show thereby such an incurable perversity of disposition and hardness of heart as to fully merit the condemnation of the Righteous Judge.

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25: 41, 46); "... punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. (2 Thess. 1: 9.) "The wicked shall be (re)turned into hell" (Psa. 9: 17), for "all the wicked will he destroy."—Psa. 145: 20.

Elimination of Sin

In these passages there is also a plain intimation of what is to be the main feature of the work of the Kingdom Age. It is the elimination of sin.

In this process no effort will be made to coerce the will, but because the truth will be abroad throughout the whole earth each will know fully what the effect of persistent disobedience will be.

He who fails to benefit by the corrective stripes which will be administered (Luke 12: 47, 48) will himself be "eliminated" from the Kingdom and utterly destroyed in the second death, out of which there is no possibility of a resurrection.

We are informed by the Prophet Isaiah (55: 11, 12) that Jehovah will not fail in the accomplishment of any of His purposes; nothing can hinder the realisation of His objectives.

We have seen in the previous addresses that His word or message in the several ages fully prospered "in the thing whereto I sent it."

So in the Future Age. It being His purpose to put down His enemies—sinners—either by the processes of forgiveness and writing of His law on mind and heart, under the gracious provisions of the New Covenant, so that eventually they are sinners no longer, but friends, or by the destruction of the wilfully perverse in the irremediable death;

It being His purpose to put down the enemies of the race by the destruction of Death and the removal of Sin to the last degree;

It being His purpose that all the willing and obedient shall have a character of absolute holiness established, fixed, in them so that each one may be delivered up to Him at the end of the Age without spot or wrinkle;

It being His purpose to have this earth made beautiful for the everlasting abode of the purified race;

We may rest assured that all these things shall be fulfilled, and that not one jot or tittle shall fail.

This word, this message, this glorious message of salvation in the Future Age, shall have its fullest realization, for there shall be a song in every mouth and everlasting joy upon their heads, and they shall enter into the eternal ages beyond triumphant *through the blood of the Lamb*. The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.—Acts 3: 21.

—F. S.



Suitable Holiday Gifts

The Parables of Our Lord

WE HAVE MUCH PLEASURE in announcing that the long-promised book on the Parables is now ready for distribution in Australia and New Zealand. (Ready in Europe and America about February, D.V.) It is a bulkier book than was anticipated, making 440 pages, and has therefore taken longer than was expected to prepare and print. Its greater bulk also makes it more expensive to produce than any other of our books; yet we do not wish to increase the prices above

2/6 (60 cents) retail and 1/6 (35 cents) wholesale, the wholesale rate being granted to "Advocate" readers on as small a purchase as only one copy. Should the book enjoy a good circulation, we shall be able to manage with the reduced margin for expenses, and we earnestly hope that this will be the case.

The hope is also entertained that friends will find this book on the Parables a useful help to their preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom, inasmuch as the Kingdom in one or another of its numerous

aspects is prominent in most of the Parables that our Lord spoke. The accompanying Table of Contents gives an idea of the scope of the book.

440 pages, handsome cloth binding, 2/6 (60 cents) per copy; to "Advocate" readers, 1/6 (35 cents); postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 6d. (12 cents). If mailed direct from Melbourne to any foreign country except New Zealand, the postage is 1/- (25 cents) per copy.

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Bible Talks for Heart and Mind

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